

# **DRAFT** PACKWOOD SUBAREA PLAN – PHASE 1





Public Review Draft October 17, 2022

### **DRAFT 20-Year Vision**

Packwood is a vibrant small town that embraces history, encourages unique local businesses, provides a diversity of affordable housing options, supports existing as well as new residents, preserves the natural environment, encourages tourism and promotes family-oriented community events.

Public Review Draft October 17, 2022

### **Acknowledgments**

This plan is the culmination of two years of work with the community of Packwood. Many thanks to the Community Advisory Committee, residents, business owners and interested citizens who filled out surveys, attended dozens of community meetings, agreed to be interviewed and invited staff to their homes and businesses to provide input on the plan.

### **Lewis County Project Team**

Mindy Brooks, Project Manager, Community Development
Lee Napier, Director, Community Development
Eric Eisenberg, Housing & Infrastructure Specialist
Preston Pinkston, Planner, Community Development
Megan Sathre, Office Assistant Senior, Community Development

#### **Technical Assistance**

Todd Chaput, Program Manager, Economic Alliance of Lewis County
Betsy Dillin, Senior Utility Engineer, Lewis County
Paul Farris, Superintendent, White Pass School District
Dave Garoutte, White Pass Country Museum
Kathleen Goyette, Director of Marketing, White Pass Ski Area
Timothy J. Haderly, Principal Scientist/Owner, Loowit Consulting Group, LLC
Nikia Hernandez, (former) District Ranger, Gifford Pinchot National Forest
Terry Jouper, Elections Supervisor, Lewis County Auditor Office
Mike Kroll, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning
Organization

Rick McClure, Archaeologist, US Forest Services (retired)
Connie Riker, Director of Parks and Recreation, Lewis County
John Roe, Airport System Manager, Lewis County
Gene Seiber, Packwood Visitor Center
Terry Wildy, Chief of Interpretation, Education and Volunteers, Mount Rainier National Park

Ron Wilson, Lewis County Water Sewer District 3
Barbara Wright, Fire Department District 10

### **Community Advisory Committee**

Julie Anderson Carole McIntire Pat Anderson **Briston Meidinger** Greg Arkle Fred Morton Ben Boylan Marilly Morton Amber Brown Nick Neville Karl Coleman Val Neng Tracy Croshaw Eric Oien Nick Deonigi Gina Owen Theresa Dusek Kim Pawlawski Andrea Erickson Dennis Riebe Teresa Fenn Rye Ryan David Fleckenstein Bill Serrahn Linda Haglund Eric Sniezak Luke Jenkins Jill Sousa Ryan Southard Hanna Jeter **Elizabeth Squires** Maree Lerchen Cathy Lilienthal John Squires

Stefan Lofgren

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2019 Downtown Packwood

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### 1: INTRODUCTION

The Packwood Subarea Plan meets the Growth Management Act rules set forth in RCW 36.70A.080, as well as the adopted Countywide Planning Policies. The Packwood Plan is being completed in two phases. Phase 1 is the vision, goals and policies, including a Future Land Use Map. Phase 2 are amendments to zoning designation and development regulations that will implement Phase 1. Phase 1 will be completed in 2023 and Phase 2 in 2025. Map 1 shows the subarea boundary and Map 2 shows the extent of Downtown Packwood.

The subarea plan is a long range vision, goals and policies that will guide Packwood's growth and development over the next 20 years. Phase 1 of the Packwood Plan was developed in collaboration with the community and guided by a 35-member Community Advisory Committee who met monthly during 2022. Additional community input was gathered through surveys, interviews and community meetings. Technical experts were consulted at key moments during the creation of the plan to coordinate on specific issues such as the capacity of Lewis County Water Sewer District #3 to serve new development.

