



ULSTER COUNTY SHORT-TERM RENTAL REPORT 2025

**Office of the
Ulster County Comptroller
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ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER

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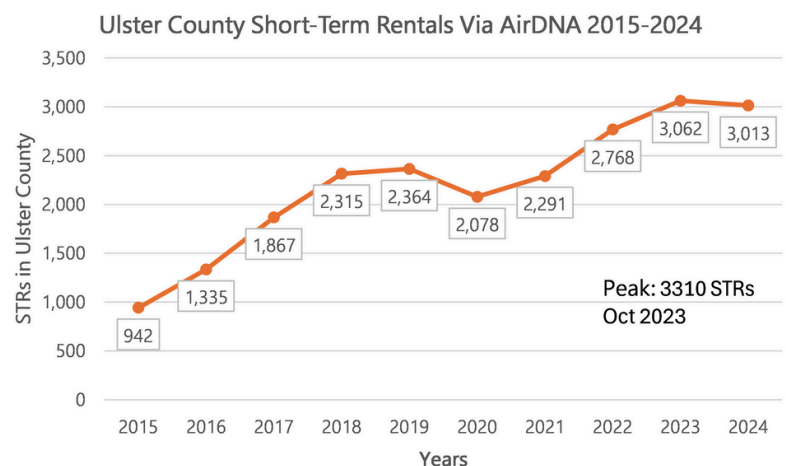
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Ulster County has been experiencing what many have characterized as a housing crisis. The cost of homes for sale¹ and the cost of rent has risen, driving the percentage of cost-burdened renting families to 46%,² as the gap between the median wage and the cost of housing has grown.³ At the same time, Ulster County has experienced growing tourism visitation resulting in higher than ever occupancy tax collections.⁴ Much of the increased visitation has coincided with the growth of the short-term rental market. Short-term rentals, especially those that are whole units of housing, impact the amount of housing stock availability. The goal of this report is to quantify that impact.

The Number of Short-term Rentals Has Grown Substantially

Ulster County has data available to it through a contract between I Love NY and AirDNA, a subscription-based platform that provides data and analytics for the short-term rental market. The Comptroller's Office reviewed AirDNA data from 2015 through 2024. According to data gathered by AirDNA, the number of short-term rentals (STRs) in Ulster County has exploded in the past decade, with an increase of 220% since 2015. AirDNA provides month-by-month data. To observe the larger trend over time, we developed an annual total by taking the average of all twelve months for each year included in the data. In 2015, the monthly average number of STRs in Ulster County was 942 and by 2024 that average had reached 3,013. The peak point during that period was in October of 2023 at 3,310 STRs, which represented 3.84% of all housing units in Ulster County.



Tracking Data

Ulster County contracts with Granicus to monitor STRs and report to the County advertising listings on STR platforms. The Granicus data interface is not user friendly and often has errors in the data, such as town location, making it challenging to cross reference against County records for the purposes of enforcement. The number and type of these platforms has proliferated over the last ten years. In our 2020 [Short-term Rental Occupancy Program and Financial Audit](#), we identified at least 4 platforms advertising STRs in Ulster County. This review found that as of May 2025, we currently have over 10 platforms listing short term rentals in Ulster County, with Airbnb remaining the dominant listing site. We limited this analysis to those properties that had rented or advertised in the past 12 months.

Rental Type

An important part of this analysis has been determining what types of properties are being used as STRs. Across Ulster County, **98% of STRs are entire homes and only 2% are a room for rent.** "Entire home" refers to any housing unit that independently could serve as a primary, full-time residence, including both full houses and apartments that are part of larger structures as well as cottages, yurts, and RVs. "Single room rentals" refer to a single room within a dwelling occupied by others. This analysis screened out locations that were clearly tent sites and hotels that may list rooms on these platforms. RV rentals were included because a significant, yet unquantified, number of Ulster County residents live in RVs on a permanent basis, and many families might choose an RV over an emergency housing placement in an area hotel.

