

# Planning Commission Workshop



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## STAFF REPORT

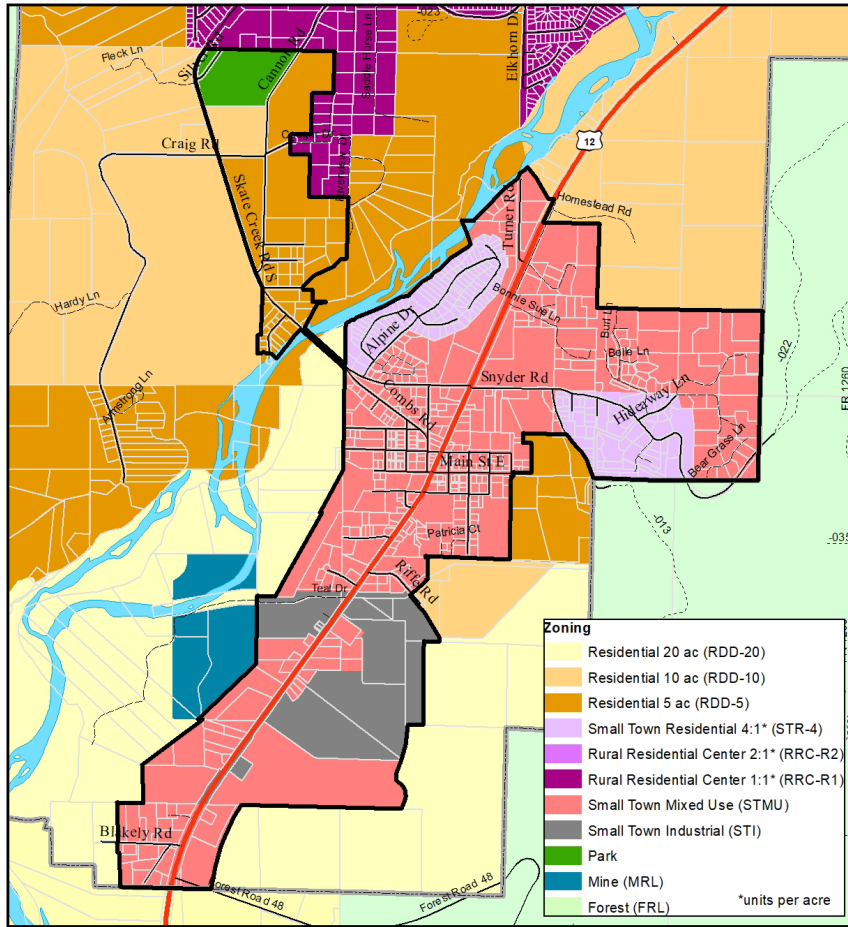
## Packwood UGA & Zoning

**Date:** February 14, 2025  
**Staff:** Mindy Brooks, Sr. Long Range Planner  
**Exhibits:** A – Draft UGA Map  
B – Draft Zoning Map

## BACKGROUND

Between 2022 and 2024, the Packwood Community Advisory Committee (CAC) met 18 times to create the [Packwood Subarea Plan](#), which includes a 20-year vision, goals, policies and a future land use designations map. The plan was adopted via Ordinance 1350 in January 2024. The CAC then began meeting to determine the tools to implement the plan's goals and policies. The CAC has met five times during Phase 2 and will meet a final time on February 27. Following completion of the CAC's recommendations, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposed Urban Growth Area boundary (UGA) and associated zoning designations, followed by a separate public hearing on the development regulations that implement the zoning. This is all part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and will be completed in September 2025.