The Packwood Plan, Phase 1, includes goals and policies that address the following topics:

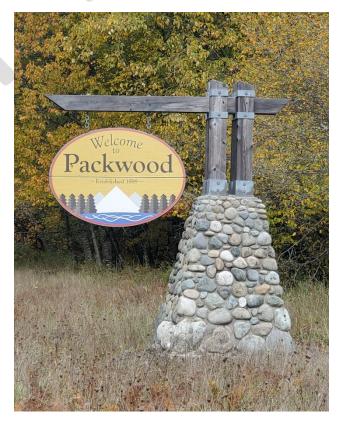
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- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Transportation
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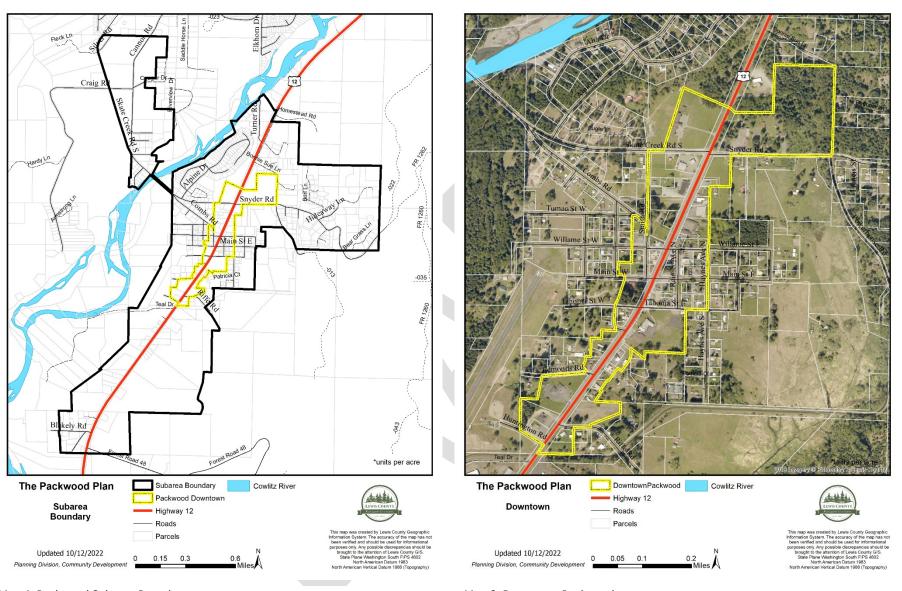
A number of supporting documents were developed. The documents are attachments to The Packwood Plan, but do not amend the Lewis County Comprehensive Plan. The supporting documents are:

Attachment A: Packwood Subarea Plan Public Participation Results (online)

Attachment B: Packwood Existing Conditions Report (online)

Attachment D: Findings of Fact (under development)





Map 1: Packwood Subarea Boundary

Map 2: Downtown Packwood

### Why create a subarea plan for Packwood?

Between 1969 and 1976, as a result of the National Environmental Protection Act and the National Forest Management Act, forest management practices shifted the focus of the area from timber production to ecosystem management. The decline in harvest, increased mill mechanization, and foreign competition ultimately played a role in the closure of the Packwood Lumber Mill in November 1998. The Packwood community lost 220 jobs at the mill and resulted in the out-migration of a large number of younger working families. By the year 2000, the year-round population of the Packwood community was estimated at about 645 people; approximately half of the houses in the community were converted to either seasonal rentals or vacation homes. With the loss of population came the closure of the Packwood Elementary School, the pharmacy, and two restaurants. The Packwood Ranger Station permanently closed in 2003. The estimated number of full time residents in 2010 was down to 342.

Since the 2010's Packwood has seen an increase in the tourism industry. Between 2019 and 2022 the Packwood Visitor Center saw a fourfold increase in attendance from 1,903 visitors to an estimated 8,000 (based on actual attendance of 6,530 as of September 6, 2022). Representatives of the Visitor Center believe only 1% of tourist come to the center, meaning the annual visitorship in Packwood may exceed 800,000 people. Mount Rainier National Park tracks traffic counts northbound on Highway 123, located 7 miles from Packwood. In 2019, there were 98,037 trips, increasing to 114,334 trips in 2021. This increase in tourism has resulted in significant traffic congestion and safety concerns on Highway 12 in Packwood.

