

September 6th, 2023

Sarah Rye Owen
647 Silverbrook Rd, Randle WA 98377
ryeryanowen@gmail.com

Dear Commissioners,

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

I am a business owner in Packwood. My husband and I live full-time in Randle, WA. We own Raintree Nursery, in Morton, and Packwood Station, here in Packwood. We have enjoyed owning businesses in East Lewis County for many reasons, one in particular, is the close community support we receive from the local residents. The residents in this County, and Packwood, specifically, have helped us manage and maintain our businesses so that they can provide resources for the local community and bolster our local economy.

We could not run our businesses well if we did not have access to local trades people and services, which is why we support the updates in the Packwood Subarea Plan to create a balance in short term rentals, encourage housing development in MU and High Density zoned areas, and allow for further housing development at the old mill site. These updates in the Subarea Plan will help to ensure that local residents who want to work in Packwood and support local businesses can afford to live here.

A healthy, vibrant town is one that contains a mix of people with various skills and giftings. We need plumbers, teachers, electricians, shop owners, makers, artists, foresters, and many more in Packwood to help foster its growth and development. All of these people need affordable housing to continue living and working here. At Packwood Station, we have been able to provide housing for US Foresters and White Pass employees because there are local hardware stores, plumbers, electricians, and property management services available. If Packwood Station did not have access to local support to keep the property in good shape, then we would not be able to provide housing for local residents working in local and Federal jobs.

It is this type of symbiotic relationship that helps a local town thrive. That is why the recent updates to the plan is a linchpin in the future development of Packwood. Thank you for taking time to review the reasons why I think you should adopt the updated Packwood Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,

Rye Owen

From: [Gina Owen](#)
To: [Mindy Brooks](#)
Subject: Packwood Subarea Plan Testimony
Date: Friday, September 8, 2023 1:33:30 PM

September 4, 2023

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

Dear Planning 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 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 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

September 11, 2023

Dear Planning Commission,

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 18 months and have witnessed how diligently the CAC has worked to prepare a complete and concise document for your consideration. The Planning Commission requested that the CAC re-visit three components of the plan to make sure that they have been addressed for the betterment of the plan and the community. The CAC met on three different occasions to review these areas. Below are my thoughts on the outstanding issues at hand.

Airport Zone:

I am in support of the creation of a new Airport Zone within the Sub area Plan. The uses that will be allowed within this zone will meet the future needs of the community while melding with the requirements of Washdot which will help insure future airport funding opportunities. The existing uses within this zone are grandfathered incompatible uses so there is no impact on those existing uses.

Mill Property:

The Mill site is an extremely unique development opportunity for the Packwood Community's future. This 160 acre parcel presents an opportunity to satisfy the community's commercial and housing needs for years to come. We are fortunate that this property sold when it did as the new owners were able to be consulted to help create a set of zoning uses that satisfy their needs as well as the community's needs. I am in support of the zoning designations in the presented plan. I do want to note that I am empathetically in support of the crucial need to masterplan this property so that all of the aspects of a large scale development such as open space parks, pedestrian and bicycle systems and appropriate vehicular circulations systems can be integrated as a unit

Short Term Rentals:

Considerable discussion was had by the CAC regarding the short term rentals and the existing lack of long term affordable rentals. The CAC recognized the need for both rental types and refined the housing policies within the plan to ensure the control of short term housing while providing future opportunities for it as well. Phase 2, implementation regulations will be the directing requirements which will insure the execution/implementation of the policies. I encourage the planning commission to adopt these policies in the current plan.

Thank you,

E. Dennis Riebe

117 Robinwood Place

Packwood, Wa. 98361

Packwood Subarea Plan – Written Testimony

Sept 11, 2023

Dear Planning Commission,

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

Sincerely,

Chris Murphy

119 Alta Drive
Packwood, WA 98361

September 11, 2023

Valerie Neng & Ryan Southard
Little Owl Cabin
PO Box 603
Packwood WA 98361
val@littleowlcabin.com

Dear Commissioners,

We're local business owners of Little Owl Cabin, five short term vacation rentals, and full-time residents of Packwood. We serve on the Community Advisory Committee for the Packwood Subarea Plan and volunteer with Livable Packwood, a local non-profit organization whose mission is to increase affordable housing in Packwood.

We're writing to support the goals and policies proposed in the Packwood Subarea Plan, specifically the changes related to land use (Airport and Mill Property) and the short term rental (STR) policies, and urge you to adopt it.

Additionally, we'd like to submit the following comment on the updated STR policy to *"ensure an appropriate balance of residential housing and short term rentals to support people's ability to live in Packwood."*