[1] New York State Association of Realtors, Quarterly Indicators Q2 2025, available at https://www.nysar.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/NYSAR_QMI_2025-Q2.pdf

[2] Ulster County Planning Department, Ulster County 2023 Rental Housing Survey available at https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/planning/2023_Rental_Survey_Report.pdf

[3] Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, Out of Reach Report (2025) available at <https://www.pattern-for-progress.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Out-of-Reach-2025.pdf>

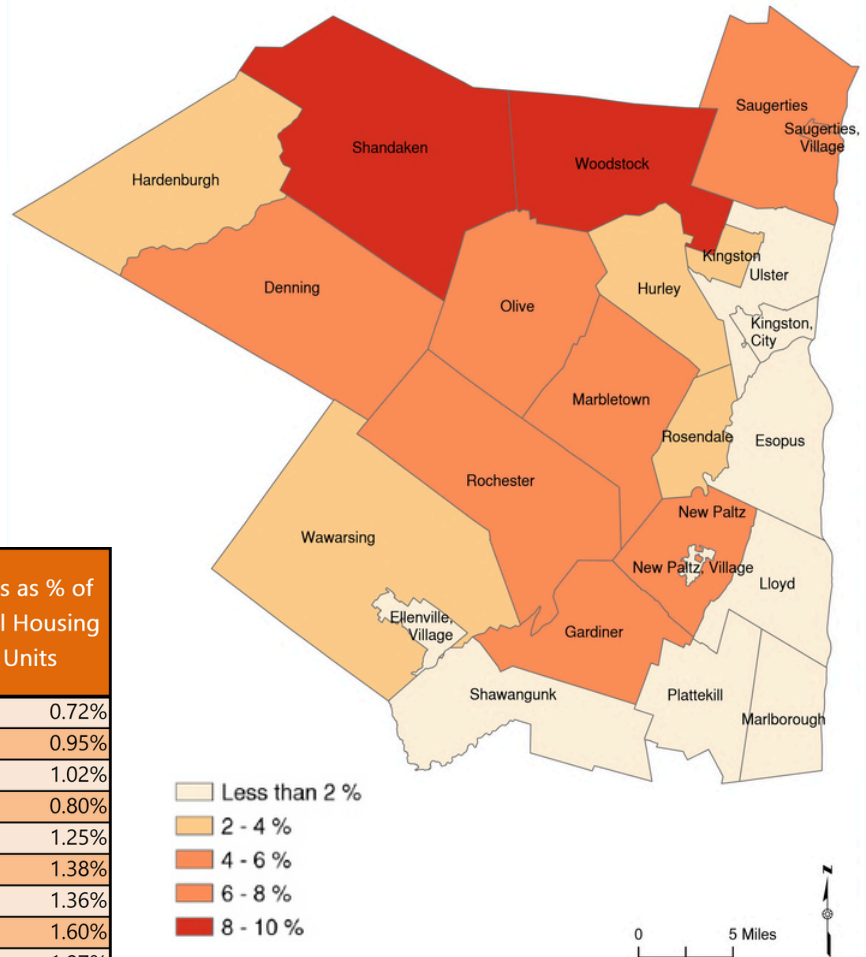
[4] Ulster County Comptroller's Office, Ulster County Occupancy Tax Audit (2025), available at <https://comptroller.ulstercountyny.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Ulster-County-Occupancy-Tax-Audit-final.pdf>

Short-term Rentals as a Percentage of Total Housing

Using data from the 2023 American Community Survey 5-year⁵ estimate and from Granicus/Host Compliance, we were able to determine the percentage of housing being used as STRs, both for Ulster County as a whole and for individual towns and villages. In addition to screening out tent sites, we also removed known hotels from the data which may use STR platforms to list their available rooms but are not removing a unit of housing from the market. As of May of 2025, 2,827 housing units are operating as STRs, occupying 3.28% of all housing county-wide. The towns of Shandaken, Woodstock, Gardiner, and Denning all have over 7% of their housing operating as STRs, with Shandaken at a county-wide high of 9.76%, or 261 STRs out of 2,675 total housing units. There were 86 units that did not specify a municipal location.

