

To the Board of County Commissioners, Lewis County:

My name is Amber S. Brown. I am a fourth generation resident of Packwood and I am very interested in the outcome of the Packwood Subarea Plan. I have been a part of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) since Mindy Brooks put the group together.

Some of the difficulties that are faced when dealing with the Subarea Plan, and Packwood in general, are the infrastructure usage, census numbers, and the voice of the people.

For the infrastructure usage, I will reference the numbers coming from Packwood Visitors Center. While the CAC was convening and making their recommendation, the Visitor Center was reporting roughly 8,000 visitors to come through Packwood during 2022. Gene Sieber, the Visitor Center manager, speculated that the number was perhaps 1% of the actual number of people travelling through and staying in Packwood. In 2023, Gene reported that the Visitor Center has had over 9,000 people stop in... and that is not including December numbers.

The sheer number of people who come to visit Packwood is staggering, considering that the economy is not all that great and that the town itself does not have the infrastructure to deal with that amount of people. While yes the current Sewer Plan is looking fruitful, Packwood has looked for getting a Sewer system for well over 20 years. There are no public bathrooms available in Packwood because everyone is on septic systems.

In addition to the Sewer needing installed in the downtown Packwood area, the septic systems and usage are being pushed to their limits. The short-term rentals in the area are being sold based on the number of beds in the house, not on the septic requirements. Therefore a 2 bedroom septic house, which should only have 4 or 5 people residing there, are housing anywhere between 6 and 10 people based on the number of beds they can comfortably fit in the space (including pullout couches and cots).

The census numbers do not work for Packwood. The 2010 census says that there are only 500 residents in Packwood. There might be 500 in the downtown Packwood area. However, that does not factor in the other communities where there is a lot more density such as High Valley, Timberline, Goat Rocks, and Riverdance. Even if we did just count the 500... the services in the area meant for 500 people are being used by at least 9,000. The numbers do not add up sufficiently.

The voice of the people is difficult to find. I believe that the members of the CAC tried their hardest to come to a compromise of what the people want. However, even to this day, I have met people who live in Packwood and have not heard of the Packwood Subarea Plan. The biggest fear is that the plan is going to turn Packwood into another Seattle. They are wrong. The Packwood Subarea Plan is the best chance that this town has to control the growth that is already happening. With the zoning of Small Town Mixed Use (STMU) there is so much allowed and if the Sewer system goes in before the zoning changes needed happens then there will be an exponential growth. The people not involved in the CAC and who have not come to the Open Houses, are not aware that we are trying to help and curb the growth.

Too many of the people want the town to go back to a logging town where there were multitudes of family and everything was cheap. Unfortunately, that is not going to happen. We are now firmly a tourist town (we were featured in the Wall Street Journal) and there is no going back. The Subarea Plan is going to help give guidance to the growth that is already occurring. Packwood is known for being a mountain town with A-Frames and log cabins. There are many new build houses that look 'modern' and honestly look like a converted shipping container, even though they are stick built.

As for the cost, the difference in housing prices from prior to 2019 to current is huge. There is no affordable housing for local people. If they were not already in a house or rental prior to the Covid Boom, then they will not be able to live here. The 'Shoulder Season' in Packwood has finally returned (the seasons between Summer Hiking and Winter Skiing). Locals are hoping for a return to reasonable housing prices. However, my experience as a real estate agent, suggests that Packwood will not return to pre-pandemic prices. Packwood has its own bubble of real estate and it is looking to stay that way.

The best that Packwood could hope for, and the Subarea Plan points the way, is for multi-family housing, apartments, and multi-use buildings. Personally, I look forward to seeing multi-use buildings, where the ground floor is commercial and the upper floors are apartments. This would allow lower income people to live in the downtown Packwood area and walk to where they wanted.

The walkability of the town could be much improved. I realize that much of the change would need to happen at the Department of Transportation level, however, the Subarea Plan gives them guidance as to what they people would like to see. Safety features like adding alley ways or side roads to allow EMS to get through town faster and adding street lights, especially near the Packwood Brewery where people cross in the dark, are things that the CAC would love to see installed and dealt with.

I wholly support the Packwood Subarea Plan. Our town will not go back to what it was and this is a way to look towards the future. In the meantime, we need to manage the growth that is occurring.

Thank you,  
Amber S. Brown

Short Bio:

Amber S. Brown, Packwood resident, 37 years old, born in Morton, raised in the Randle/Packwood area, 4<sup>th</sup> generation of living in Packwood. Currently I am employed as a real estate broker at 4U Realty, notary public, social media manager for 4U Realty and Packwood RV Park, and a journalist at the East County Journal; President of Friends of the Packwood Library; Member of Packwood Improvement Club (PIC) and the Packwood Business Owners Committee (PBOC).

November 29, 2023

Dear Board of County Commissioners,

I am writing today to express my support for the Packwood Subarea Plan that is before you for your acceptance. I have been a member of the CAC for the past 24 months and have witnessed how diligently the CAC has worked to prepare a complete and concise document for your consideration.

