



CITY OF GLENWOOD SPRINGS, COLORADO

BUSINESS RESOURCE BOOK

For more information, visit our website at www.cogs.us or call (970) 384-6400

101 W. 8th Street, Glenwood Springs. M-Th 7:30 – 5:30

Updated May 2025



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WELCOME TO GLENWOOD SPRINGS

THE SPA IN THE MOUNTAINS

Dear Business Owner,

Whether you're just beginning to explore our community as a place to start or grow your business, or you have recently opened your doors in town, we want to extend an enthusiastic welcome. Glenwood Springs is more than just a beautiful mountain destination; it's a thriving, dynamic city where entrepreneurship is celebrated, partnerships are valued, and the community rallies around local businesses.

Strategically located at the heart of the Roaring Fork and Colorado River valleys, Glenwood Springs offers a unique blend of small-town charm, natural beauty, and economic opportunity. With a strong year-round tourism economy, a growing regional population, and a supportive business climate, our city is the ideal place to invest, innovate, and thrive.

As a city, we are committed to helping you succeed. The Economic and Community Development Department provides resources and guidance to navigate local regulations, identify potential funding or incentive programs, and connect with other businesses and civic leaders. We encourage you to contact us early and often — we're here to support you at every stage.

We also invite you to explore partnerships with the Glenwood Springs Chamber Resort Association, the Glenwood Springs Downtown Development Authority, local nonprofits, and other community organizations that share our mission of creating a vibrant, resilient economy.

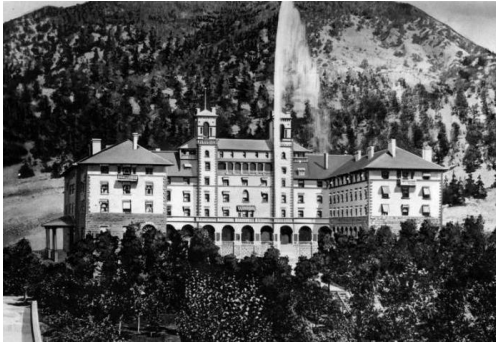
Thank you for choosing Glenwood Springs. Your vision and investment strengthen the fabric of our community, and we're honored to be part of your journey. Please don't hesitate to contact our office with questions, ideas, or ways we can assist. We look forward to working with you!



GLENWOOD SPRINGS HISTORY

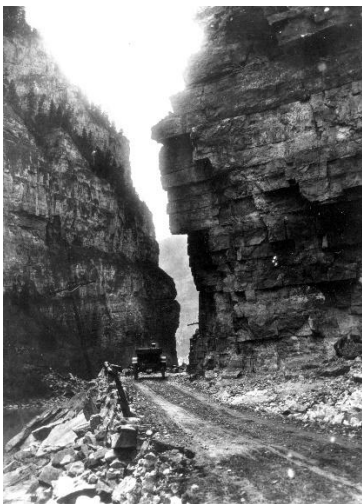
A BRIEF HISTORY

Long before Glenwood Springs became a hub for recreation and commerce, this area was home to the Ute (Nuche) people, who lived in harmony with the land for centuries. In the late 1800s, following U.S. westward expansion and the displacement of the Ute tribes, settlers arrived, drawn by the promise of natural resources, mineral hot springs, and railroad access. Originally called “Defiance,” the settlement took on the name Glenwood Springs in 1885.



The town quickly grew into a bustling resort and railroad hub. Walter Devereux helped transform Glenwood Springs with the development of the historic Glenwood Hot Springs Pool in 1888 and the Hotel Colorado in 1893, which hosted dignitaries like President Theodore Roosevelt. The development was the catalyst for the construction of a coal-fired steam power plant that supplied electricity to the city by 1887, one of the first in Colorado.

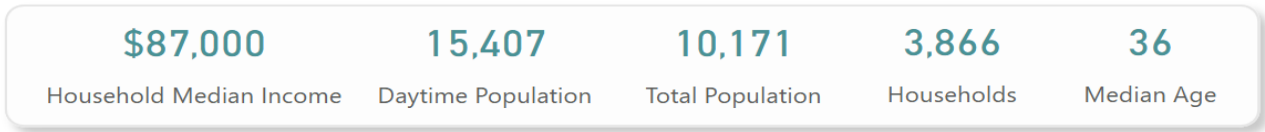
Established in 1898, the Strawberry Days Festival is the oldest continuously held civic celebration west of the Mississippi River. Local farmers donated strawberries and cream, while community members baked cakes. Over the years, the festival has evolved into a cherished three-day celebration held every third weekend in June, featuring live music, arts and crafts, a vibrant parade, and the enduring tradition of serving free strawberries and ice cream.