Today, Packwood is a Type 1 Limited Area of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRD) and is zoned Small Town Mixed Use (STMU) and Small Town Industrial (STI) (Map 1). The biggest change adopted with the Packwood Subarea Plan was the future land uses map (Map 2). The SMTU development regulations allow a wide mixed of uses including residential, grocery store, restaurants, breweries, hotels, motels, shops, gas stations, medical, kennels, event centers, schools, mini-storage, and other uses (please see [17.42 Table 2 LCC](#) for a complete list of allowed uses). The CAC and wider community, through multiple engagement events, expressed interest in not allowing all of those uses anywhere in the STMU zone and instead to consolidate the most intense uses near Highway 12, in the downtown core and at the historic Packwood Lumber Mill site, now called Commerce Meadows. The CAC and community expressed interest in keeping the areas in the STMU further from the main transportation corridors as lower density residential and to not allow restaurants, hotels and other intense commercial uses in those areas. The end results is the future land uses map that focusses development and preserves lower density residential areas.



**Packwood Subarea Plan**

Existing Zoning

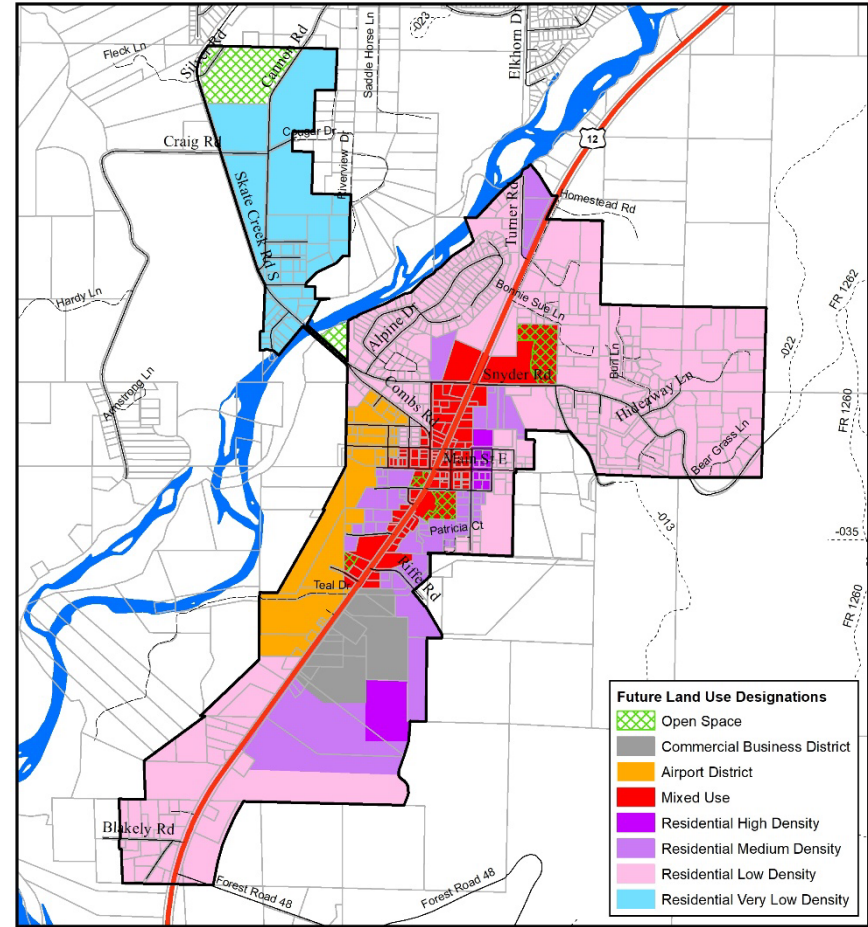
- Study Area
- Subarea Boundary
- Highway 12
- Roads
- Parcels

Updated 11/09/23  
 Planning Division, Community Development

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 Miles



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**The Packwood Plan**

Future Land Use Map

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

Updated 01/02/2024  
 Planning Division, Community Development

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 Miles



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Map 1: Packwood Existing Zoning Designations

Map 2: Packwood Future Land Uses Map

In addition to the future land uses map, the CAC recommended guidance regarding how development regulations that should implement the map. The guidance is found on page 23 of the Packwood Subarea Plan and are summarized below. Again, these were adopted by Ordinance 1350 and Phase 2 is intended to implement the future land uses map and guidance.

