

Amber S. Brown

Full-Time Packwood Resident

Career: 4U Realty broker & social media manager, Packwood RV Park social media manager, correspondent for East County Journal

Volunteer: Community Advisory Committee to the Packwood Subarea Plan, Packwood Improvement Club, Friends of the Packwood Library, Packwood Business Owners Committee, White Pass School Board, Livable Packwood

Dear Lewis County Planning Commission,

Packwood is my home. As a 4th generation resident, I have lived 30 of my 37 years in Packwood (I left for college). I have seen the changes come to Packwood and I want to be a voice added to those who agree with the Packwood Subarea Plan.

I have been part of the Community Advisory Committee for the past year and have had a hand in creating the Packwood Subarea Plan as it stands now. Throughout the year, our dedicated group of residents have worked on tailoring the plan to the best fit for our small town. We have not always agreed... in fact I would say that many of our final decisions were based on a compromise between heated factions within the group. "A compromise is an agreement whereby both parties get what neither of them wanted." I pulled this quote from the internet (didn't find an author) but it explains how two divisive factions can come to an agreement and meet in the middle. I believe that the CAC worked very hard to find the best way to move forward.

Introduction: I will go through each section of the goals and policies of the Subarea Plan and give my opinion on each.

Community: In this section the focus was on keeping the long-term working people and aging residents to stay here. With the way the economy is focused on tourism, it is hard for many people to continue to stay in Packwood. There are many activities in place for tourists, the Packwood Brewery is packed from Thursday to Sunday every week, but many of the locals don't want to be among a crowded place and will avoid that. The bi-annual flea markets have the same reaction from many of the locals, they stay home during the chaos. We want to find a way to bring some activities to the local people instead of these large events focused on tourists.

Land Use: Packwood is unique, there is no argument from people. However, the question is how to make it stay unique instead of becoming overrun with investors who will turn it into another Morton, Mossyrock, Centralia, etc. Design guidelines are one way to do that. We do not want guidelines as strict as Leavenworth but keeping the charm in Packwood is the desire. Another way to keep the charm is to keep the businesses and density of people concentrated on the highway instead of out in the residential communities of High Valley and Timberline. Imagine a target, the center of the target would be where the business and density of people would be and there would be less and less people the further out you went. This would help with some things like the amount of people crossing over the bridge between High Valley and downtown Packwood. The bridge is the only access across the river and if it fails then the people are trapped (at least during the winter months while Skate Creek Rd is closed).

Housing: This is a BIG issue in Packwood. I hear stories every week of working people who have to leave Packwood because they cannot afford a place to rent or buy. At the grocery store, they are constantly hiring people because they cannot keep workers in the area. I personally know someone that was given notice that they must pay double their original rent or move. If they could not pay then that home was being put into the Short Term Rental (STR) market.

Short-Term Rentals are a hot button subject in Packwood and we did not address it in the Packwood Subarea Plan on purpose. Any regulation would need to be done at the county level (because we are not incorporated) and while MANY in Packwood would like to see STRs gone forever, we are a tourist market that needs them. However, they have created a situation in which the majority of buyers purchase at a higher price than they would have otherwise because they can make money over the weekends. This drives out long-term rentals and people who would otherwise have sold, creating a scarcity in the market and driving up prices even more. The CAC was fully aware of this and in the interest of making the Subarea Plan succeed, we chose not to tackle that difficult subject.

Instead of tackling STRs we looked at what we could do. Changing the policy so that zoning could be changed in Phase 2 was an actionable step that we *could* do. We would like to see mixed use buildings in the downtown Packwood area (commercial on the ground floor with housing above), multi-family housing, and even apartment buildings. Many disagree with allowing apartments, however, that is an affordable option for someone who is working minimum wage (\$750 for a single minimum wage income is what is 'affordable'). Currently, the lowest rent on the market is roughly \$1200-\$1400. For seasonal workers, an option like dormitory style housing would be a great option. Many of these are not allowed in the current zoning plans and we'd like to change that.

Economic Development: Many in the CAC realize that tourism is what is keeping our town afloat, however many remember the days when the lumber mill was the source of the economy. In our compromise, we agreed that while we would still cater to tourism, we'd like to see more businesses that would make Packwood self-sufficient. It is difficult to drive 2 hours to the nearest Wal-Mart to get what we need. Packwood does not want a Wal-Mart, however, we do want a grocery store where we can afford to get groceries. Having stores like a clothing store and a shoe store would be nice instead of having to drive to Centralia or Yakima.

Having other places like a bank (nearest is 45 minutes away), pharmacy where you don't have to wait at least 45 minutes for your prescription (worst I heard was 6 hours), a sheriff station (it currently takes at least an hour before they arrive) are places that many in Packwood would love to see. Although we realize that the bank and cops will probably have to wait until incorporation which might happen in 20 years... but we can try to pave the way in the meantime.

Having small businesses in Packwood would be welcome. We would like to create a walkable downtown area where people will walk to multiple stores in one stop and spend their money. If 800,000 people visiting is correct, we would love to capture some of that income and make Packwood a profitable place to live. We wish to see jobs where people can not just make

minimum wage but a livable wage where they can purchase a house or go on vacation or even save for retirement.

Transportation: This is a wish list item to be honest. The CAC understands that any actual change will have to be made by the Department of Transportation. However, our wish list is to make the streets more walkable and safer for all involved. We realized that with Highway 12 running right through the middle of the town that we will have huge semi-trucks coming through to make deliveries. Our changes would be focused on safety for the pedestrians and slowing down the semis because Packwood is not I-5. Also by differentiating between drivable and walkable areas, perhaps the people who drive on the right of way and almost hitting pedestrians would be quelled. A particular spot that is a danger is Highway 12 at the Packwood Brewery. People park on both sides of the road and when they cross the street at night it is dark, traffic cannot see people darting out, and usually traffic is going too fast.