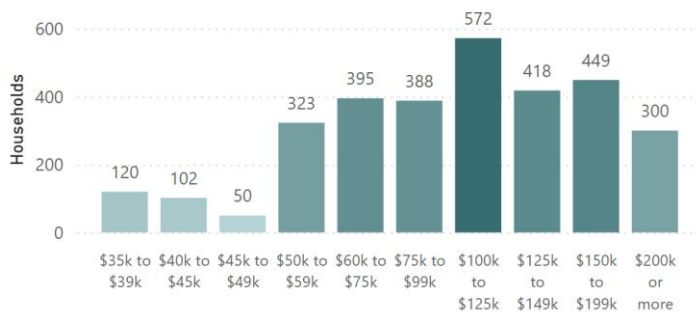
U.S. Highway 6 was constructed through Glenwood Canyon in 1938, following the natural contours of the canyon with a narrow, winding roadway that provided one of the first reliable east-west routes through the Colorado Rockies. Throughout the 20th century, Glenwood Springs evolved with the rise of tourism, outdoor recreation, and health-based travel.

Today, Glenwood Springs is a vibrant mountain city that blends natural beauty, historic charm, and entrepreneurial spirit. With its revitalized downtown, thriving tourism economy, and growing population, Glenwood Springs continues to honor its past while embracing a dynamic future.

DEMOGRAPHICS
GLENWOOD SPRINGS



Distribution of Household Income



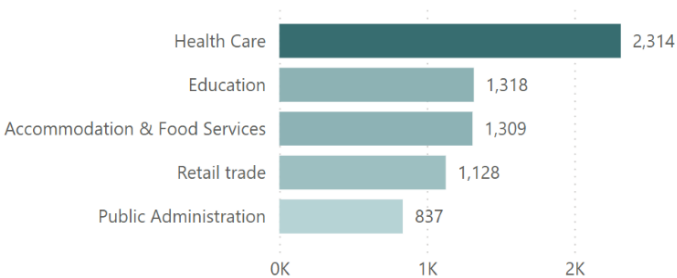
Glenwood Springs has a semi-arid climate with low humidity at an elevation of 5,761 feet above sea level.

As of the 2023 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, Glenwood Springs is home to 10,171 residents with an average age of 36 years old and a household median income of \$87,000 annually.

Our community is 57% Caucasian and 36% Hispanic or Latino, with the Hispanic or Latino population increasing by more than 45% in the last 10 years.

Glenwood Springs is a job center for the region, with 9,300 people employed within our city limits. Our hospitality industry is the dominant cluster, followed by education, accommodation and food services, retail, and public administration.

Top 5 Industries by Employment



Average Daily Visitors



Best known as a historic destination with diverse natural amenities, including hot springs, world-class ski areas, mountain biking, spectacular fly fishing, and rafting, Glenwood Springs hosts more than 1.2 million unique visitors every year. On average, tourists and shoppers represent 19,000 people or 55% of our daytime population, peaking at 25,000 in July.