When the Packwood Mill closed, the number of wage-earning jobs evaporated, and the town went from approximately 1000 residents to about 300. Numerous businesses were shuttered, and several public services were discontinued. The town had fallen into hard times for several years. In the past few years Packwood has experienced new life in the form of a new industry, tourism. The town is becoming vibrant again. It is vital to adapt to this new industry and the Packwood Subarea Plan is drastically needed to direct how the community must handle the new growth being experienced.

To me, there are several important reasons to have a clear, concise, up to date comprehensive plan for the community. Especially important to me are:

- **Managing Growth:** As growth comes to the community it is vital to determine where different types of uses should be located. The Land Use Plan before you has been developed by the community over the past 24 months to determine where different types of uses should be located.
- **Affordable Housing:** As I am sure you are aware, the cost of housing has skyrocketed over the past few years. This is especially true in Packwood with the introduction of the tourism industry. There is currently a dire need for affordable housing in the community. This is planned for in the sub area plan. A sewer system is a vital infrastructure element for affordable housing as higher density housing must be served by sewer, per the county code. The land use plan has been designed to provide the most “bang for the buck” in terms of affordable housing alternatives with the planned sewer system.
- **Highway 12 safety:** With growth comes more people. The current state of Highway 12 through the central part of the community is outdated. The Speed limit needs to be reduced, pedestrian systems need to be put in place, vehicular parking needs to be refined for safety, and green spaces need to be created adjacent to the roadway to enhance the street frontage. All of this is possible to achieve with the Subarea plan being adjusted. Preliminary discussions with DOT during the development of the plan have been very positive and the welcomed the input of the CAC.
- **Economy, Businesses, Living Wage Jobs:** The community has seen an uptick in new businesses coming to Packwood, providing vitality and new job opportunities. The Subarea Plan provides for new businesses both in terms of the amount of land needed and locations for business to locate to best serve the community.
- **Living in Place:** The Subarea Plan recognizes the need for services in the community that will allow the aging population to live in place as well as providing the services that the community

needs as a whole. Our new Medical Clinic is one example of a new service that was drastically needed.

I thank the Board of County Commissioners for seeing the wisdom the creating a Subarea Plan for Packwood which best recognizes and addresses the unique features of our community and creates a Comprehensive Plan that will allow the community needs to be met.

E. Dennis Riebe

117 Robinwood Place

Packwood, Wa. 98361

November 21, 2023

Lewis County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)  
351 NW North Street  
Chehalis, WA 98532

RE: Packwood Subarea Plan - Future Land Use Map Revision Request  
0 Huntington Ave. N., Packwood, WA 98361  
Parcel #035191001001 & 011031001000

Dear BOCC:

The proposed Future Land Use shown in the Packwood Subarea Plan, dated November 9, 2023, of my parcels referenced above is "Residential Low Density" (see enclosed exhibit). As mentioned in the Subarea Plan, the "lack of affordable housing has a negative impact on the residents and on businesses". There appear to be very few areas intended for high density residential use as shown on the Future Land Use map and I believe additional higher density zoned parcels would provide for more affordable multi-family housing options.

My parcels are located approximately 3-4 blocks from Hwy 12 in downtown Packwood; there are little to no critical areas encumbering my parcels (per Wetland Delineation report prepared by Theresa Dusek Consulting, dated April 7, 2022, and county GIS mapping); and the site soils and topography would allow for a higher density use.

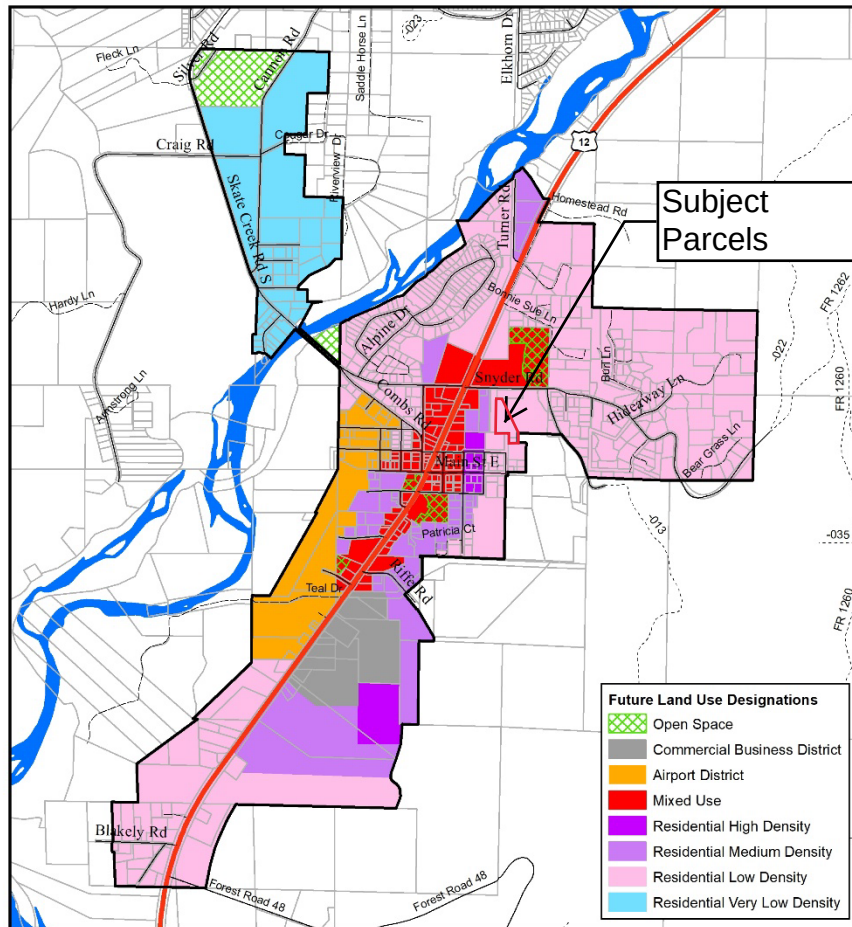
I am respectfully requesting the proposed future land use of my two parcels be changed to "Residential High Density" or "Residential Medium Density" in the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,