Municipality	Total Housing Units (ACS)	STRs	STRs as % of Total Housing Units
Town of Plattekill	4,696	34	0.72%
Village of New Paltz	2,519	24	0.95%
Town of Marlborough	3,837	39	1.02%
Village of Ellenville	1,874	15	0.80%
Town of Lloyd	4,945	62	1.25%
Town of Ulster	5,811	80	1.38%
City of Kingston	11,049	150	1.36%
Town of Shawangunk	4,508	72	1.60%
Town of Esopus	4,257	84	1.97%
Town of Hurley	3,184	74	2.32%
Town of New Paltz outside of Village	2,994	120	4.01%
Town of Wawarsing outside of Village	4,366	156	3.57%
Town of Kingston	447	12	2.68%
Town of Hardenburgh	292	8	2.74%
Town of Rosendale	2,793	96	3.44%
Town of Saugerties outside of Village	7,666	384	5.01%
Town of Olive	2,338	108	4.62%
Town of Marletown	3,231	151	4.67%
Village of Saugerties	2,026	106	5.23%
Town of Rochester	4,240	238	5.61%
Town of Denning	432	33	7.64%
Town of Gardiner	1,709	136	7.96%
Town of Woodstock	4,289	378	8.81%
Town of Shandaken	2,675	267	9.98%
County Totals	86,178	2,827	3.28%

Percent of Housing Units Used as Short-Term Rentals
Ulster County, NY



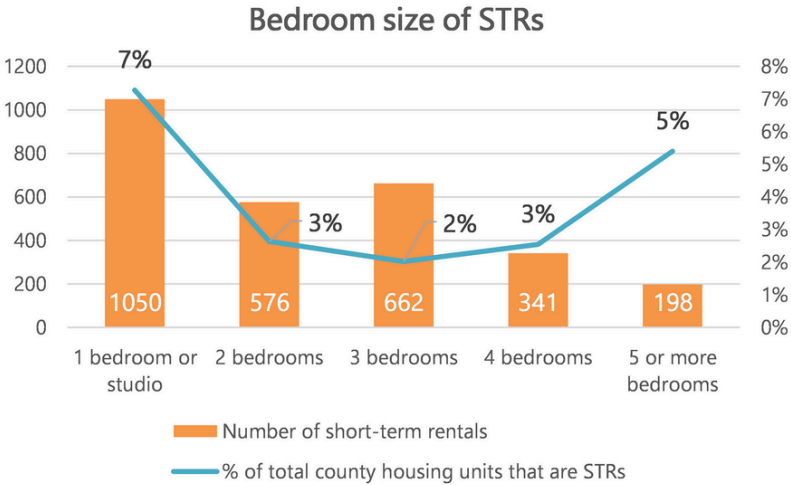
The Ulster County Housing Smart Communities Initiative (HSCI) recommends that towns require STRs to be owner-occupied, or that towns place a cap on the number of STRs permitted, such that STRs occupy no more than 2% of the housing stock in that town to preserve housing stock and avoid disruption to residential neighborhoods.⁶ As can be seen in this map, 15 out of the 24 municipalities in Ulster County, or 63%, are above that 2% mark and the County has several STRs that exceed the 2% recommended threshold.

[5] U.S. Census, American Community Survey (2023 5-Year estimates, Table S2504, Physical Housing Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units, available at <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S2504>. ACS data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error. The margin of error can be interpreted roughly as providing a 90 percent probability that the interval defined by the estimate minus the margin of error and the estimate plus the margin of error (the lower and upper confidence bounds) contains the true value. The Comptroller's Office recognizes that ACS data is less accurate than Decennial Census data. In this case, however, because the 2020 Census is data that is 5 years old, we chose to use more recent ACS data.