Find this data and more at www.cogs.us/836

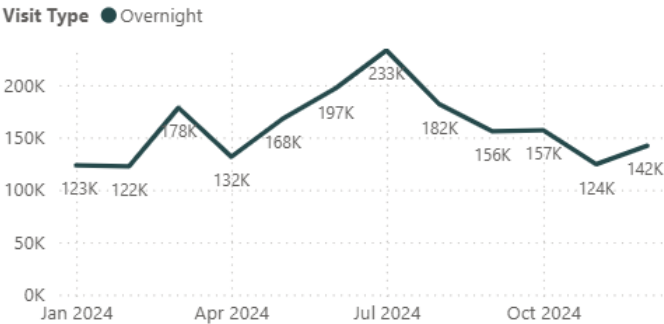
VISITATION TRENDS

GLENWOOD SPRINGS

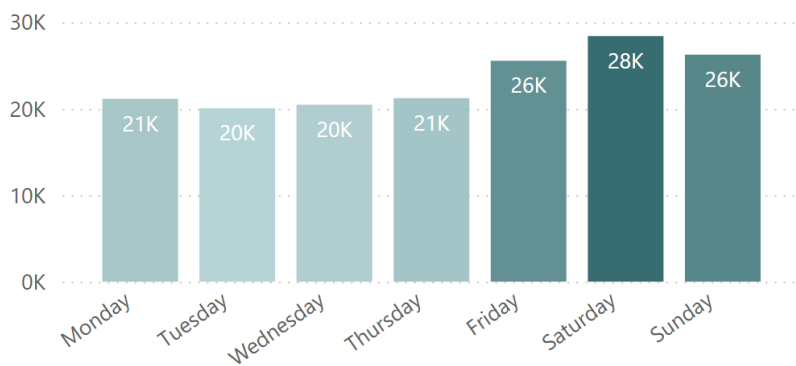
Glenwood Springs is home to 16 hotels with approximately 1,500 guest rooms and an additional 130 permitted short-term rentals.

In 2024, 2.1 million tourists visited the City of Glenwood Springs, visits peaking in March during Spring Break and in the summer months, May through August.

Visit Trends



Average Daily Visitors by Day of the Week



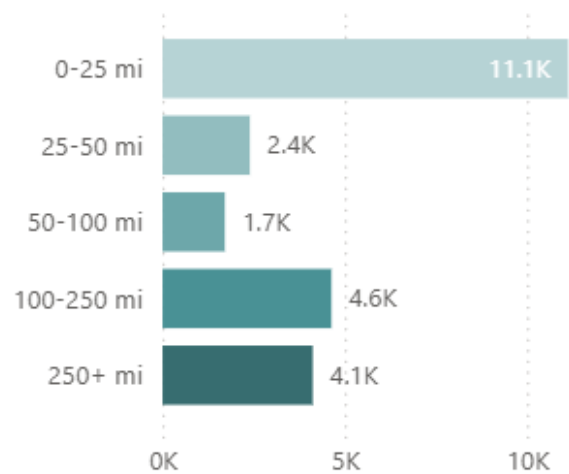
Weekdays, Monday through Thursday, see an average of 21,000 visitors, while weekends, Friday through Sunday, average 27,000 visitors. Visitors are defined as individuals who neither live nor are employed in Glenwood Springs, capturing tourists and shoppers who spend meaningful time within the city.

Our largest group of daily visitors is regional shoppers between Rifle, Basalt, and Gypsum, taking advantage of our large array of shops and services.

Visitors from 25-100 miles away capture people from Grand Junction, Montrose, and Silverthorne. This group is drawn to attractions like the hot Springs, adventure Park, and rafting.

Visitors from over 100 miles away account for Front Range and out-of-state tourists; these visitors stay the longest and are the primary users of attractions and accommodations.

Average Daily Visitors by Home Distance



LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS
ORGANIZATIONS, EVENTS, & CONTACTS



GLENWOOD SPRINGS CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION

ABOUT

Founded in 1919, the Glenwood Springs Chamber Resort Association is the longest-standing community and business organization in Glenwood Springs, dedicated to helping businesses thrive and the community prosper. As an independent 501c6 nonprofit organization, they serve as both a chamber of commerce and a destination marketing and management organization.

SERVICES

BUSINESS SUPPORT & ADVOCACY

Offers programs, education, resources, events, and tools to help businesses. Advocate for the business community and the overall well-being of Glenwood Springs by engaging with local, state, and federal policy issues.

PROMOTION

Through publications, online channels and sponsorships, we help increase business visibility and exposure.

SAVINGS

Benefits like ski pass discounts, RFTA zone passes, and member deals help businesses save money and attract and retain employees.

DESTINATION MARKETING & MANAGEMENT

The Chamber is Glenwood Springs' contracted destination marketing and management organization, operating Visit Glenwood Springs and the Visitor Center.

EVENTS

NETWORKING

Business After Hours; Monthly Let's Do Lunch Leads Group; Women Interacting and Networking

EDUCATION

Economic Forecast & Community Update; Hablemos de Negocios/Let's Talk Business: Spanish Business Resource Series; The Morning Brew Educational Series; Legislative Outlook Breakfast and other timely educational seminars.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Strawberry Days and Winter Wonderland

CONTACT

www.glenwoodchamber.com (970) 945-6589 info@glenwoodchamber.com

GLENWOOD SPRINGS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

ABOUT

The Glenwood Springs Downtown Development Authority is a tax-funded district established in 2001 with several overarching goals: to enhance the downtown experience through infrastructure, beautification, pedestrian access and connections to open space, views and river corridors.