**Residential Very Low Density** – This area should retain its current development patterns, zoning designations and development regulations. In the future, should additional areas for development be needed to accommodate population growth, this is the next location to study.

**Residential Low Density** – The focus of these areas is traditional single family residential uses at 4-6 units per acre. Duplexes and ADUs should be encouraged to increase affordable housing options. Clustered tiny home villages should also be allowed. Institutional uses (e.g., churches, libraries, schools) and home-based commercial uses should be allowed. Lot sizes should range from 7,500 to 12,500 sq. ft.

**Residential Medium Density** – Medium density residential uses, 6-10 units per acre, should be located in these areas. Rowhouses, fourplexes, triplexes, duplexes and ADUs, as well as tiny home villages should be allowed. Single family residential uses should also be allowed. Institutional uses (e.g., churches, libraries, schools) and home-based commercial uses should be allowed. Lot sizes should range from 5,000 to 7,500 sq. ft.

**Residential High Density** – High density residential uses, 10-16 units per acre, should be located near Downtown Packwood and the Commercial Business District. Apartments and condos should be in a courtyard style around a common open space. Row houses, fourplexes, triplexes and duplexes should be encouraged. Dormitories or hostels should also be encouraged. Commercial uses should be allowed. Building heights should be capped to preserve views of Mount Rainier, Tatoosh Wilderness and Goat Rocks Wilderness.

**Mixed Use** – The focus of these areas is small scale (<10,000 sq. ft.) commercial and highest density residential uses, 18-30 units per acre. Lots facing Highway 12 should include ground floor commercial or office space and second story apartments or condos, with entrances facing Highway 12 and surface parking placed behind buildings to increase pedestrian access. Connectivity and pedestrian safety should be prioritized. Space between buildings is encouraged and building heights capped to preserve small town feel and views of Mount Rainier, Tatoosh Wilderness and Goat Rocks Wilderness. New residential single family development should be discouraged.

**Commercial Business District** – The focus of these areas is commercial, office space and small scale manufacturing uses. Larger commercial buildings, 10,000 to 20,000 sq. ft., may be located here. Highest density residential uses, 18-30 units per acre, should be allowed if buffered from

manufacturing uses. Connectivity and pedestrian access should be prioritized. New residential single family development should be discouraged.

**Airport District** – This area includes the Packwood Airport and supporting lands. The focus is commercial and small scale manufacturing. Larger commercial buildings, 10,000 to 20,000 sq. ft., may be located here. Very low density single family residential uses should be allowed on larger lots. Duplexes, ADUs and multifamily residential should be prohibited. Lots sizes should be one (1) acre or larger in size.

**Open Space** – The focus of these areas is recreation for the general public. Areas should be programmed for community gathering and outdoor play. Play structures, sports fields and courts, picnic tables, benches, gazebos and walking trails are encouraged. Streams, wetlands, trees and native vegetation should be protected and enhanced.

In addition to the future land uses map and guidance, the CAC recommended that the County adopt design standards to create a cohesive look to new development. The adopted subarea plan included design guidelines to describe this intent:

*"In general, to meet the guidelines, buildings should be no taller than two stories, or 35 feet, and have pitched or slant/shed roofs. Exterior facades facing Highway 12, Main Street or Willame Street should make extensive use of natural wood and stone, or synthetic materials that resemble wood or stone, including exposed exterior support beams. The color palette for siding, if not natural wood/stone color, should be brown, green or gray hues that match the natural landscape. The intent of these guidelines is to ensure that new buildings fit within the "small town" look of Packwood and are cohesive with the existing historic buildings. The intent is not to have buildings match; each building is encouraged to be unique with a generally cohesive look."*

*"To further create a cohesive look and design in Downtown Packwood, guidelines should also be applied to new signs on properties fronting Highway 12. New signs should resemble the existing historic signs in Packwood. The signs should be made of natural wood, or synthetic material that resembles a natural wood, and have exterior illumination. New plastic signs with interior illumination should be discouraged fronting Highway 12."*

Examples were provided in the adopted subarea plan of existing buildings and signs that incorporate the desired design features.