David Swanson  
6110 207<sup>th</sup> Ave. E  
Bonney Lake, WA 98391  
(253) 223-6400

Encl: Future Land Use Exhibit



The Packwood Plan

Future Land Use Map

- Subarea
- Highway 12
- Roads
- Parcels
- River Channel

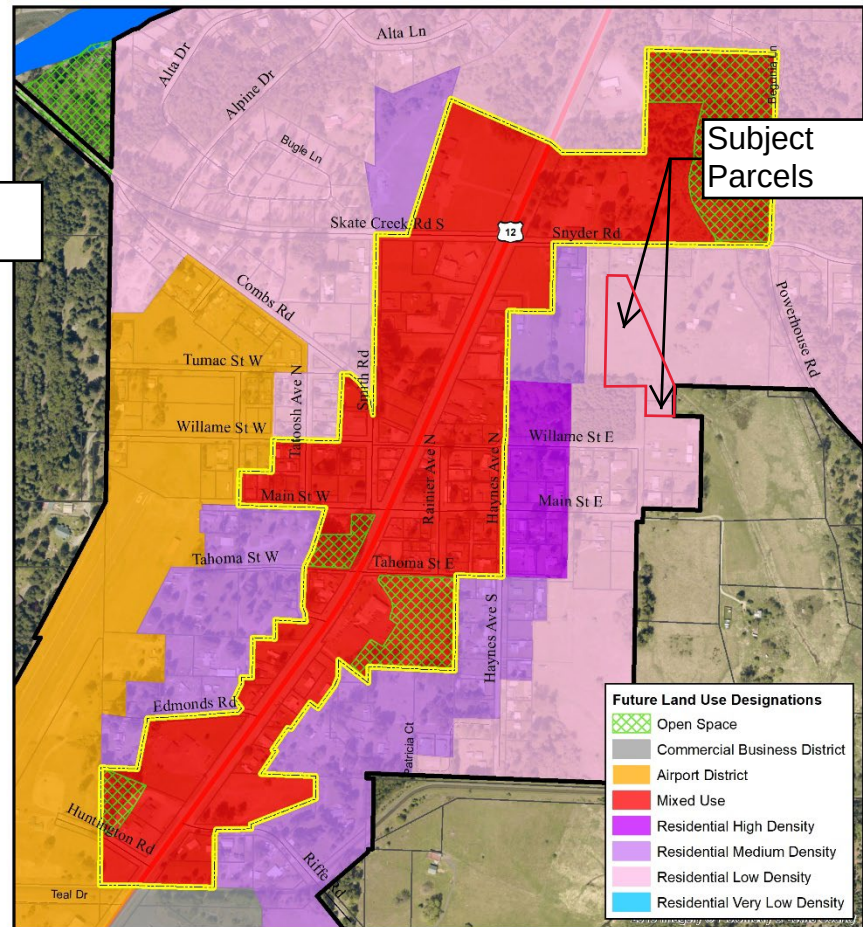
Updated 11/09/2023

Planning Division, Community Development

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 Miles



This map was created by Lewis County Geographic Information System. The accuracy of the map has not been verified and should be used for informational purposes only. Any possible discrepancies should be brought to the attention of Lewis County GIS. State Plane Washington South FIPS 4802 North American Datum 1983 (Topography)



The Packwood Plan

Future Land Use Map Downtown Packwood

- Subarea Boundary
- Downtown Packwood
- Highway 12
- Roads
- Parcels

Updated 11/09/2023

Planning Division, Community Development

0 260 520 1,040 Feet



Note - Lands with no Future Land Use Designation are proposed to maintain the existing zoning

This map was created by Lewis County Geographic Information System. The accuracy of the map has not been verified and should be used for informational purposes only. Any possible discrepancies should be brought to the attention of Lewis County GIS. State Plane Washington South FIPS 4802 North American Datum 1983 (Topography)

Map 11: Future Land Use Map

Map 12: Future Land Use Map - Downtown Packwood

Lands with no future land use designation on the maps are proposed to maintain the existing zoning as shown on Map 5, as well as the existing development regulations. Only those areas with future land use designations are proposed for new zoning designations and development regulations in Phase 2.