There are also several areas that would benefit from resurrecting the original street grid design. If the roads and alleyways were put back into place and used, the emergency responders would be able to reach places faster. In the case of a house fire, it took the fire truck 15 minutes to reach the location. If they had had another path to use, perhaps they could have made it there in 10 and saved the house.

Recreation and Environment: The CAC would like to see more options available for locals, rather than just skiing and hiking which is geared towards tourists. We also realize that our environment is one huge reason for the tourists to come and is what makes living in Packwood a great thing, so we want to protect our environment. Many of us like our 'Packwood Puppies' (the elk) and we keep an eye on them. Currently there is an elk running around Packwood with a hammock stuck in his antlers. Many people are watching carefully to make sure that he is still able to eat and drink, if that changes then Dept of Fish and Wildlife will come remove the hammock (he should lose it when he sheds his antlers in the spring).

Public Facilities: While the goal is short and to the point this one is HUGE for the impact. We are focusing our goal to just 20 years, however, even small changes will be significant in the long run. Burying power lines will keep the town from experiencing days of power outages. Having a sewer system will make the economic development and housing grow exponentially. Keeping our water supply the best I have ever tasted will help retain our character.

Conclusion: Packwood is special. However, I personally understand that the best way to save our uniqueness is to put the Packwood Subarea Plan into place. The only thing stopping developers right now because we are zoned Small Town Mixed Use is the lay of the land and the lack of sewer. If sewer develops before a plan can be installed, then there is an unlimited growth opportunity for developers.

There are many people who say to stop having the city people come to Packwood. It's too late for that. The cats out of the bag... especially when Packwood was listed in the Wall Street Journal as the perfect 'undiscovered' tourist destination. We cannot stop the people from coming, but we can put a plan in place to try to moderate the growth or at least make the growth happen in a way that we want.

My personal feeling on this is that in 20 years, Packwood will need to think about incorporating into an official city. There are steps that need to happen before that can take place, however, having a Subarea Plan in place and eventually becoming an Urban Growth Area (UGA) will help transition the town into a city. There will be many growing pains along the way, but I feel like the people who live in Packwood and would like to see the town survive will make it work.

Please vote yes on allowing the Packwood Subarea Plan to be adopted.

Sincerely,
Amber S. Brown

March 4, 2023

Gina Owen
647 Silverbrook Road
Randle, WA 98377
ginaowen321@gmail.com

Dear 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 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. How that expansion and growth is managed is the central question, not whether growth should be allowed. Growth is happening, and with the sewer system project soon to begin, it will only accelerate. 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 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.

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

Sincerely,

Gina Owen

March 5th, 2023

Sarah "Rye" Owen
647 Silverbrook Rd, Randle WA
rye@wonderlandshospitality.com

Dear Planning Commission,

I am writing in support of the proposed Packwood Subarea Plan and strongly urge you to adopt it.

My husband and I own Packwood Station, a retired Forest Service Station which sits on the corner of HWY 12 and Snyder Rd. For the last 10+ years, Packwood Station has functioned primarily as a vacation rental location and elk habitat. Since taking over the business, my husband and I have been working to preserve the unique landscape, including a large Sequoia tree and several pine trees that were planted by the Foresters many decades ago. In addition, we have tried to provide affordable rental spaces for local business owners and affordable housing for local residents. We have lived in the Valley for over four years and believe its proximity to National parks and forest, along with its abundance of natural resources makes Packwood a wonderful place to live and visit. It is critically important that we adopt the Packwood Subarea Plan now, if Packwood is to develop in a way that benefits those who call this Valley their home, and those who wish to visit its incredible natural beauty.

The reasons I support this plan are:

- 1. Economy/Business Development.** The Packwood Subarea Plan has thoughtfully laid out a strategy for encouraging small businesses by intentionally zoning a core-business district area which is walkable and easily accessible for travelers and local residents. Secondly, it has outlined parameters around what types of businesses would be welcomed in the community to help maintain a small town, unique business district. By setting these requirements, it will help ensure that local Washington business owners have an opportunity to develop Packwood and hire locally, while maintaining a cohesive town identity. Lastly, the suggestions for a specific motif in architectural style, will greatly draw in travelers as we develop as a town with a thriving Outdoor recreation and Agricultural tourism industry.
- 2. Supporting Families.** In order for Packwood to be a place where families can live and work, we must develop a thriving enough economy that can support living wage jobs. A strong economy, with a strong workforce are the first steps in having the resources to develop resources such as a school system, fire station, police department, bank, and medical facilities. These resources are necessary to sustain a local full-time population. The Subarea plan has laid out a detailed plan for what resources are necessary to sustain a local community that has the ability to thrive here. Without the Subarea Plan, there is no clear direction as to how local residents will get support to grow and develop.

I appreciate you taking the time to consider my reasons as to why we should adopt the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,

Rye Owen

March 6, 2023

Lenee Y Langdon, Program Coordinator
Economic Alliance of Lewis County
1611 N National Avenue
Chehalis, WA 98532
Lenee@lewiscountyalliance.org

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express support from Economic Alliance of Lewis County for the Packwood Subarea Plan.

The Packwood Subarea Plan is an important step towards managing and directing growth in Packwood.