Historic Hotel Packwood (source: packwoodwa.com)



Cowlitz River Lodge (source: tripadvisor.com)



## **PROPOSAL SUMMARY**

Phase 2 of the Packwood Subarea Plan results in tools to implement the Packwood Subarea Plan. Only those tools that are regulatory and require adoption by the Board of County Commissioners are included in this staff report. Other tools include coordination with services providers and other agencies and investments in infrastructure.

### **Urban Growth Area**

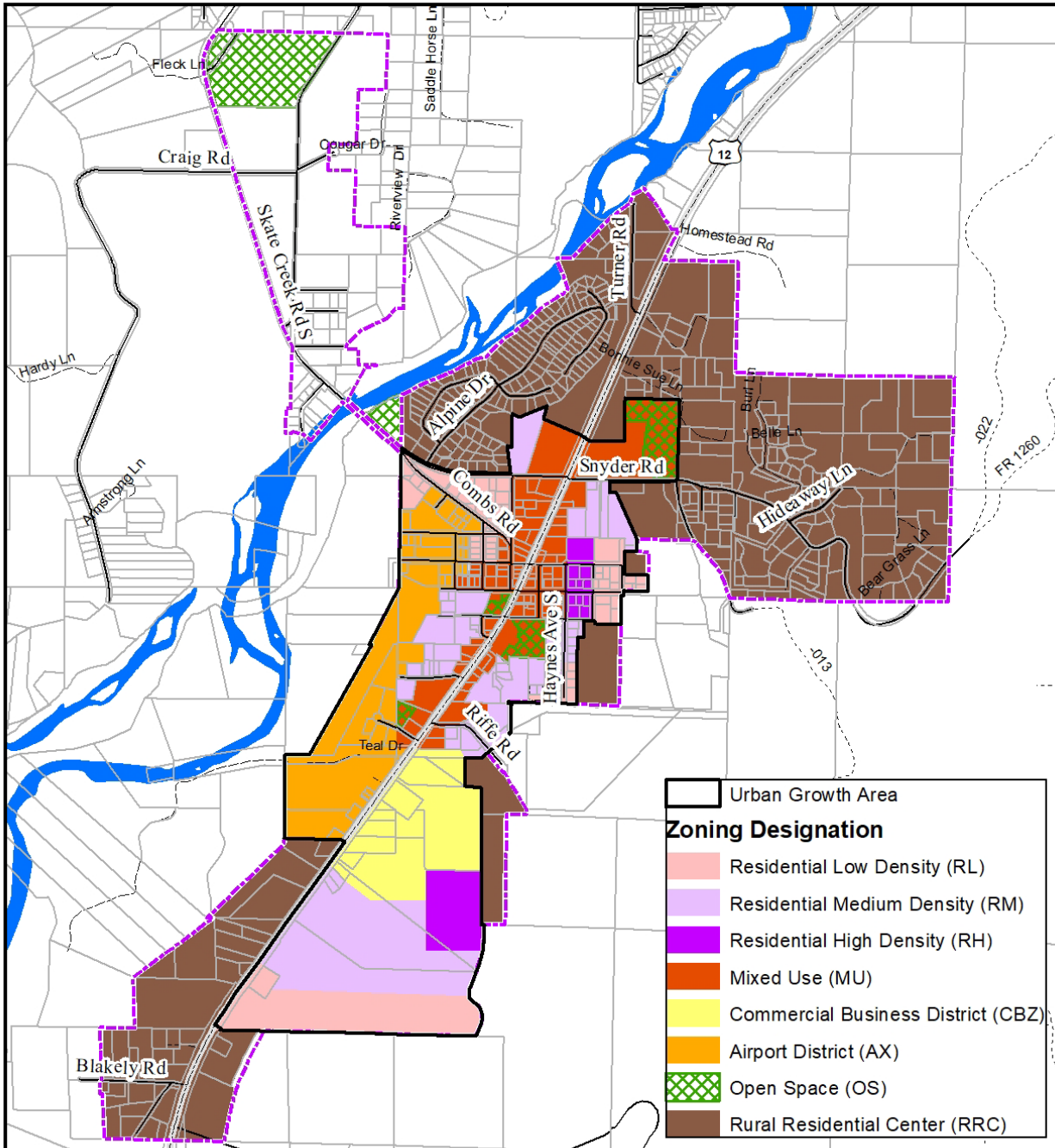
Packwood is currently a Type I LAMIRDs and as such the development regulations must confirm to the applicable Revised Code of Washington (RCWs). The most notable is that new development and redevelopment must meet the existing rural character (RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d) and WAC 365-196-425(6)(c)(i)(A)). Rural character for LAMIRDs is defined as the development types and patterns that existed when the LAMIRD was designated, which was 1995 for Lewis County. The Packwood Subarea Plan includes goals and policies, as well as future land use designations, for high density residential development (rowhouses, small apartment complexes) which are not consistent with the existing rural character of Packwood. Therefore, new development regulations that allow that type of residential development would not be allowed with the Type I LAMIRD designation.