**Mindy Brooks**

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**From:** Gina Owen <ginaowen321@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 11, 2023 9:07 AM  
**To:** Mindy Brooks  
**Subject:** Re: Packwood Subarea Plan - Written Testimony Due Today

Dear Lewis County Commissioners:

I am writing to express my support for the Packwood Subarea Plan and to urge you to adopt it. I am a resident of Randle, having moved here 7 years ago with my husband when we retired. We are very connected to East Lewis County as residents, family business owners, active community participants and recreators. Our family members own the Packwood Station in Packwood as well as Raintree Nursery in Morton. They have worked very hard to grow these businesses and contribute to a vibrant business community. In addition, we are very active volunteers for the community as Board members for Pinchot Partners, Lewis County Water Conservancy Board, Members of Friends of Skate Creek Park, the Gifford Pinchot Trash Force and many other activities. We are committed to this community, and feel very optimistic about its future. I am in support of the Packwood Subarea Plan for the following reasons. Growth is happening in Packwood, and all of East Lewis County. This is an incredibly beautiful part of the country, with easy access to Mount Rainier National Park, White Pass Ski Resort, endless hiking, fishing, biking and hunting opportunities. Packwood is emerging from the economic malaise of the last 30 years, and rapid expansion is here now. With the impending sewer system installation, the Packwood Mill site development and White Pass Ski Resort expansion, growth will begin accelerating soon. How that expansion and growth is managed is the central question, not whether growth should be allowed. Growth is happening, regardless of what locals may believe or want. As I see it, growth can be either ignored, and it occurs in a haphazard and unthoughtful way, or it can be carefully managed and planned, which is what I believe this first phase of the Subarea plan does.

First and foremost, the Plan addresses the Small Town Mixed Use zoning that is resulting in haphazard growth. It calls for more varied zoning that will allow for better affordable housing options, businesses and future planning for planned expansions. As family business owners in Packwood, one of the most difficult issues is affordable housing. The current zoning prevents options for more affordable housing with multifamily housing, ADUs, bunkhouses, etc. that can meet present and future needs for citizens of Packwood and business owners having difficulty hiring due to lack of affordable housing. Jobs, housing and quality education are in short supply in Packwood. It is nearly impossible to hire additional staff due to lack of affordable housing and quality education. Few young families can live in, move to or remain in Packwood without good job opportunities, affordable housing and quality education. White Pass school, in the next town over is the only option, and even that school has declining enrollment. A vibrant community cannot exist without meeting young families needs. Aging in place for long time residents is not an option with the lack of medical and pharmaceutical services. Older people have almost no option but to leave when medical needs increase. The plan supports the addition of amenities that will address this and allow better options for Packwood's senior citizens.

The Subarea Plan additionally addresses haphazard growth near the airport, as well as the types of housing allowed and encouraged within the Plan.

Thank you for your time and I urge you to adopt the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Respectfully,

Gina Owen

December 10, 2023

To: Minday Brooks, Lewis County Senior Long Range Planner

Re; Restrictions on Use of Multi Family Properties for Short Term Rentals in Packwood

Dear Mindy

My name is Eric Oien and my business partner and I, Brandon Hamrick, are the owners of Fiddleback Properties LLC and Birdseye Investments LLC. Our companies are responsible for refurbishing the Peters Inn building and bringing Arbor Health, 4 new affordable rental units, Skate Creek Salon, and Milltown Restaurant (soon to open) to Packwood within the last 18 months. I am writing in regard to the pending decision regarding short term rental restrictions in Packwood. The two entities mentioned above own the properties shown in the map below and will be adversely impacted by an outright restriction being placed on multi family properties in Packwood.



In addition to being a property owner in the area I have also participated in many of the recent public meetings in Packwood and am a member of the Subarea Planning Community Action Council (CAC). As

such I am very aware of the ongoing need for short term-term housing in Packwood and the discussions that have occurred regarding potential solutions. I am also keenly aware of the plans to develop a public sewer system with the goal of allowing the newly served lots to be developed into properties that help meet the needs of Packwood, including affordable long-term housing. Although our company is highly supportive of both of these efforts to alleviate the need for affordable housing, and are in fact developing plans to help with this need, we are highly concerned that current rules being proposed to restrict the use of multi-family properties for short term rentals will in fact worsen the problem by making new multi story/unit projects cost prohibitive to build and operate.