The Economic Alliance supports the subarea plan because we believe it is important to our community to support rural lands, revitalize existing communities, and create places that people, especially young people, don't want to leave. It is important to direct growth while ensuring that it meets the economic, environmental, and public health goals of our communities.

Thank you for taking time to review the reasons why Economic Alliance of Lewis County supports adoption of the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,

Lenee Langdon

Tourism Alliance of Lewis County
Program Coordinator
Office: 360.748.0114
Cell: 360.460.3392
Lenee@lewiscountyalliance.org



March 7, 2023

Teresa M. Fenn
126 Hideaway Lane
Packwood, WA 98361
tfenn54@yahoo.com

Dear Commissioners,

I was a member of the Community Advisory Committee for the Packwood Subarea Plan. I write to you today to express my full support for the Packwood Subarea Plan and to strongly urge you to adopt it.

I am a full time resident of Packwood. We originally purchased in Packwood in 2013 to have a place to stay when we came skiing. We fell in love with the area and purchased the place next door in 2016. By early 2018, my son, grandson and I were all living here full time.

When I attended the first Community Advisory Committee meeting, I had very different ideas about what I thought was important. After spending 12 months attending meetings and housing forums and talking to the community, I support the Plan because I believe it ultimately represents what the majority of the community wants.

Growth isn't coming to Packwood, it's already here. We are being run over by it. We can't control it so managing it is our only option. This Plan will help us do that.

Long-term housing is not available for local workers in Packwood. Affordable housing is non-existent. Over 70% of the dwellings in Packwood are owned by people who live somewhere else. If we don't solve the housing crisis in Packwood, we are at risk of losing the workers who serve not only the locals but the hundreds of thousands of tourists who descend upon us during peak seasons. We all have stories to tell where an employee of a local business lost their long-term rental because either the place sold or the owners turned it into a short-term rental.

As a full time resident, the safety of Highway 12 through the heart of downtown Packwood is of considerable concern to me. I live close enough to town to walk to the grocery store but I don't. With a speed limit of 35 and no traffic calming, semi-trucks whizz by easily going 45. It's difficult to enjoy walking the town.

Providing Packwood with a plan for the future will help guide us as we struggle to find a balance between full time residents and tourists. Tourism is the only industry keeping Packwood alive but it's eating us alive at the same time. Without municipal services like garbage and full service

sewer, residents, local charities and local businesses are left to deal with the messier aspects of tourism on their own, at their own cost.

Without more focus on infrastructure, the businesses necessary to support residents and a large volume of tourists will not come to Packwood. We need businesses that serve the community and provide living wage jobs. Packwood needs to be a community where residents of all ages live, work, and thrive.

Packwood is a unique community. Not because I think so, but because Packwood is a Gateway Community. A community at the gateway of 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. I'm from Colorado and I know exactly what that means. We are well behind the curve in trying to solve our most serious problems but this Plan will put us on the path to finding Packwood solutions for Packwood problems.

Thank you for your time and thank you for helping us protect our beautiful community.

Sincerely,

Teresa M. Fenn

March 8, 2023

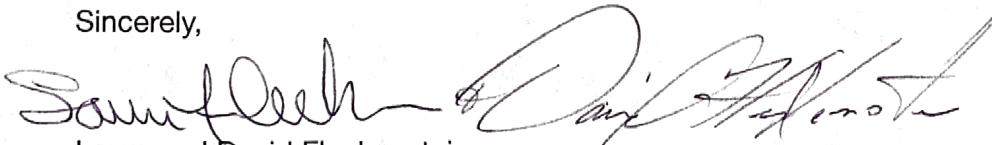
Dear Lewis County Planning Commission,

We are writing in support of the Packwood Subarea Plan. We have owned a house in Packwood since 2014, and in 2022 moved here full-time. Please consider adopting the plan for the following reasons:

1. **Packwood is growing and needs guidelines.** The community needs a set of goals and policies to help manage the growth. Development without a plan is like going to the grocery store without a list, baking a cake without a recipe, or playing a game without rules. Packwood is a beautiful and unique place to live, work, and play. The town continues to experience growth from people wanting to live in or visit Packwood. We have the opportunity and responsibility to ensure the growth benefits the current and future members of the community as well as visitors to the community while maintaining the beauty of the landscape and small town feel that draws so many to the area.
2. **The plan was written by the community for the community.** The 35-member Advisory Committee that developed the plan is made up of a group of diverse people who live in Packwood, are business owners and/or own property in the community. The members come from different socioeconomic backgrounds, different age groups, and have different personal reasons for caring about Packwood. These people that comprise the Committee came together and crafted a vision to help manage the responsible and reasonable growth of their community.
3. **We can't stop development, but we can manage it.** We live in Packwood because we love the small town, the mountains, and the recreation. The library, coffee shop, hardware store, brewery, Mercantile, and Hotel Packwood all embody what we love about the town of Packwood. People are coming to Packwood for the same reasons we did. Managing growth through a comprehensive plan will ensure the needs and desires of those living in Packwood now and in the future are addressed. In order to adequately plan for those things that most growing towns like Packwood experience such as maintaining its charm and beauty, providing affordable housing and services, managing traffic, enabling business owners, meeting the needs of families, and keeping the community safe we need the plan approved and consequently acted upon.