GRANTS

DESIGN ASSISTANCE GRANT

Up to \$1,000 for businesses and property owners to hire a design professional to develop plans for exterior building renovations.

DOWNTOWN ENTERTAINMENT GRANT

Up to \$1,000 is available to businesses to hire a live band to provide evening entertainment.

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT

Up to \$25,000 is available for exterior building renovations to enhance the quality and vitality of downtown Glenwood Springs, not to exceed 50% of total project costs.

ALLEY LIGHTING GRANT

Free program designed to foster active alley connections and increase the sense of safety after dark. The DDA will pay for the purchase and installation of alley lights for property and business owners.

SAFETY & SECURITY GRANT

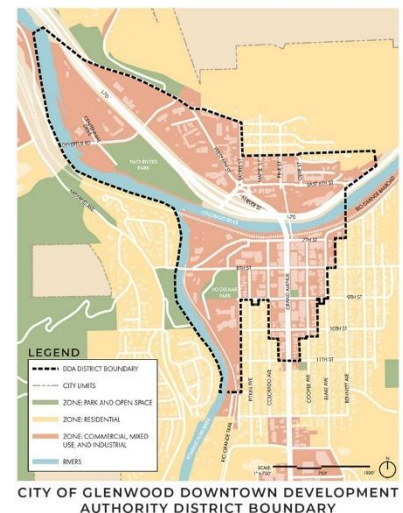
Reimbursement program for the purchase and installation of a public-facing security camera, maximum of 50% of project cost not to exceed \$5,000.

CONTACT

www.glenwoodspringsdda.com

(815) 735-9315

director@glenwoodspringsdda.com



REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATIONS, EVENTS, & CONTACTS

COLORADO WORKFORCE CENTER – GLENWOOD SPRINGS OFFICE

ABOUT

Colorado Workforce Centers provide a variety of free services to support employers in their recruitment, retention and ongoing staffing needs through a wide array no-cost services.

SERVICES

Job Listings
Computer and Internet Access
Career Counseling and Training
Recruitment, pre-screening, and referral
Tax credits and training reimbursement
Self-service and staff-assisted options

CONTACT

cdle.colorado.gov/jobs-training/workforce-centers
(970) 945-8638
cdle_glenwood_springs_wfc@state.co.us



COLORADO
Department of
Labor and Employment

NORTHWEST COLORADO SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

ABOUT

The Colorado Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network provides free, confidential 1:1 advising and no- or low-cost training programs to aspiring entrepreneurs and existing small business owners with over 50 full-time staff members and approximately 230 specialized business advisors.

CONTACT

sbdc.colorado.gov/locations/northwest
(970) 328-3414
info@northwestsbdc.org



REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATIONS, EVENTS, & CONTACTS

COLORADO RURAL JUMP-START PROGRAM

ABOUT

The Rural Jump-Start program creates incentives for new and unique businesses in rural areas of Colorado like Glenwood Springs. Incentives include local, county and state tax relief and matching grants up to \$15,000

TAX RELIEF

State income tax for the new business
State sales and use tax for the new business
County personal property tax for the new business
Municipal personal property tax for the new business
State income tax for qualified new hires

GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Businesses located in a Rural Jump-Start zone can receive a matching grant of up to \$15,000 as a newly established business.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Businesses must not be operating at the time of application
2. Plan to hire at least three employees by the third year of operation
3. Export goods and services outside the county
4. Adhere to submitted business plan
5. Work with local sponsor Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership
6. Cannot compete directly with another business in Garfield County or neighboring counties
7. Cannot be a sole proprietor business structure

CONTACT

oedit.colorado.gov/rural-jump-start-program

Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership

(970) 306-1899

alicia@livingonmntntime.com



COLORADO

Office of Economic Development
& International Trade

BUSINESS RESOURCES

TOOLS, INFORMATION, FINANANCING

SITE SELECTION

Through our partnership with REsimplifi, Inc., we are happy to make a site selection tool available for both current Glenwood Springs businesses and those wishing to locate in our community. Through this application, visitors can view all available listings compiled from multiple commercial real estate sites.

Site Selection Tool: glenwood-springs-co.resimplifi.com

INCENTIVES & FINANCING

The City of Glenwood Springs offers Sales Tax Rebates of up to 25% of the city sales tax collected for up to 5 years to cover approved fees and improvement costs, as well as a revolving loan fund designed to provide small businesses with low interest loans.