The reason for our concern is that due to the high cost of property development it is not feasible to build structures with the “look and feel” that community and CAC members have requested without allowing some portion of the building to generate higher revenues from the short term rental market. With current land costs in excess of \$250K/ac and quality commercial/multi family construction costs in excess of \$300/sf it is not possible to build high quality, high density, multi level structures without charging rents that are on in excess of median rents in the local area. By completely restricting higher value short term rental income in Packwood it would preclude developers, such as ourselves, from investing the amount of money it takes to develop multi family properties of the size and quality that stakeholders are requesting.

In order to avoid creating new rules with unintended negative consequences we would like to propose a solution that allows building developers to use a portion of their building for long term rentals and a portion for short term. We would propose that new multi family buildings be allowed to use up to 50% of their building for short term rentals and the other 50% for traditional long term multi family rental purposes. This would allow for a higher blended revenue stream that would make it feasible to develop high quality buildings that support the needs of the community and achieve the “look and feel” that people want. It’s also important to remember that without sufficient new tourist dollars from new downtown short term rentals there will be limited opportunity for both new and existing businesses to grow.

As an example of what we are proposing please see below for a concept sketch of a proposed building on the Birdseye Investment property. Although we are only in the early design phase of the project, and it will not be built until the sewer is completed, the concept includes a 3 story, multi use property with approximately 30K square feet of space. It will include up to 24 housing units, 10,000 sf of office/retail space, and ample parking for both residents and parking. The façade of the property (concept sketch provided below) will provide a visually appealing “mountain look” that will match/improve the aesthetics of Packwood. We envision the building being a cornerstone property in Packwood that all stakeholders can be proud of and improve the overall value of the community.