Thank you for your time and for considering our support for the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,



Laura and David Fleckenstein
109 Fleck Lane
Packwood, WA 98361

Maree E. Lerchen

Post Office Box 487 | Packwood WA 98361

[360-269-2622](tel:360-269-2622) | maree@mountainvalleyre.com

March 8, 2023

Board of County Commissioners

bocc@lewiscountywa.gov

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to urge you to approve the Packwood Subarea Plan. I served on the draft committee and can assure you that our efforts were thorough, thoughtful, and balanced. I am a forty plus year resident, business owner and community activist volunteer. I have lived, firsthand, the evolution from a timber-based to a tourist-based economy here.

The plan will give the county and the community the opportunity for successfully managing growth, maintaining our small town lifestyle, and encouraging economic prosperity. Recent progress in planning for infrastructure improvements makes it even more crucial to have a long-range plan for our vision of the community.

While all the elements of the plan are important, for me personally the following elements are priorities:

- Managing growth to maintain our rural lifestyle
- Affordable housing for employees needed for tourism related activities
- Infrastructure to allow comfortably aging in place

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration in evaluating the merits of the plan and its approval.

Sincerely,



Maree E. Lerchen

March 8, 2023

Dear Lewis County Planning Commissioners,

As you are aware, the town of Packwood is at a crossroads. Within the last few years, our small town has experienced unprecedented growth – short and long-term residents, tourism, and new residential construction. This explosion of interest in Packwood has created a strain on our resources, and if ignored, our quaint mountain town will become another cookie-cutter tourist trap.

Packwood has multiple geographic features that limit future growth and development. The town is surrounded by National Park and National Forests on 3 sides, and the Cowlitz River bisects our Valley. Mount Rainier and snow-capped hills frame our town, and elk, deer, and other wildlife are often observed in and around Packwood.

We pride ourselves on Packwood's rich history, natural beauty, clean and delicious drinking water, and access to abundant recreational opportunities throughout the year.

The Packwood Subarea Plan provides a framework for guiding future growth and development within the main town core, while retaining and enhancing our community's unique charm and character. Through approval and implementation of the goals and policies of the proposed Subarea Plan, I believe that Packwood will be poised to reasonably accommodate continued growth and popularity for years to come.

This Plan was created through the hard work of over 30 members of the Packwood community. The participants of the Community Advisory Committee represented a variety of residents, from new transplants to the town to families that have lived here for generations. Business owners, long and short-term rental owners, renters, and landowners all offered their personal and professional experiences to this time-consuming process.

The Subarea Plan will not prevent future growth from occurring in Packwood, nor will the goals and policies satisfy the concerns of all of the residents. However, the varying backgrounds and collaborative efforts of the members of the Community Advisory Committee ensured that every attempt was made to reach an agreeable recommendation.

I encourage the Planning Commission to approve the Packwood Subarea Plan as drafted. Prompt approval of this Plan will allow for development regulations to be crafted, approved, and implemented before new uncontrolled residential, commercial, and industrial development destroys our small town.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Kim Pawlawski

Community Advisory Committee member
Full-time Packwood Resident
Land Planner
Long-term Rental Owner

March 7, 2023

E. Dennis Riebe
117 Robinwood Place
Packwood, Washington 98361

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my **support** for the Packwood Subarea Plan and to urge you to adopt it.

Our family has had our residence in Packwood since 1988. This was a weekend residence for a number of years and now my wife and I have retired to Packwood. Over the years I have had numerous business dealings in Packwood and have watched it change significantly.

When the Packwood Mill closed, a number of wage earning jobs evaporated and the town slid from approximately 1000 residents to about 300. Numerous businesses were shuttered and a number of public services were discontinued. The town has been experiencing difficult times for a number of years. In the past few years Packwood has experienced new life in the form of a new industry, tourism. The town is becoming vibrant and busy again. It is vital to plan for this new industry and growth. The Packwood Subarea Plan is the mechanism needed to provide the direction on how the community must handle the new growth being experienced.

Packwood is a rural mountain community. It is imperative that this is maintained going forward into the future. I know that each of you have thoroughly reviewed the proposed plan and goals needed as determined by a year's work of the Community Advisory Committee. Below are the goals most important to me and embody how all of the goals in the report can be achieved.

The plan provides for the intensification of development within the current core of the "downtown" of Packwood. This allows growth to occur within the area where infrastructure improvements are planned and allows the balance of the community to retain its rural nature. Changing the zoning within the core area, providing for more commercial, more intensive housing densities and improving the transportation corridor(s) where they are most needed, will allow the balance of the area to retain its rural character. This plan is not by accident. After 12 months of work by the Community Advisory Committee the plan before you manages growth, provides for affordable housing in the area where the infrastructure can support it, provides for new businesses, and creates a solution to the transportation needs, both vehicular and pedestrian.

With the creation of new businesses, and a growing residential population, infrastructure upgrades such as **police, fire, emergency services, and healthcare will occur. It is inevitable that new living wage jobs will be created and the needed community services will assist in supporting families and allow our people to age in place.**

Thank you for taking time to review the reasons why I think you should adopt the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,
E. Dennis Riebe
edriebe@msn.com



WHITE PASS SCENIC BYWAY

PO Box 805
Chehalis, WA 98532



March 8, 2023

Board of County Commissioners
bocc@lewiscountywa.gov

Dear Commissioners:

The Board of the White Pass Scenic Byway is writing to support approval of the Packwood Subarea Plan. The Byway organization recognizes the importance of planning for growth, especially in rural areas impacted by outdoor recreation activities. The need for managed growth is critical to maintenance of the local community identity and the opportunity for an improved business environment.

Several of our board members served on the draft committee. It was a thorough and thoughtful process. We have pledged support for the proposed Packwood Corridor Plan grant. We continue to support businesses in the area with maps and online traveler services.