The Downtown Development Authority offers several grant opportunities for businesses located within their boundaries.

Owners of historic commercial or residential property may be eligible for local, state, or federal grants and tax credits to support restoration or rehabilitation projects.

Incentives & Financing website: www.cogs.us/709/Incentives-and-Financing

HOUSING RESOURCES

The City of Glenwood Springs continues to roll out a series of initiatives to assist community members in navigating the challenging housing market. Programming is funded through various sources including our Workforce Housing Lodging Tax, along with state and federal dollars. Whether you are a business owner, a renter, or a prospective homebuyer, we are here to help.

City of Glenwood Springs Housing website: www.cogs.us/839/Housing

COLORADO BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE

The Colorado Business Resource guidebook is a comprehensive business guide, covering topics from startup checklists, legal structure definitions, tax guides, marketing, business accounting and more.

Scan for PDF



SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

The Small Business Administration offers many free resources including an online learning platform, comprehensive business guides on various topics, and one-on-one consulting services offered through the Northwest Colorado Small Business Development Center.

Small Business Development Center website: www.sba.gov/business-guide

Find all these resources and more at www.cogs.us/487/Business

LICENSES & PERMITS

OVERVIEW

BUSINESS LICENSES

All businesses are required to obtain a business license with the City of Glenwood Springs before operating OR doing business within city boundaries, ensuring compliance with local regulations and zoning requirements. Apply online at glenwoodsprings.munirevs.com.

SIGN PERMITS

Signs must be permitted and approved through the community development department prior to installing, altering, or modifying any permanent signage, ensuring compliance with the city's sign code and maintaining community aesthetics.

CONTRACTOR LICENSES

If you are doing construction work within the City of Glenwood Springs, you must hold a current City of Glenwood Springs contractor license. If you are working as a subcontractor but are not directly employed by that contractor, you also must be licensed to work in Glenwood Springs. Contractor licenses must be renewed on an annual basis.

B.E.S.T. CARD

B.E.S.T. cards are required to obtain a contractor license in the City of Glenwood Springs and must be renewed every 3 years. International Code Council (ICC) certifications may also be used to obtain a contractor license.

B.E.S.T. is Board of Examiners Standardized Testing. A B.E.S.T. card is evidence that you have passed a written test on the code that applies to your licensing category. The B.E.S.T. card is recognized by cities and towns in the Roaring Fork Valley and west to the town of Silt.

The City of Glenwood Springs gives the B.E.S.T. test by appointment only. Call the Community Development Department at 970-384-6450 to schedule your appointment.

BUILDING PERMITS

Building permits are required in the City of Glenwood Springs for most construction, remodeling, or repair projects to ensure compliance with safety codes and local regulations. Obtaining a permit helps protect property owners by verifying that work is done to standard and inspected properly. In the event of property damage, insurance companies may not cover the costs of repair work performed without a permit.

BUSINESS LICENSE GUIDE

PROCESS

Outlined in this section are the key steps involved in starting your business in the City of Glenwood Spring; including site selection, zoning, parking requirements, possible fees, business license applications, and renewals. Scan the QR code to find all the relevant links for this process.

Scan for more



FEASIBILITY

The first step towards opening your doors for business is feasibility - determining where your business is allowed to operate and to understand what upgrades are necessary to make a space suitable for your operation, as well as any accompanying fees. It is recommended you reach out to Community Development staff at 970-384-6450 as early as possible.

SITE SELECTION

[Resimplifi](#) is a site selection tool offered by the City of Glenwood Springs to help current and prospective businesses find available commercial properties for sale or lease within Glenwood Springs.

ZONING

Review the zoning districts and municipal code to see the lists of allowed uses that govern where your business can be located. See the Zoning page for more information.

[Table of Allowed Uses](#) from municipal code lists both residential and commercial uses. Click the blue expand button to make the table easier to read and scroll down till you find the row that best describes your business.

[Food Trucks](#) can be found under “Temporary Uses” and require both a business license and a temporary use permit.

PARKING

After you have confirmed your business is allowed use per the zoning map, you must also make sure there are enough parking spaces for your customers. The right-hand side of the [Table of Allowed Uses](#) from the previous step lists the required minimum parking for each type of use.

FEES

Before you submit your business license application it is important to understand what fees might be associated with starting your business. Please reach out to the Community Development Department to review if fees associated with starting your business will be required by the City Code.