[6] Ulster County Planning Department, Housing Smart Communities Initiative, Why Is It Important to Regulate Short-Term Rentals, available <https://hsci.ulstercountyny.gov/housing-smart-actions/adopt-short-term-rental-regulations/>

The Number of Bedrooms in STR Units

To evaluate the bedroom characteristics of STRs we used American Community Survey census data to gather bedroom size. The ACS data combines studios and 1-bedrooms and aggregates all units with more than 5 bedrooms. The size of STRs is skewed towards studio or 1-bedroom units and properties with 5 or more bedrooms. So, while STRs are not taking up notable proportions of 2-4-bedroom housing units, 7% of all studios or 1-bedroom apartments in Ulster County are STRs and 5% of all housing units with more than 5 bedrooms are STRs.



The high proportion of studio and 1-bedroom apartments operating as STRs limits housing availability for people who do not need and may not be able to afford larger housing spaces with more bedrooms.

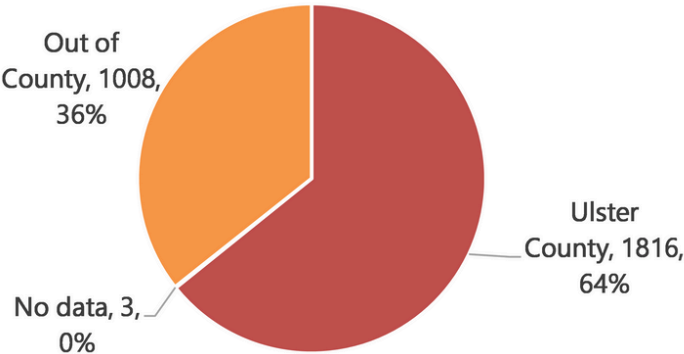
Owner Address

A prominent concern around STRs is who owns them and where those owners live. STR regulation in several municipalities depends on owner-occupancy, that is, whether the structure is the primary residence of the owner. Notably, both Hurley and the Village of New Paltz require that all STRs be owner-occupied. The City of Kingston limits the number of non-owner occupied STRs to one percent of total housing units.

The data from Granicus provides an "owner address" for each unit. This data does not indicate where the tax bill for the unit is sent, which would be more definitive of owner location. Granicus data also does not provide the section block and lot number for each parcel which limits the Granicus data's value for enforcement of a variety of local laws including building code and STR regulations such as residence requirements.

Instead, the address included in the Granicus data for owner location is merely the mailing address that the STR owners provide to the STR platforms, and in many cases, it is not the primary residence of the STR owner. Thus, the statistics given here on the location of owner addresses inside versus outside of Ulster County reflect that there are at least that many STRs whose owners receive their mail at an address away from the STR unit or out of the County. It can thus be presumed that at a minimum, these owners live away from the unit or out of the County. These statistics could vary to a great degree.

STR Owner Mailing Address



The data reveals that 1,816 or just 64% of STRs have their mail sent to addresses inside of Ulster County. On the other hand, 1,008 STRs in Ulster County have owners that receive mail outside of the county. Three of the STR units in our data had no identifiable owner location available.

Most of those owner mailing addresses that are outside of the County are in New York City.

[7] U.S. Census, American Community Survey (2023 5-Year estimates, Table S2504, Physical Housing Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units, available at <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S2504>.

STR Owner Mailing Location as per STR Platform		
Mailing Address	Number of Units	Percent of Units
New York City	603	21%
New York State (excluding Ulster County & NYC)	154	5%
Out of State	251	9%
Ulster County	1816	64%
No data	3	0%

For out-of-state owner mailing addresses, the states of New Jersey, California, Florida, and Pennsylvania have notable concentrations, with a high of 116 STRs in Ulster County having their mail sent out of state to New Jersey. One STR has the owner's mailing location as Paris, France.