Especially important to our stakeholders is the issue of affordable housing for local employees who are necessary to support a robust tourism economy. The ability to construct multi-family units in the community would help tremendously.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration for approval of the draft plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maree E. Lerchen".

Maree E. Lerchen
President



Livable Packwood

126 Hideaway Lane, Packwood, WA 98361 509-713-3835

March 10, 2023

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express Livable Packwood's support for the Packwood Subarea Plan. Livable Packwood is a new local non-profit organization working to ensure housing is available and affordable for current and future Packwood residents, at all income levels.

The Packwood Subarea Plan is an important tool towards meeting affordable housing needs because it includes goals and policies that directly call for expanding housing options including:

- Encourage high and medium density housing in and near Downtown Packwood that is designed to fit "small town" character
- Encourage the development of affordable long-term rental units such as dormitories and hostels
- Encourage a diversity of single family housing types including duplexes, tiny home villages and ADU
- Support options to alleviate property cost burden for people on fixed incomes

We would like to ask that you consider adding a goal and policies to the Packwood Subarea Plan to manage short term rentals (STRs). STRs are quickly consuming existing single family houses in Packwood. While we understand that STRs are an important part of the town's tourism economy, there also needs to be housing for the people who work in the service industry supporting tourism. We would like to see a goal of preserving a portion of existing housing in Packwood for residents rather than tourist accommodations. We would also like to see a goal of creating new affordable housing options that cannot be used as STRs. To properly serve the constituents living in Packwood, as well as the visiting tourists, there needs to be a balance of long term housing and STRs in Packwood.

Thank you for taking time to consider adding a new policy and goals to the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,



Teresa M. Fenn
Treasurer/Founding Board Member
Livable Packwood

From: [Patti Doe](#)
To: [Mindy Brooks](#)
Subject: Packwood Subarea Plan
Date: Friday, March 10, 2023 1:14:53 PM

Ms. Brooks,

I was born and raised in Vancouver WA, have lived in Los Angeles for forty years, and have been returning to Packwood every year since my first camping trip there in the mid 90s. As I am now retired, I purchased a small piece of property in a High Valley neighborhood and visit several times a year. Eventually there will be a tiny home among the old growth and new trees I have planted. Legally I am too close to the river to install a septic, but had no plans to, as I didn't want to chance fouling any ground water.

But now, for better or worse, Packwood has been "discovered." I have seen my property taxes skyrocket from \$60 dollars a year to \$600 for a small lot which contains an water spigot, electrical box and 14 x 8 shed in just 5 years. I called the Assessors office. It seems the "high tide" of pricey vacation homes and STR's raises the "property tax tide" even for those who choose to live modestly.

Ideally Packwood would have been "discovered" by those who actually wanted a bucolic life, but sadly, Packwood is loosing it's small town charm and a copious amount of old growth forest. It seems the ideal vision of many that want to "get back to nature" is what you find in a city: a clear cut lot and an extravagant home, resplendent with a lawn, hot tub and a non permeable driveway that leads to a three car garage. And what better way to finance this endeavor than filling the rooms with bunk beds (as there are no rules against it) and listing it as a short term rental. The irony is both stunning and laughable.

Traffic, pollution, more crime, stoplights, loss of habitat and wildlife, an over abundance STR's, higher property taxes, large homes on noticeably barren lots, more pavement, more runoff... Is responsible grown truly only an oxymoron? Can and will we protect nature from ourselves? Is it possible for us to create and consider development where **profit TRULY is not paramount, but respecting our plant is?**

I find myself hoping your and your committee (and those who will give their opinions) let wisdom, not profits be your guide. Let your decisions be made free from greed or guile. Be good stewards of the land, make thoughtful decisions about the nature which took a geological epoch to create. The fate of the flora and fauna who call Packwood home, lies in your hands. Be far sighted. Remember your twenty year plan, after implementation, will have repercussions that will long outlast any of the lives responsible for creating it.

Respectfully,

Patti Miller

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March 11, 2023

Hanna Jeter
146 Marmot Loop
Packwood, WA 98361
jeterhm1@gmail.com

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the Packwood Subarea Plan and to urge you to adopt it.

Born in Packwood in 1990, I have witnessed the many changes our community has endured over the last 30 years. I actively choose to live here for many of the same reasons people like to vacation here; the proximity to outdoor recreation and quiet ruralness, but also for the connection to a community that has existed here long before Packwood became a particularly “trendy” area.

My interest in the community has driven me to become involved in planning for the future of Packwood. There are many reasons to support the Subarea Plan, but the driving force behind my support for the plan are the ways it proposes managing growth and creating affordable housing options for all income levels.

Through changes in the zoning of the downtown corridor, the plan intends to limit sprawl and concentrate business near downtown. In keeping with higher density limits in the downtown area, the plan also proposes ways to create higher density housing without needing to create large structures that could drastically alter the appearance of Packwood. High density supports lower costs which is drastically needed to maintain the employment that keeps our economy, and thus our community, humming along. The plan also takes into consideration our natural wetlands and other open spaces that should be left natural and protected. In my view, the plan has done a superb job of tackling the problem of supporting a tourist economy, while implementing measures that protect our town from becoming overrun by corporations and unaffordable to those who wish to live, work and raise families here.

Thank you for taking time to review the reasons why I think you should adopt the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Jeter', written in a cursive style.

Hanna Jeter

March 13, 2023

Valerie Neng & Ryan Southard
PO Box 603
val@littleowlcabin.com

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing to express our support for the Packwood Subarea Plan and to urge you to adopt it.