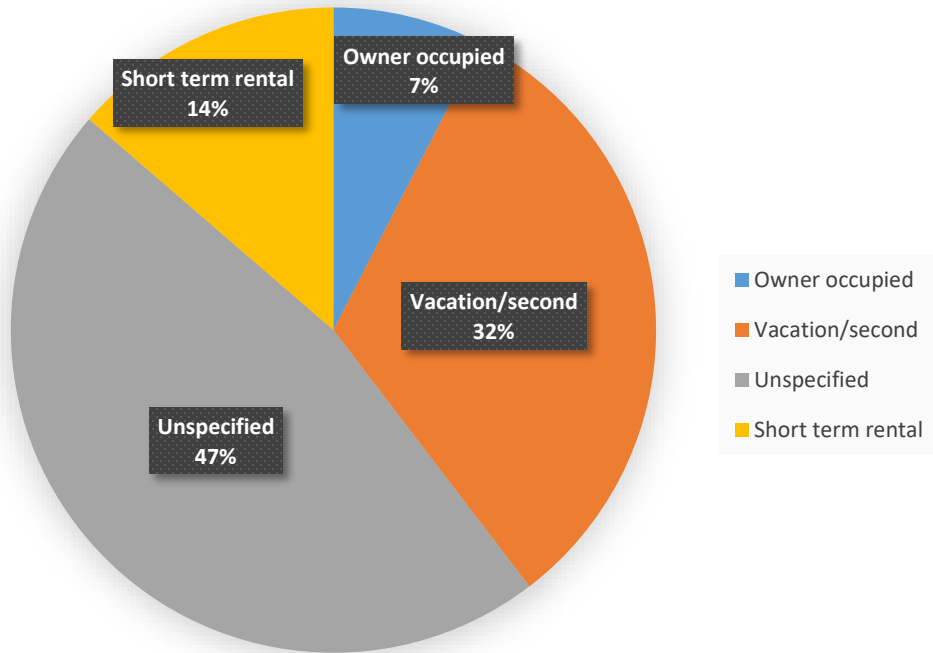
We fully support a balance of housing uses to encourage more long term rental opportunities. However, we believe the conversation must include the largest housing use in Packwood: **second or vacation homes.**

As the charts on the next page indicate, both the Packwood Subarea Plan and Livable Packwood's Housing Needs Assessment (presented to the Commission in August 2023) found that a significant number (33-40%) of housing units are currently being used as second or vacation homes. This means there are 2-3X more second or vacation homes than STRs. In contrast, STRs make up 14% of all housing units. Second or vacation homes are used occasionally or seasonally by their owners. Many sit vacant for weeks, months or even years at a time.

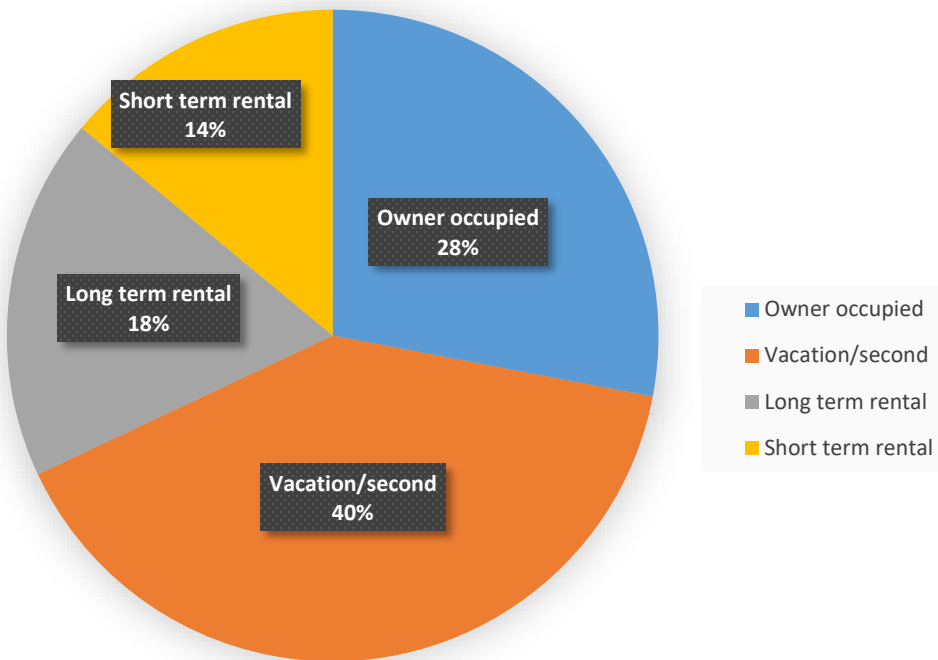
We urge you and our fellow Community Advisory Committee members to keep these findings in mind as we head into the next phase of developing zoning and development regulations.

Thank you for your consideration,
Valerie Neng & Ryan Southard

Housing Use By Type
Source: Packwood Subarea Plan



Housing Use By Type
Source: Packwood Housing Needs Assessment



Dear Planning Commission,

As a member of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and resident of Packwood, I am writing in support of the Packwood Subarea Plan which includes recent recommendations regarding the airport and mill property land uses and short term rentals.

The recommendations from the CAC are a result of the meetings organized and guided by Mindy Brooks as the primary planner from Lewis County. The CAC is comprised of individuals with various interests and professional backgrounds representing residents of Packwood, land owners and business owners. Hence, the recommendations are a result of the earlier work by the CAC and the diverse backgrounds represented, input from the Planning Commission and input provided by other community members who took the opportunity to review the previous versions of the plan.

Regarding the mill property land use, the CAC believes it is important to provide a mix of housing and business opportunities with an emphasis on affordable housing. With Packwood's current and projected growth, there are needs to support a variety of interests at the mill site as one of the last remaining large parcels yet to be redeveloped within the subarea boundary.

The land use recommendations for the airport provide protections to the facility that will ensure the airport remains a viable asset to the community. Perhaps more importantly, it considers how aviation is likely to change over the next 20 years providing additional access and business opportunities to the community and surrounding areas.

Additionally, the CAC believes it is important for the county to consider the impacts from short term rentals (STRs) within the Packwood area. STRs support local business and tourism opportunities but can place a strain on affordable housing while also impacting the quality of life for full time residents. As such, I believe it is important to develop a regulatory framework in order to strike a balance between STRs and affordable housing.

Overall, I recommend the Planning Commission approve the plan with consideration for what Packwood will need in the near term and some 20 years into the future. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
David Fleckenstein
CAC Member and Packwood Resident