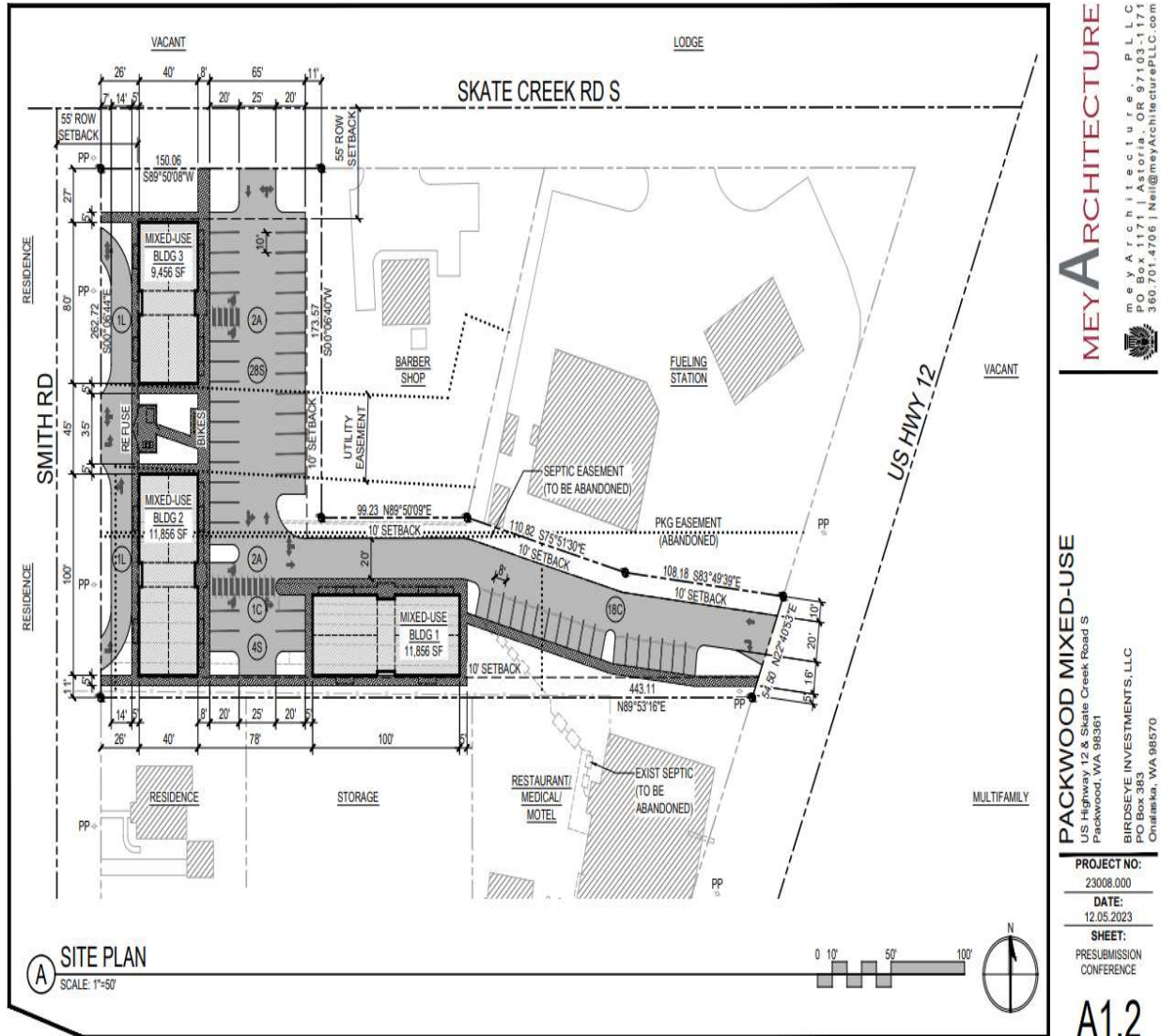
## ZONING ANALYSIS

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>PARCEL:</u>         | 035197003000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <u>ADDRESS:</u>        | 0 US HWY 12; PACKWOOD, WA 98361                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <u>ZONE:</u>           | PACKWOOD SMALL TOWN MIXED USE (STMU)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <u>PERMITTED USE:</u>  | MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING (A)<br>RETAIL, SALES, OR PRO SERVICES (P/SUP)<br>RESTAURANTS (P)<br>HOTEL/MOTEL (P)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <u>SETBACKS:</u>       | FRONT = 0', SIDE = 10', REAR = 0', ROW = 55' FROM E                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <u>LOT SIZE:</u>       | REQ'D: NO MIN<br>PROVIDED: 61,855 SF (1.42 ACRES)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <u>BLDG HT:</u>        | ALLOWED: 50' MAX<br>PROVIDED: 45', 3-STORY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <u>BLDG SIZE:</u>      | ALLOWED: MULTI-FAMILY = 24 UNITS / ACRE<br>RETAIL = 2,500 SF (RCW 36.70A.070.5.C.2)<br>OFFICE = NO MAX<br>PROVIDED: 11,056 SF FOOTPRINT (17.9%)<br>33,168 SF TOTAL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <u>LANDSCAPE AREA:</u> | REQ'D: NO MIN<br>PROVIDED: 19,493 SF (31.5%)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <u>PARKING AREA:</u>   | ALLOWED: NO MAX<br>PROVIDED: 23,160 SF (37.4%)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <u>WALKWAY AREA:</u>   | ALLOWED: NO MAX<br>PROVIDED: 8,126 SF (13.1%)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <u>DEV COVERAGE:</u>   | ALLOWED: NO MAX<br>PROVIDED: 42,362 SF (68.5%)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <u>PARKING:</u>        | REQ'D: HOUSING/LODGING = 3 / 2 UNITS<br>RETAIL = 1 / 250 SF<br>BUSINESS & COMMERCIAL = 1 / 300 SF<br>COMPACT = 35% MAX<br>LOADING = 14'X60'X15' / 10,000 SF<br>BIKES = NO MIN<br><br>24 HOUSING UNITS X 3/2 = 36<br>2,500 SF RETAIL / 250 = 10<br>7,260 SF OFFICE / 300 = 24<br>TOTAL STALLS REQ'D = 70 (3 ADA)<br><br>SIZES: 2-WAY TRAFFIC @ 90° = 10'X20'<br>COMPACT = 8'X15' MIN<br>W/ 25' AISLE (20' @ COMPACT)<br><br>PROVIDED: 32 STD + 4 ADA + 19 COMP (34.5%) = 55 TOT<br>2 LOADING<br>6 BIKE |



**A VICINITY MAP**  
SCALE: NTS





In summary, the reason we are requesting that at least 50% of multi family properties be allowed to rent as short term rentals is because a building of the type and quality we are considering cannot be built using today's land/construction costs and only rent at median rental rates. In addition, median income renters cannot afford to solely support the businesses and professional office space that will be located on the main floor of a multi use property such as this. By allowing developers to tap into high short term rental rates, and also provide affordable housing in a portion of the building, it will bring tourist dollars to support businesses, provide much need affordable housing for local workers/residents, and allow developers to build high quality properties that improve the overall beauty and value of Packwood. By completely eliminatng multi family properties from the short term rental revenue stream it is highly unlikely that properties of this caliber will ever be built in Packwood. I would strongly recommend that you consider modifying the current short term rental restriction in order to meet the stated goals of the local community and stakeholders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Oien". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eric" and last name "Oien" clearly distinguishable.

Eric Oien  
Fiddleback Properties LLC  
Birdseye Investments LLC

Cc; Commissioner Scott Brummer  
Cc; Commissioner Sean Swope

Monday, December 11, 2023

My name is Teresa Fenn and I live at 126 Hideaway Lane in Packwood, Washington.

I served as a member of the Community Advisory Committee for the Packwood Subarea Plan and I am writing to express my full support for the Plan and strongly urge you to adopt it as written.

My family purchased in Packwood in 2013 and again in 2016 and by 2018 my son, grandson and I were living here full time.

**Growth isn't coming to Packwood, it's already here** and we are being overrun by it. This Plan will help us manage what we cannot control.