We are local business owners since 2016 and full-time residents since 2020. We served on the Community Advisory Committee for the Packwood Subarea Plan. Also, we participate in Livable Packwood, a local non-profit organization whose mission is to increase affordable housing in Packwood.

We support the plan for the following reasons:

- Growth is inevitable. This plan will manage and direct growth and development to meet community goals and values.
- It addresses the lack of affordable housing.
 - Proposed higher density zoning in certain parts of downtown increase affordable housing options for people with low- and moderate-income levels (duplexes, townhomes, apartments, ADUs, etc).
 - More housing options will allow local businesses to hire the skilled labor they need to operate and grow (electricians, plumbers, mechanics, carpenters, housekeepers).
 - Local retail businesses need to hire service workers to keep up with demand from tourists and locals alike.
- It's important to preserve the mountain town charm and rural character that makes Packwood a special place with appropriate zoning and design guidelines, especially in the downtown corridor.
- We must support tourism, the main economic engine of Packwood. Tourism dollars enable our local businesses to offer living wage jobs to residents and attract new services/development to Packwood.
- We need to make Highway 12 corridor a safer place for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Thank you for taking time to review the reasons why we think you should adopt the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,

Valerie Neng & Ryan Southard

Dear Commissioners,

It is in the best interest of the town of Packwood to consider adopting Residential Low Density (RL) and Residential Medium Density (RM) zoning designations in favor of Commercial Business District (CBZ) designations for both the Huntington Road Property and the Mill Site. This would support the need for affordable housing and create space for more residential housing near downtown Packwood.

It's our understanding that the CAC recommended the Commercial Business District (CBZ) zoning designation to the committee because it is a "do no harm" designation that would allow no more housing than under the current (STMU) zoning today. However the language of the CBZ designation has since been updated from "residential uses should be discouraged or buffered from industrial uses" to the newest definition "High density residential uses, 18-30 units per acre should be allowed and buffered from commercial or manufacturing uses." I would submit to the committee that a lower residential zoning designation would better fit the recommendation of the airport.

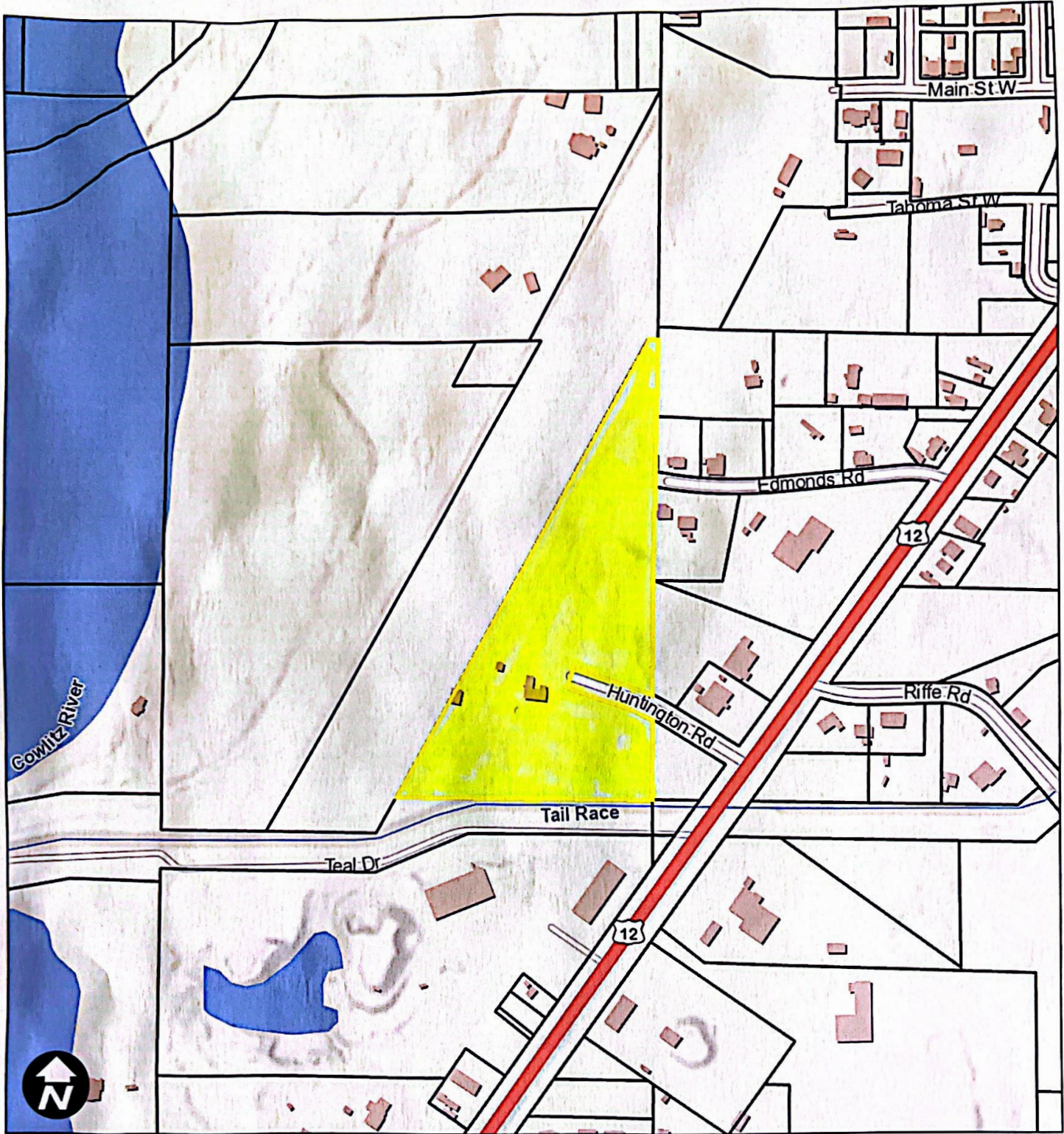
For this reason, we are advocating that the subarea plan committee recommend that this property be changed to Low Density Residential because it would be congruent to the current Small Town Mixed Use (STMU) zoning designation and would have the lowest impact possible in relation to the nearby airport. This zoning would also align with the policy goals of the committee, namely Land Use Goal 1 - to preserve the small town feel of Packwood and retain open space.