Short-term Rental Regulation and Enforcement

At least 16 municipalities in Ulster County have adopted some form of STR regulation. Of those, at least 6 Ulster County municipalities have adopted STR regulation with either a cap or a requirement that the unit be owner occupied.

Municipalities with Short-term Rental Regulation with Caps or Occupation Requirements						
Municipality	City of Kingston	Town of Hurley	Village of New Paltz	Town of Olive	Town of Shandaken	Town of Woodstock
Total Housing Units (ACS 2023 5-year estimates)	11049	3184	2519	2338	2675	4289
STRs (Granicus data pull on 5/28/25))	150	71	23	101	261	368
STRs as % of total housing units	1.36%	2.23%	0.91%	4.32%	9.76%	8.58%
Housing Smart Communities Initiative Participant	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cap on # of STRs	Yes – 106 Permits	Yes – Owner-Occupied	Yes – Owner-Occupied Only	26 - Non-Owner-Occupied	Yes – 150 Permits	Yes – 285 Permits

Due to the timing issues of permits expiring and the format or lack of information in the Granicus data, it is nearly impossible to ascertain whether a municipality was over their STR cap for enforcement purposes.

Enforcement of STR regulation has presented a challenge for municipalities. Although Ulster County has data sharing agreements with the municipalities that opt in to share Granicus data, that data sharing presents several barriers. First, the data is only shared upon the request of the municipality. Those requests do not come frequently and are not addressed promptly by the County. The data provided by Granicus does not contain section block and lot number which would provide a unique identifier for enforcement. The data contains errors that we identified such as providing the wrong town for a particular address.

Given new state requirements⁸ to create an STR registry that will require STR platforms to inform the County as to all units listed, Ulster County is considering other vendors to assist with that process. Hopefully, the STR registry and STR tracking coming from the registry will contain fewer errors and better identifying data. Even with ideal data, enforcement takes staff time. For example, the Town of Olive hired a part-time code enforcement officer to administer a series of stringent tests required to prove residency to meet the owner-occupied requirement. Those tests include a written affirmation that the application is true, presumably giving a potential fraud charge if owners fabricate occupancy, as well as additional documents to cross verify. Town of Hurley requires a driver's license, utility bill, or passport with the address.

Conclusion

The number of STRs in Ulster County has more than doubled over the last ten years and most STR offerings are for the entire house or an apartment unit. As a result, STRs are impacting the housing inventory of Ulster County, taking up 3.28% of all housing stock. Studio and one-bedroom units are the most impacted with 7% of all studios and one-bedrooms being offered as STRs. STR operations are impacting some towns much more than others. Only 5 municipalities in Ulster County have STR regulations that cap the number of permits or require the unit to be owner occupied. A significant percentage (36%) of STRs have an owner's mailing address outside the County and of those, most absentee owners have addresses in New York City. Enforcing STR regulation is a challenge and the data available through the County's contract with Granicus does not provide all that is needed for good analysis and enforcement. The new state requirement for an STR registry may result in more robust data. Communities should consider limiting the number of STRs to preserve housing stock and keep the residential character of communities intact. While STRs provide an income source for hosts and contribute to the tourism economy, they have had a major negative impact on housing availability for Ulster County.

Special Thanks: The analysis for this report was conducted with support from Bryn Mawr College's Career and Civic Engagement Self Design Internship for Summer 2025.

[8] The short-term rental registry regulation (S.885C/A.4130C) was signed into law December 2024. A chapter amendment (Chapter 99 of the Laws of 2025 – S.820/A.5686) creating the final framework for implementation was signed in February of 2025. The law requires STR platforms to collect and remit and state sales tax and local occupancy tax. The legislation also requires counties to establish a county-wide short-term rental registry unless they opt out. The registry data collected from the hosts and STR platforms will provide counties with address locations, lengths of stay, and the number of guests staying in each community. This new tool may greatly enhance the enforcement ability of local governments by providing concrete information the City, towns and villages can use when monitoring short-term rentals.