**Long-term housing is very limited in Packwood** and affordable housing is non-existent. Over 70% of the dwellings in Packwood are owned by someone who lives someplace else. We all have stories to tell where an employee of a local business lost their long-term rental because the place sold or the owners turned it into a short-term rental. If we don't solve the housing crisis in Packwood, we will lose the workers who serve the locals and the hundreds of thousands of tourists who come through Packwood in peak season. **I hope the commissioners will be courageous and forward thinking enough to approve the application of Short Term Rental controls. Please don't leave the future of affordable housing in Packwood to the market. There is evidence around the world of that failed concept.**

**As a full time resident, the safety of Highway 12 through the heart of downtown Packwood concerns me.** I live close enough to walk to town but I don't because semi-trucks whizz by going 45 or more. Traffic through Packwood needs to be calmed.

**Providing Packwood with a plan for the future will help guide us as we struggle to find balance between residents and tourists.** Tourism is the only industry keeping Packwood alive but it's eating us alive at the same time. Tourist tax dollars generated in Packwood need to return to Packwood to be used to reduce the impact of tourism on the community.

**Packwood is a Gateway Community.** A community at the gateway to natural amenities and resources. Gateway Communities around the world are struggling to solve the very

issues Packwood struggles with today. We don't want to become an Aspen, Colorado. This Plan will put us on the path to finding Packwood solutions to Packwood problems.

My last thought is simply a statement. I attended every minute of every meeting of the Community Advisory Committee and I did every bit of homework requested of us during the nearly two years I participated on the committee. I am also the sitting President for Livable Packwood, a new affordable housing non-profit recently started in Packwood. Despite my concern for affordable housing in Packwood, I make this statement with confidence. **The Packwood Subarea Plan is not dependent upon the installation of a sewer system in Packwood. Significant change and improvement in Packwood are both possible without it.**

Thank you for your time and thank you for helping us protect our beautiful community from greedy, thoughtless over-development.

**Katie Johnson**

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**From:** Rob Maricle <itsamaricle@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 11, 2023 1:40 PM  
**To:** Mindy Brooks; robert.p.maricle@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Re: Packwood Subarea Plan - Written Testimony Due Today

You don't often get email from itsamaricle@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Mindy,

This is my written testimony that I wish for you to submit to the county.

To: Lewis County Commissioners  
Subject: Short Term Rentals in Lewis County

It is my understanding that there is a lot of discussion as of late on the subject of Short Term Rentals (STRs). From attending local community meetings, there seems to be a prevailing attitude amongst many that STRs are the cause of many of the ills plaguing the local Packwood community. Having been to many community meetings STRs are blamed for all loud noises, fires, high property assessments and trash problems.

My inputs as an STR owner (which also is my permanent residence):

- 1 Short Term Rentals are a LARGE income source via the B&O taxes and Hotel taxes that are sent to the State of Washington and to Lewis County. It is my understanding that the majority of these taxes assessed in Lewis County come from the Packwood area.
2. Without STRs, the recent expansion of tourist related businesses in Packwood would not have happened. Again, another set of tax revenues generated for the State and the County simply because STRs exist in Packwood.
3. Along with point #2, STRs provide housing to support White Pass Ski Area and Mt. Rainier National Park. Without STR's to provide this necessary housing to support these other income-generating attractions.
4. STRs pay well for people who are wanting to go into the housecleaning business. Personally, the person who cleaned our two STRs made at least \$30K per year just from us in cleaning fees. This person also cleaned 6 other homes while in our employ. So STRs do provide well-beyond a minimum wage if people are willing to work for it.
5. Lewis County is "double dipping" via taxation on STRs. I have recently received my tax assessment and in 4 years said assessment has gone up 161%. When I inquired of the Assessor's office as to the justification, I was told that since we rent our place as a Short Term Rental (whether it is 1 day or 365 days in any one year), that it is assessed at a much higher level than if it was a Single Family Residence home. Referring back to the income from STR's in point #1, double dipping into an STR owner's pocket book twice via taxation from two different avenues is simply wrong. You are "killing the golden goose" as it were. One could make the argument that these policies are Marxist foundationally ("To each according to his means to each according to his need") and are an indication of "taxation without representation" at best.

It is clear that the County likes STRs due to the monetary benefits accorded to the County. But, as an STR owner, I am asking that you start representing those of us "footing the bill" for all of the great things that STRs bring to the community instead of allowing a vocal minority dictate policies that will further impact STR owners to freely use their land; something Thomas Jefferson was adamantly in favor of. Private property rights were, in his mind, foundational to the continuation of the Republic.

Sincerely,

Rob Maricle  
Packwood, WA

12.11.23

Dear Lewis County Commissioners,

I am a member of the Advisory Committee on the sub-area planning that produced this proposal. My husband and I and many friends have been in Packwood for vacations and longer stretches since 2005, when we bought property. We know people that live here as well as people who spend their free time here - we love and are invested in this community. I support the plan.

I have learned so much from other committee members about their experiences in Packwood. We came together to define a vision for the future of the community. People were clear that they wanted to retain the small-town feel, some control of the future of the town, as well as the connection to the natural environment.