Sincerely,

Schuyler Jorgensen



P.O. Box 626
Tenino, WA 98589

Lewis County GIS Web Map



3/10/2023, 9:31:41 AM

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March 12, 2023

Dear Planning Commission and Commissioners,

I'm writing in opposition to the proposed Packwood Subarea Plan – Phase 1. I'm absolutely opposed to the Plan.

I'm a long-time resident of Packwood. I arrived in 1977 to work as a seasonal Wildland Firefighter at the Packwood Ranger Station. I eventually married and raised my family of three boys in Packwood. I was employed by the Packwood Timberland Regional Library for 20 years. I worked my way up from Library Aide to Senior Library Assistant. I retired in 2015.

Packwood is in fact rural and the Packwood Subarea Plan is an urban template of urban values and mindset. There is room enough for tourists and long-term residents without layers of constraining regulations.

Thank you for considering my opposition to the Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,

Chloe Renne-Freitas

Pox Box 118

Packwood, WA

iceuke@hotmail.com

Dear Lewis County Planning Commission and Commissioners,

March 12, 2023

I am providing written notice to proclaim my opposition to the Draft Packwood Subarea Plan – Phase 1. It is my hope the Planning Commission will reject the Packwood Sub Area Plan Phase -1 as written for the following reasons below.

I've been a fulltime resident of Packwood for 44 years (1979). I retired from the US Forest Service after 35 years of service as Reforestation and Pre-commercial Thinning program manager and Heritage Coordinator (2000 -2011) 20 years working at the Packwood Rangers Station and 13 years at the Cowlitz Valley Ranger Station in Randle. My wife and I raised a family here (3 sons) and participated in community service as Cub Scout Pack leader (6 years) and Little League Coach (6 years).

Land Use Goal 2: Table 2: Future Land Use Designations, Code RH – Residential High Density.

The two planned zoning changes as designated on Map 10 and Map 11 fall directly in vibrant traditional single home family neighborhoods. The majority of these homes are occupied by full time and long-term residents. Many of the residents have lived here for over 40 years.

Designating these 2 neighborhoods as Residential High Density will destroy the character of the historic traditional neighborhoods. Many of these homes predate the development of recreational properties of High Valley, Skyline etc. Currently the majority of the homes here have retired people and people who hold jobs at the Hampton Lumber Mill in Randle or local business.

Housing, page 27, Policies, HS1.1, HS1.2 Encourage High and Medium Density Housing.

This policy destroys the current healthy vibrant neighborhoods of long-term residences by encouraging multiple dwelling units (figure 1 page 27). The unintended consequences of allowing multiple dwellings would be the elimination of single-family homes for the creation of duplexes/4plexes for short term rentals. Short term rentals will be favored as optimal revenue for owners over long-term rentals.

The plan states on page 11 there are 459.5 acres vacant in the study area. I suggest designating HS1.1 and HS2.2 somewhere on those 360 vacant parcels and leaving the 2 neighborhoods intact as is, vibrant single home family residences.

In Conclusion, the plan lacks detailed analysis of unintended consequences, offers zero alternatives for zoning and land use designations, fails to discuss the interrelationship and the interdependence of the residential housing of High Valley, Timberline, Goat Rocks homes, have with the planning area. The Plan is misleading at best with reporting on "Why Create a plan", page 3-4, which states "half the houses in the community were converted to seasonal rentals or vacation homes", this is not true for the homes in the planning area. There are zero mitigating measures for any of the proposed changes. Fails to mention the negative effects of the annual flea market on transportation (page 30). Design Guidelines page 24 are over the top and excessive. The plan is a blueprint for Gentrification with a complete disregard for full time residents of the planning area of Packwood. The plan is written as if a population of full-time residents do not exist. It appears the oldest single-family home neighborhoods in Packwood are a target for mega change while the newer homes in the surrounding area such as Skyline, High Valley, etc. are left unscathed.

Thank you for considering my reasons for opposing the proposal.

Steve Freitas iceuke@hotmail.com

PO Box 118

Packwood, WA

3.10.23

Dear Planning Commissioners, Lewis County Planning

I was a member of the Advisory Committee on the sub-area planning that produced this proposal. My husband, friends and I have been in Packwood for vacations and longer stretches since 2005. We own property here, know people here, and 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, debating the issues. We came together to define a vision for the future of the community. We looked at feedback from the community at large; some of us manned stations at the open house to hear feedback and answer questions. 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 here between Packwood as it was 20 years ago and a different community with more people population 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. Pedestrian traffic is known to boost retail sales.

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

- Encourages the stylish handpainted signs that tie the community together.
- Requires 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.
- Brings 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: [cathy Lilienthal](#)
To: [Mindy Brooks](#)
Subject: Testimony for Subarea Plan
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 2:39:12 PM

March 12, 2023

Cathy Lilienthal
P.O. Box 174
109 Rainier Ave S
Packwood, WA 98361
llcathyjo@gmail.com

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for the Packwood Subarea Plan.