Tourism has bolstered the economy of Packwood; however, at the same time property values have increased significantly. Between 2012 and 2022, Packwood saw a 300% increase in the sale price of houses. By 2022, there were 216 short term rentals. The lack of affordable housing has a significant impact on residents and on businesses. Nikia Hernandez, former Cowlitz Valley Ranger, said "We typically try to hire 25-30 seasonal employees every summer. If we cannot find candidates who live within a commuting distance it is quite common for applicants to turn down a position if there is no affordable housing available to them. This has become more and more of an issue over the years and it is directly affecting our ability to fill positions." Kathleen Goyette, White Pass Ski Area, said "lack of affordable rental properties available seasonally is of great concern to us and to our current and prospective employees."

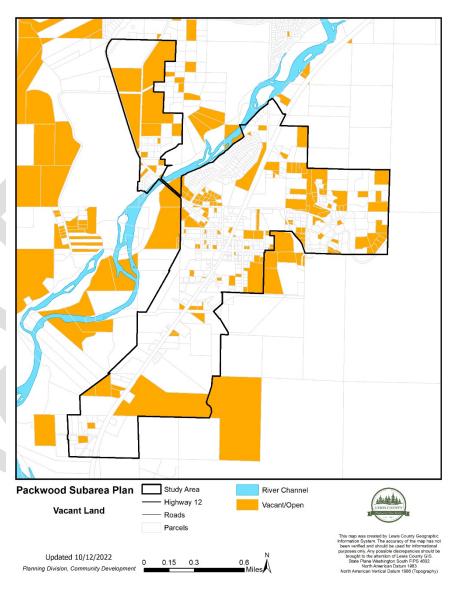


White Pass Ski Resort

The existing zoning in the subarea, Small Town Mixed Use, allows many new uses and development including: single family residential, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, sporting goods stores, restaurants, grocery stores, fuel stations, hotels/motels, RV parks, small event centers and other small businesses, as well as schools, doctor's office, churches, etc. With sewer, anticipated in 2026, multifamily residential would also be allowed in portions of downtown. There are 195 acres of vacant land in the subarea boundary that are currently zoned Small Town Mixed Use and could be developed with the above listed uses, bringing many more people and businesses to town (Map 3).

The capacity for future development and the significant increase in tourism puts pressure on the transportation system. Highway 12 in Packwood is a barrier to connectivity. Speed limits leading to Huntington Road in the south and Turner Road in the north are 55 mph and the speed limit within the study area is 35 mph. There are traffic calming facilities (e.g., rumble strips, stop signs, roundabouts) on Highway 12 in the study area. There is no designated parking or parking signs. There are no designated walking or bike paths. There is no accessibility for people who are not fully able-bodied. There is very limited lighting. The results of all of these factors are that people cannot easily and safely access both sides of the highway.

The intent of the subarea plan is to guide and manage growth and development over the next 20-years. The plan does not drive development, it says how development should happen. The plan creates a compass that helps direct where the highest density of housing should go, what kind of housing is needed for residents and employees, where most commercial uses and businesses should go, what kind of uses are needed or not desired, how to improve the transportation system and other infrastructure as growth occurs.



Map 3: Vacant Lands

# **Public Engagement**

The subarea plan visions, goals and policies are developed by the community of Packwood through public engagement that has included a 32-member Community Advisory Committee that met monthly from January through December 2022, four public forums on housing-related topics, three community surveys provided online and at the Packwood Timberland Library, interviews with eleven businesses and multiple other community meetings and open house events. The full results of public engagement are found in Attachment A: Packwood Subarea Plan Public Participation Results. (*Note – Future engagement will include additional community meetings, as well as a public hearings process that allows for public comment to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners.*)



Figure Packwood Housing Forum on Short Term Rentals



Info Table at the 2021 Holiday Craft Fair

### 2: PACKWOOD HISTORY

Native American use of the Packwood area has been documented through a number of archaeological investigations. Demonstrated use of the study area was found as early as 9,000 to 10,000 years ago (Mack et. al, 2010). Early occupants of the upper Cowlitz River Valley were highly mobile foraging people who likely did not build permanent shelters or settlements in the area. Approximately 2,500 to 4,000 years ago adaptations shifted toward greater reliance on mass harvest and storage of key resources, particularly anadromous fish. At the same time, there was an increase in the use of more sedentary residences and the establishment of village settlements within the Cowlitz River Valley. The valley was abundant in wolverine, marmot, lynx, beaver, bear, deer and other furbearing animals. The Cowlitz River was the upper spawning area for coho, Chinook salmon, steelhead, grayling (mountain whitefish) and cutthroat trout. Huckleberries, three varieties, were an abundant food source, along with salal, wild strawberries, red elderberries, thimbleberries, salmonberries, trailing blackberries and Oregon grapes. Camas, lily bulbs, wild celery, wood sorrel and wild onion were also important food sources. Collectively these are known as the "first foods."