[System Improvement Fees](#) may apply to ensure our city infrastructure and services are able to meet increases in demand caused by a significant change of use in the location. System Improvement Fees are charged to offset impacts to water, sewer, fire, schools, and parkland, please refer to Municipal code section [080.060 – System Improvement Fees](#) for more information.

APPLICATION

After confirming your business is allowed in your chosen location and meets parking requirements, you can submit your business license application.

SUBMISSION

Complete your business license application online at glenwoodsprings.munirevs.com then see below for the next steps in starting your business.

If you are a returning temporary vendor (Food Truck), call the Finance Department at (970) 384-6455 before submitting the application to see if the deposit is still required.

BUILDING INSPECTION

New and existing businesses looking to move locations must complete a building inspection for a new location before receiving a business license may be issued.

TAXES

Your business must also be compliant with all local, state and federal taxes. The City of Glenwood Springs uses the online MuniRevs system at glenwoodsprings.munirevs.com for both business license and sales tax applications.

INITIAL USE TAX FORM

If you have purchased an existing business you will need to file Initial use tax form, [Initial Use Tax Application](#). Fill out the form and send it to the City of Glenwood Springs with the payment. All future forms will need to be filed and paid online with Muni Revs.

LICENSE RENEWAL

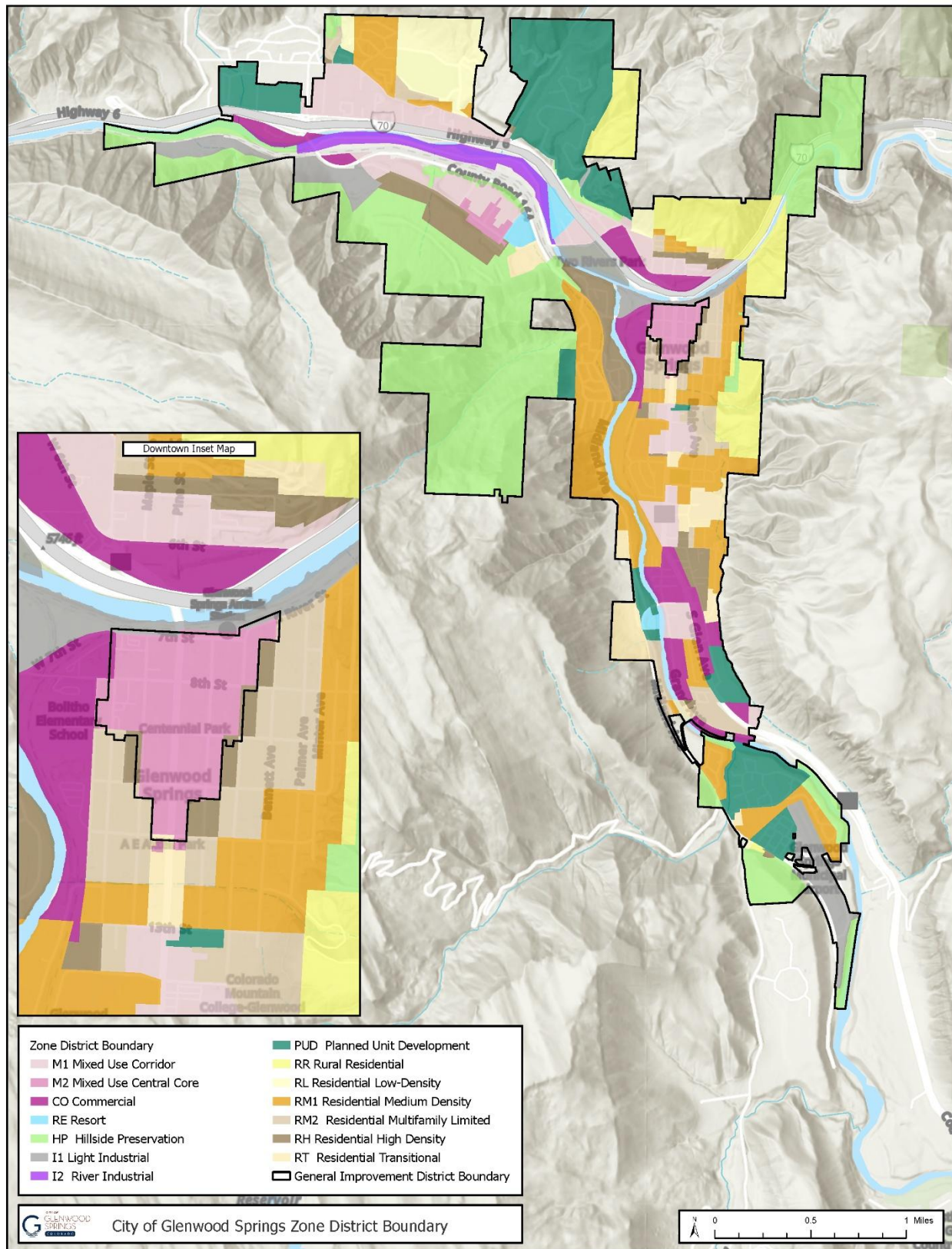
Business licenses are valid for up to 2 years, expiring at the end of odd-numbered years. Renewals are handled online at glenwoodsprings.munirevs.com.