I am a business owner and longtime resident of Packwood (since 1978) . I was a member of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for this plan and am in support of most of it. And there are a couple parts that I think are lacking. One thing I'd like to voice right up front, is that I believe there is an irreconcilable, foundational, difference in perspective between most of the longtime residents and most of those who have moved here from more populated areas recently, regarding all aspects of living in Packwood, but particularly around density and growth. No judgement, but the fact is, a majority of the CAC members are folks who haven't lived here very long and don't have the same ingrained, historical perspective as longtime residents. Also, speaking only for myself, this process moved very quickly without enough time to really digest and understand all the implications. All that being said, when I surrender to the fact that rapid growth/change is happening and we've already lost our way of life here, then I can support the Plan's intention to guide/manage the growth.

There has been a feeling of urgency around getting this Plan done, understandably, to try to get ahead of the growth (we're already way behind). But it was challenging for me because it takes me time to digest all the varied ideas and concepts. It always felt too rushed for such important issues, but again, I understand that there is an urgency to act.

We, as members of the CAC were asked to be ambassadors for the community, to gather input and share information with our fellow community members. (I'm not sure that this actually happened for most committee members, or if it was just personal input from the committee members themselves...which relates to my comment earlier about who actually comprised the CAC and the ideas that were put forth and adopted)

The urgency that is felt from most of the people that I know and converse with, is around the issue of Housing and cost of living due to housing, property taxes, etc.

There's a felt sense of being crowded out of our own homes, neighborhoods, stores and restaurants, and even trails and favorite places in the forest. The focus is on the visitor, for economic gain...not the full time residents.

The Plan does address the issues of Community and I support that.

In my opinion, the #1 issue affecting life in Packwood is the volume of short term rentals, which results in a lack of long term rental housing as well as disrupting neighborhoods. And in this Tourist Economy, and the service industry that supports it, we need housing for the workers. Most of the committee seemed to think that the installment of a sewer system, and the subsequent 'affordable' multifamily housing, will solve the problem. But I think that a likely unintended consequence is that high cost condos could be built instead, or other visitor-oriented accommodations in the proposed high density zoning in the downtown core. In fact, I am against any high density zoning in the downtown core. To maintain the small town feel, it makes sense to me...let the businesses grow there, but not high density residential. Less dense affordable housing (medium density) in downtown would be more in keeping with the #1 vision of "maintaining the small town character". Let the high density be in the outer areas like the old mill site, High Valley or Timberline, and not add to the downtown congestion.

And, lets be honest, I also believe that the sewer will drive new growth and that the sewer is not just about water quality issues, as the plan implies. The sewer project has, since its inception 20+ years ago, been about economic growth.

I strongly support the regulation of STRs. An example of a STR that I know of in the downtown core is a 3BR house that advertises "sleeps 8". How is this different from a 'multifamily' duplex or 4 plex, that requires sewer to even exist? And what about the health and safety standards that motels are required to provide for their accommodations,(including parking) yet there are no regulations for sleeping 8 in a vacation rental house night after night.

Another point I'd like to make in relation to this is that the seasonal workforce is not necessarily transient in nature. Many seasonal workers are local, year-round residents and have families. Hostel and dormitory type housing and tiny houses are not the only answer for this population.

Affordable housing is about more than building and creating more density. I believe that only govt grants/subsidies, land trusts, etc will bring affordable housing, mostly because currently the driving force of development is economic gain. Perhaps the County is also reluctant to regulate growth for reasons of property tax dollars filling their coffers....?

I know of 4 situations, currently where long term renters are being asked to vacate their home because of a change, by the owner, to short term rentals. And I, myself, as a long term renter, am just one landlord's decision away from having a housing/homeless crisis. There is no incentive as a home owner to rent to someone long term vs short term. Until incentive is provided or regulation is put in place, the

trend of fewer options for affordable housing will continue to decline.

An unintended consequence of the Design Guidelines could be that it presents a financial barrier to a local resident who wants to start a more modest business. Yes, I love aesthetic beauty, too, but who gets to be the judge? The designation of the limited color selection for buildings and no plastic interior illuminated signs is too extreme, in my opinion, and maybe even borderline elitist. In fact, the design guidelines were kind of a later idea in the whole process, and given too much attention, in my opinion. Visitors will have no problem knowing when they have reached downtown Packwood, regardless of how we 'manage' the aesthetic of the town.

I support the Transportation policies laid out in the Plan. We definitely need some type of traffic calming in the downtown area. I have witnessed so many near misses involving autos and pedestrians.

I support lowering the speed limit through town for safety reasons.

I love the idea of street connectivity on the side streets, for example, so that people could get to the Market without having to get onto highway 12.

The zoning proposal that I do strongly support is the Open Space designations! All of them!

I support maintaining Skate Creek Park as a public natural area.

I advocate that the Library Park become a Lewis County Park, as it was willed to the town of Packwood by Sherman Combs..

I love the idea of keeping new building heights capped to preserve views of Mt Rainier and the wilderness areas

I love the idea of burying utility lines to enhance views and to coordinate this with the disruption that will occur with sewer installation

I strongly advocate for the education of visitors about proper interaction with wildlife

I support most of the Plan. It has been a valiant and appreciated effort by Mindy and her team and the CAC. The real "teeth" of the Plan is yet to come with phase 2. If we could just add some more language to address the urgency of the housing crisis, I would be happier with it.

Thank you,
Cathy Lilienthal. L.M.T.