Packwood is growing. That's not a choice because like all of us people want to live in this beautiful place. Growth is happening, under the existing small town rural zoning, and it is changing the character of the community. That has happened and will continue. There is no choice between Packwood as it was 20 years ago and a different community with more people and different demands. The sub-area plan offers us an opportunity to manage the growth that is going to happen whatever we propose here.

The existing zoning rules in the core area of the town allow for new development that does not match what we would like to see - what we heard from community members - what they would like to see in Packwood in the future. Once the sewer system comes online, development opportunities are going to grow in the core area, and the development pressures are only going to increase. The sub-area planning process aimed at directing the growth that's coming in the core area to align it with the visions of the community.

The committee set traffic calming as a goal on Highway 12. We also proposed adding new roads to the town matrix to allow for alternative routes in town. With this, the highway would not be the only way to get around. Local residents would be able to avoid Highway 12 to get to local businesses. This would boost pedestrian traffic, which is known to boost local retail sales.

There are some small but significant elements in the plan I hope you will consider:

- Encouraging the stylish hand-painted signs that tie the community together.
- Requiring larger side setbacks which will keep the general character of the town, and provide for views to the hills/mountains, and hopefully save some of the trees.
- Bringing stronger broadband to the community as some combination of working remotely is a likely scenario for many current and future residents.

Most important is to try to keep Packwood livable, with affordable living options and family-wage jobs. I have young adult offspring that are trying to make their homes in mountain towns in other states, towns that are struggling to deal with the same pressures that Packwood faces. I would hope that young people like my sons could find housing and employment in Packwood

in the future, and I think that the subarea plan addresses these concerns and is a good vision for Packwood in the next 20 years.

Thank you,

Jill Sousa

**From:** [Joel Stirling](#)  
**To:** [Mindy Brooks](#)  
**Cc:** [Commerce Meadows, LLC](#)  
**Subject:** Packwood Subarea Plan  
**Date:** Monday, December 11, 2023 3:56:11 PM

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Good Afternoon Mindy,

Please forward my email correspondence to the BOCC as a pledge and commitment of support by Dave Campos and I, the owners of the Mill Property, towards adoption and approval for of the Packwood Subarea Plan. We support the higher density housing component that has been allocated to the Mill Property and we also are willing participants in working with Lewis County for locating the required sanitary sewer treatment facilities within the boundaries of our property. We believe development of the Mill Property, with the allocated higher density residential components, will provide for more flexible residential housing opportunities along with much needed affordable work force housing.

We plan to attend the Public Hearing Meeting tomorrow morning in person and will be available for further questions or discussion at the meeting.

Sincerely,

Joel G. Stirling, PE  
STERLING DESIGN, INC.  
2208 E. Evergreen Blvd.  
Vancouver, WA 98661  
Ph. 360.759.1794 Mbl. 360.600.5666

**Packwood Subarea Plan – Written Testimony**

December 11, 2023

Dear County Commissioners,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed short term rental (STR) regulation provisions of the Packwood Subarea Plan. I urge the County Commissioners to omit or recommend omission of any regulations on STRs as a component of the Packwood Subarea Plan for the following reasons:

1. **Limited Geographic Scope of Subarea Plan** – Fundamentally, I believe the Packwood Subarea Plan is an inappropriate vehicle to implement STR regulations in Lewis County because of its highly limited geographic scope. If regulations on STRs are necessary, the regulations should be contemplated and implemented across all of Lewis County. The proposed STR regulations will only impact a small fraction of Packwood's housing stock and imposing regulations on some, but not all of Packwood (and Lewis County, for that matter), is prejudicial because it unfairly impacts a landowner's rights to use their property and unfairly reduces the market value of only the properties within the Subarea Plan's geographic scope.
2. **Ambiguous Direction** – The first recommendation from the Community Advisory Committee to "Ensure an appropriate balance of residential housing and short term rentals to support people's ability to live in Packwood" is inappropriately ambiguous. Initially, there is no clear direction as to how "balance" is defined and especially as it relates to "people's ability to live in Packwood." Additionally, as it relates to reason #1, assuming "balance" is clearly defined, balance cannot be truly achieved when the regulations are solely being proposed in the Subarea Plan's geographic scope. The result will be a significant imbalance of STRs in the neighborhoods outside of the Subarea Plan's geographic scope, which will be the opposite result of the desired outcome.
3. **Discourages Development of "Missing Middle" Housing** – The second recommendation from the Community Advisory Committee to "require newly built multifamily housing, such as triplexes, rowhouses and apartments, to be provided for long-term residency, including seasonal rentals" significantly discourages development of the "missing middle" housing product type. Developers will invariably focus on building the product that is most profitable to the developer and, if STRs are prohibited in multifamily housing, developers will focus on single family housing that can be sold to owners who intend use the property as an STR. The result will be an expansion of the missing middle and a significant reduction in the potential for affordable housing to be developed in Packwood.

Thank you for considering my reasons for urging the County Commissioners to omit or recommend omission of any regulations on STRs as a component of the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,

Chris Murphy