Add historic photo

In the early 1800's, the area was home to a band of Táytnapam known to settlers as "Poniah's band" after the name of the village headman. The village at Packwood was called *Chawachas* (Smith, 2006) and following Ichishkiin language conventions, the Táytnapam band would have called themselves the *Chawachas-łáma*. Táytnapam descendants are today members of both the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.

The Cowlitz River Valley, from Packwood to Randle, was known by European settlers as "the Big Bottom," shortened from Big Bullrush Bottom in reference to the bullrushes that grew along the river. In 1858-59, James Longmire and William Packwood led an expedition to find a low pass to connect the Puget Sound with the Oregon Trail. They were led by guides from the Nisqually Tribe. On an exploration in 1861, they descended Skate Creek with government engineer W.W. DeLacy and five Nisqually Indian packers and found a native village on the banks of the Cowlitz River (*Pioneer and Democrat,* 1861). Although a pass was not established, significant coal beds were found south and east of the Tatoosh Mountain Range that piqued further exploration.

In 1914, the U.S. government opened more than 23,000 acres of Rainier National Forest for settlement. The area included what today is the housing developments around Packwood such as Goat Rocks, High Valley Park, Packwood Heights, Skate Creek Terrace, Skyline and Timberline Village. Many new settlers came into the area at that time. It was not until the 1930s, when a lumber sawmill was opened in Packwood, that commercial logging began to develop in the area and there was a shift in the County's economic emphasis toward forest products, including full-time local jobs. The first ranger station in the Packwood area was established in 1908, in a cabin on the former Ed Dixon homestead (Cannon Road area). In 1928, the U.S. Forest Service leased property and structures were built in 1928 and 1929 for the Packwood Ranger Station.

In 1953, White Pass Ski Area was opened and became an important recreational draw to the Packwood area. In 1964, the Packwood Lake Hydroelectric Project was built and included a drop structure with a pipeline to transmit water to a power generating facility in Packwood.

Add historic photo

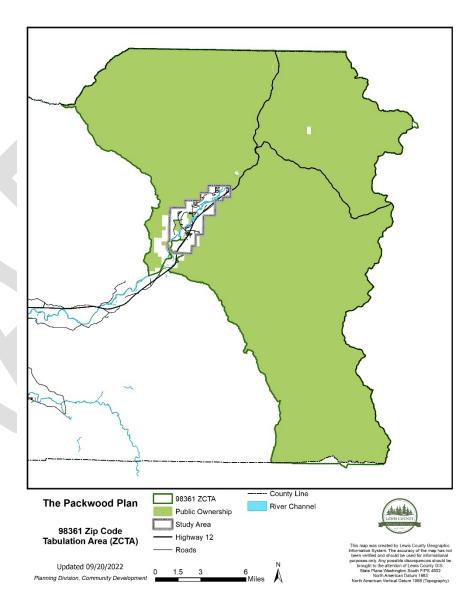
### 3: EXISTING CONDITIONS

### **Population**

Packwood is not an incorporated city and therefore does not have an allocated population.

The 2020 census documented 1,073 people who reside permanently within the standardized census zip code tabulation areas (ZCTA) 98361 boundary (Map 4). The 98361 ZCTA boundary includes the Packwood study area and the surrounding national forests, parks and wildlife areas (Map 3). It is assumed there are no full time residents living in the national public lands; therefore, the population is based almost entirely within the Packwood study area.

