



Bridger Canyon Property Owners' Association

"... to do everything in its power to preserve the rural character and the natural beauty and resources of Bridger Canyon and the State of Montana; to use its best efforts in guiding and directing orderly growth and development; to maintain, through organization, a definite influence in all matters which may affect residence or property rights and enjoyment thereof by its members; and to hold regular meetings for open discussions of problems of mutual interest and concern to those land owners. "

Dear Neighbors,

This year's General Meeting is dedicated to defining the future of Bridger Canyon, and ensuring that BCPOA can continue its mission.

We hope that this year's meeting can be less contentious, without the pressure of pending legislation. We'd like to focus on a vision for the next 50 years, as our founders did in 1971.

Annual Meeting June 10th, 7pm

BCPOA's annual General Meeting of the membership sees the election of directors to represent you, and covers a variety of news from the year.

We'll be meeting in person at the Bridger Canyon FD Community Room, 8081 Bridger Canyon Road. We hope to see you there!

Agenda

- Adopt the Agenda
- Minutes of 2024 Annual Meeting
- Treasurer's Report
- Introduction of current board members
- Review of Year
- BCPOA business
 - Bylaws amendment
- Elections
 - Retiring Board members
 - Review of Board work and meeting times, dues requirement for voting
 - Board Chair election
 - Election of new Directors
- New Business
 - Discussion—the future of Bridger Canyon and BCPOA
- Canyon Groups

A Busy Year ...

As of last year's General Meeting, the Gallatin County Planning and Zoning Commission was considering the adoption of a text amendment (not submitted by BCPOA) to the Bridger Canyon Zoning Regulation to allow for short-term rentals (STRs) and rental of an accessory dwelling (ADU) on every parcel in Bridger Canyon. At the June hearing, the P&Z Commission tabled the amendment for further work to be completed by the end of the year. We considered a few of the provisions non-negotiable: enforceable language, deterrence of full-time unsupervised commercial operations, and ADU rental. The PRC was not willing to give on these things, so no agreement was reached. The amendment was to be heard again in December, but facing overwhelming opposition in written testimony, and the Commission's reluctance to continue the matter further, the sponsors chose to withdraw the amendment.

Like many of you, we were fatigued with STRs at that point ... but that was not the end. The 2025 legislative session ramped up with several bills that would have affected short term rentals or even gutted zoning altogether. These bills stood out not so much for their policy particulars, but for their targeted effort to override local control with one-size-fits-all mandates from Helena. Historically, state law has established a framework for zoning, without getting into particulars—agriculture and mineral resources have a few lines limiting regulation, but no other specific use is mentioned.

By contrast, SB 336 devoted a dozen pages to STRs, elevating them above other uses, and even altering the interpretation of private contracts (targeting an active Supreme Court case). Given that the legislature was grappling with over 4000 bill proposals, it's not surprising that many were poorly drafted, with loopholes by defect or design that would ultimately lead to litigation.

There were consequential bills on other topics as well. HB 614 provides a mechanism for counties to terminate Part 1 zoning districts like ours with only a hearing. This passed over opposition from Springhill, Bridger Canyon, and other districts, but hopefully the county heard clearly through the [Envision Gallatin](#) process that termination without extensive due process is not popular. SB 214 encodes a standard principle of legal interpretation, that ambiguities should be interpreted in favor of free use of property, but through flawed grammar it may also permit nonconforming uses that were legal in 1889 to be resurrected at any time.

It would be too much to say that the legislature “fixed” property taxes, but there are some important changes in HB 231 and SB 542, including another round of rebates (for which we'll have to apply). The new “homestead” classification will lead to a [projected 12% reduction for owner-occupied homes in Gallatin County, but a 71% increase for second homes](#), effective 2026.

Future Bridger Canyon

The population of Bridger Canyon has roughly quadrupled since BCPOA was founded, causing significant changes in wildlife patterns, the visual landscape, and the traffic and other disturbances we experience. But we are comparatively blessed, compared to places that have utterly changed and lost their natural beauty.

The pressures on Bridger Canyon, from development, from Helena, and from recreation will only increase. STRs are still in play, but they're really just one of many things that will change Bridger Canyon in the coming decades. We can't stop time, but we can to some extent guide progress in beneficial directions. This is a good time to ask, what legacy do we want to leave for BCPOA's next 50 years? What steps does the board need to take to make it happen?

Bylaws

During the last year, it became clear that some of our policies and procedures were out of date. Therefore we are proposing a bylaws update to address a number of issues. You can read the full text on our web site. There are no changes to BCPOA's fundamental mission—this is an administrative update. Principal changes include:

- ◆ Clarify membership criteria in the event of multiple ownership.
- ◆ Stagger board terms and manage vacancies to prevent clustering of elections.
- ◆ Provide more committee structure for distribution of workload.
- ◆ Improve the resolution of real or perceived conflicts of interest.
- ◆ Make liability and indemnification consistent with state law.
- ◆ Provide a map for clarity.

This will be our first order of business at the meeting.

We hope you will join us to discuss our future.

Please note that the record date for membership and proxies is June 6th. If you need to join or renew your membership, please see <https://bcpoa.net/about-bcpoa/membership/> or contact us at board@bcpoa.net.

Your participation is vital! Hope to see you there!

Resources

You can find out more at [BCPOA.net](https://bcpoa.net)

Questions or comments? Let us know at board@bcpoa.net