In addition, the Packwood Subarea Plan includes goals and policies for the Commercial Business District to allow new retail shops that are up to 20,000 square feet in size. However, the Type 1 LAMIRD regulations limit the size of new retail shops to 10,000 square feet (RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d)(C)).

Removing the LAMIRD designation and applying a UGA to a portion of the subarea plan removes these two limitations. UGAs are intended for a variety of residential uses from a minimum density of 4 dwelling units per acre (typical single family housing) to high density apartments. (It is up to the local jurisdiction to determine the mix of residential densities.) UGAs are also intended for more intense retail uses such as grocery stores.

The size of the UGA is predicated on urban services – water and sewer. One requirement of UGA is that over a 20-year period, as the land is built out, the development must be served by municipal water and sewer. The entire subarea plan is already within the Lewis County Water/Sewer District boundary for water services. Therefore, the UGA boundary is set based on the 20-year service area for sewer services. The Packwood Sewer Project is currently at 60% engineering design and is scheduled to begin construction in 2026. Again, the UGA does not need full service as the time of designation; there only needs to be a plan for providing services over the next 20-years.

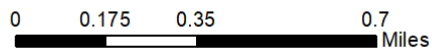
Without removing the LAMIRD designation and applying a UGA, the areas shown as Residential High on the future land use map cannot be implemented as adopted Packwood Subarea Plan. In addition, the size threshold adopted for the Commercial Business District shown on the future land use map also cannot be implemented. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the CAC to apply a UGA boundary as shown in Map 3.



**Packwood Subarea Plan  
Phase 2  
DRAFT  
Zoning Designations**

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

Updated 02/14/2025  
Planning Division, Community Development



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Map 3: Packwood Urban Growth Area & Zoning Designations



## **Zoning**

The UGA alone has no regulations associated with it. The UGA does have requirements, such as minimum residential density and urban services (discussed above), but in order to fully implement the adopted future land uses map, the County must apply zoning designations and development regulations.

The recommended zoning designations exactly match the adopted future land uses map designations within the UGA (Map 3). All areas outside of the UGA are recommended to change from STMU to Rural Residential Center (RRC). The RRC is a zone that implements the Type I LAMIRD designation; however, unlike STMU that allows commercial uses, RRC only allows home-based business and does not allow restaurants, convenience stores, hotels, etc. The RRC meets the adopted future land uses map and guidance.