SIGN PERMIT

Signage is regulated in Glenwood Springs, you are required to get a permit prior to installing signage. Contact Community Development staff at (970) 384-6450 to review your plans and to ensure they will be up to code.

ZONING MAP

GLENWOOD SPRINGS ZONING



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

BUSINESS FAQ

How do I register my business with the City of Glenwood Springs?

The process of registering for a business is handled online through glenwoodsprings.munirevs.com. Call Community Development at (970) 384-6450 with any questions.

Do I need a permit for a sign?

Yes, most signage requires a permit. Contact Community Development staff before purchasing a sign to understand regulatory requirements.

When is the best time to contact community development staff?

Always as soon as possible, before contracts are signed, we can offer the most guidance on applicable regulations and possible fees or development costs.

What is a change of use?

Change of use occurs when, for example, a building that was originally a retail clothing store changes into a coffee shop. The City keeps track of these changes to ensure our services such as electric, water and sewer are able to meet changing demands.

What are system improvement fees?

System improvement fees are assessed when a change of use occurs that increases the usage of city services such as electricity, water and sewer. Contact Community Development staff before you sign a lease agreement to review your plans, especially if you feel this may apply to you.

We offer several incentives and financing options that may cover some or all system improvement fees if they apply.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION & SERVICES

GLENWOOD SPRINGS

TRANSPORTATION

Glenwood Springs offers several public transit options. Scan the QR code to download a free route planner to see all transit options and live bus schedules.



RIDE GLENWOOD

Ride Glenwood Springs is the City's year-round public transit bus service, operating daily from 6:53 a.m. to 7:26 p.m., at 30-minute intervals. All rides are FREE.

ON DEMAND TRANSIT

Our On-demand ride-sharing service called Ride Glenwood On-Demand starting in May 2025 allows users to request a ride anywhere within Glenwood city limits for \$1 using the Ride Roaring Fork App.

ROARING FORK TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

The Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA) provides FREE bus service within Glenwood Springs, as well as regular paid service from Rifle to Aspen.

COMMUNITY BROADBAND NETWORK

The City of Glenwood Springs was one of the first cities in the United States to install and operate our own fiber optic-based network in 2020. Today our network provides affordable internet to residents and businesses at industry leading speeds up to 2.5 Gbps.

WASTE

FATS, OILS AND GREASE (FOG)

Businesses that produce high volumes of Fats, Oils and Grease—such as restaurants or food service operations—are required to install, maintain, and properly operate grease traps. Contact Community Development staff to learn more.

WILDLIFE-RESISTANT CONTAINERS

In Glenwood Springs, there are specific trash management regulations to mitigate bear encounters and ensure public safety.

All residential and commercial establishments must use bear-resistant trash containers. These containers should be properly secured and maintained to prevent bear access.

Violations of bear regulations can result in fines. As of October 1, 2024, the penalty for a first offense at a commercial establishment is \$1000, with subsequent offenses incurring higher fines.

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

GLENWOOD SPRINGS

City Administration	970-384-6449
City Clerk	970-384-6406
Community Broadband Network	970-384-4800
Community Development	970-384-6450
Building Permits and Contractor Licenses	970-384-6450
Building Department / Building Official	970-384-6410
Inspection Line	970-384-6432
Engineering	970-384-6435
Public Works	970-384-6435
Police Department	970-384-6500
Fire Department	970-384-6480
Information Technology	970-384-6443
Landfill	970-945-5375
Recycle Center	970-945-5375
Municipal Court	970-384-6530
Parks and Recreation Department	970-384-6300
Transportation	970-384-6437
Airport	970-384-6307