Zoning designations are implemented by development regulations. Development regulations apply to *new* development. Existing development is allowed to persist, be maintained and be replaced within its current footprint. For example, if there is a house in an area that will be zoned for commercial uses and where new houses would no longer be allowed, the existing house can stay, be maintained and be replaced.

The development regulations are still being drafted by the CAC and County staff. The regulations are guided by the Packwood Subarea Plan goals, policies and maps. Please see the adoption process below for an explanation of how all parts of Phase 2 are adopted and when the new development regulations will become effective.

## **ADOPTION PROCESS**

### **Step 1 – Adopt UGA & Zoning**

The UGA and zoning designations will be adopted together by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). However, until the development regulations are adopted and implemented, the existing zoning of STMU and STI and the associated development regulations remain in effect.

#### Planning Commission

The Lewis County Planning Commission will hold a workshop on the Packwood UGA & Zoning on February 25 at 6:00pm at the Lewis County Community Development building, 125 NW Chehalis Avenue, and via Zoom. At the workshop staff will present the recommendations and the Commissioner will ask questions. The public is invited to attend but no testimony is taken.

On April 8 at 6:00pm, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to receive public testimony on the Packwood UGA & Zoning. The hearing will take place at the Packwood Community Hall and via Zoom. Following close of the hearing, the Planning Commission will vote to recommend, or not, the UGA and zoning designations. Note, the hour before the hearing, there will be an open house at the Community Hall for the public to meet with the CAC and staff to ask questions.



## BOCC

The BOCC will hold workshops on the Packwood UGA & Zoning on May 28 (*tentative*) and June 11 (*tentative*) at the Lewis County Historic Courthouse, 351 NW North Street, Chehalis. Similar to Planning Commission, staff will present the recommendations, and the Commissioners will ask questions. The public is invited to attend but no testimony is taken.

The public hearing is tentatively scheduled for June 17 and/or June 24, also at the Lewis County Historic Courthouse. Exact dates and times will be announced through a formal Notice of Hearing, published in the local newspaper and on the [BOCC webpage](#). The public will be invited to provide testimony. Following close of the hearing, the BOCC will deliberate and vote on the Packwood UGA & Zoning.

## **Step 2 – Adopt Development Regulations**

The development regulations that implement the zoning designations will be adopted along with all amendments proposed to the Lewis County Code to implement the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The draft regulations will be available for review before BOCC adopts the UGA and zoning.

## Planning Commission

The Lewis County Planning Commission will hold a workshop on the Packwood development regulations on May 27 at 6:00pm at the Lewis County Community Development building, 125 NW Chehalis Avenue, and via Zoom. At the workshop staff present the recommendations and the Commissioner will ask questions. The public is invited to attend but no testimony is taken.

On June 24 at 6:00pm, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to receive public testimony on the Lewis County Code amendments, including the Packwood development regulations. The workshop will be held at the Lewis County Community Development building. The public will be invited to provide testimony on all amendments to the Lewis County Code.

## BOCC

The BOCC will hold workshops on the Lewis County Code amendments, including the Packwood development regulations, on July 9 (*tentative*) and July 23 (*tentative*) at the Lewis County Historic Courthouse, 351 NW North Street, Chehalis. Similar to Planning Commission, staff will present the recommendations and the Commissioners will ask questions. The public is invited to attend but no testimony is taken.

The public hearing is tentatively scheduled for August 5 and/or 12, also at the Lewis County Historic Courthouse. Exact dates and times will be announced through a formal Notice of Hearing, published in the local newspaper and on the [BOCC webpage](#). The public will be invited to provide testimony. Following close of the hearing, the BOCC will deliberate and vote on the Lewis County Code amendments, including Packwood development regulations.

## **Step 3 – Implementation**

As part of adopting the UGA, zoning and development regulations, the BOCC will set an implementation date. That date will follow the final adoption of the development regulations. Until implementation, the existing zoning (STMU and STI) and development regulations remain in effect.