Between 2010 and 2020 the population of unincorporated Lewis County grew by 10%. Countywide growth appears to have increased rapidly in pace after 2020. Development permits issued for residential development (single family, manufactured homes and accessory dwelling units) were 292 in 2019 and 370 in 2022, a 27% growth rate. Office of Financial Management records show that Packwood and immediately adjacent rural areas have consistently ranked highly in development in Lewis County over more than ten years, behind the largest urban areas around Centralia and Chehalis, but outstripping smaller incorporated areas like Mossyrock and Winlock or the urban growth area in Onalaska. It is anticipated that the growth rate for Packwood 2022 through 2030 will remain high at 25% and will then level off to 10% growth between 2030 and 2040. Applying those growth projections to the 2020 population, the forecasted 2040 fulltime residential population within the Packwood ZCTA boundary is 1,250 people.



Map 4: 98361 ZCTA Boundary and Public Ownership

### **Existing Zoning & Land Use**

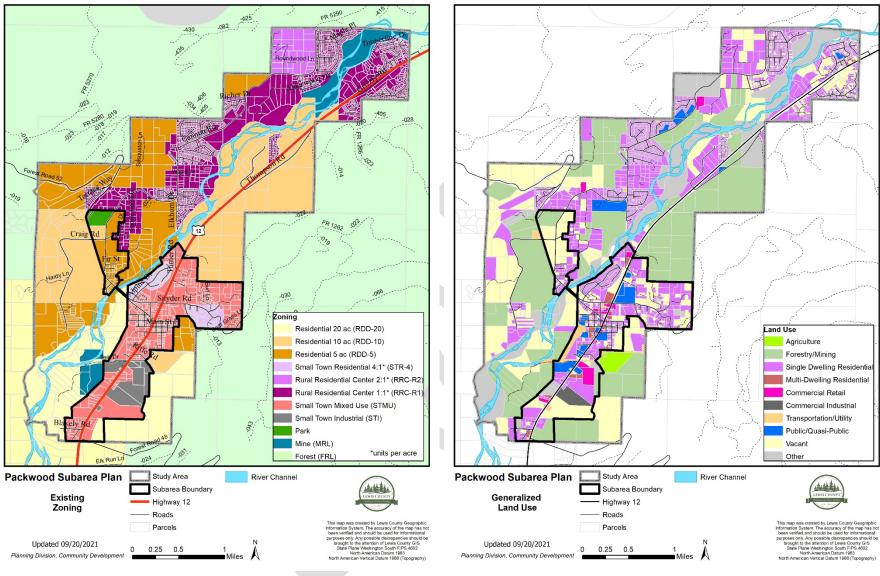
The existing conditions were evaluated for an area larger than the proposed subarea plan boundary. The study area included all of the "limited areas of more intense rural development" (LAMIRDs) in the Packwood vicinity, as shown in Map 5. There are no agricultural resource lands or forest resource lands within the study area. Lewis County Code (LCC) Chapter 17.42 provides the list of allowed uses in each zone. Existing land uses within the study area are shown in Map 6. It is important to understand that existing uses may not match the allowed use in LCC 17.42 because some existing uses predate the zoning code regulations. Those uses are allowed to persist in their current development footprint and are referred to as a "legal nonconforming use."

In the study area there are nine Type I LAMIRDS, divided into five use types, shown in Table 1. Type I LAMIRDs have boundaries that were adopted based on development patterns in 1995 and those boundaries cannot change unless an error was made in the original mapping. However, new development including land divisions and redevelopment within the LAMIRD boundaries are allowed. There are 360 vacant parcels in the LAMIRDs, equaling 459.5 acres, which can be developed with residential or commercial uses. This means there is significant capacity for new growth and development based on the existing zoning designations and development regulations.

Table 1: Packwood LAMIRDs

Zone	Title	Allowed Density	Parcel Count	Total Acres	Vacant Parcels	Vacant Acres
RRC-R1	Rural Residential Center 1	1 unit / 1 acre	1,660	1,143	213	177
RRC-R2	Rural Residential Center 2	1 unit / 2 acre	31	158	9	53
STR-4	Small Town Residential 4	4 units / 1 acre	193	134	25	33
STMU	Small Town Mixed Use	N/A	423	704	111	195
STI	Small Town Industrial	N/A	16	122	2	1.5

The Packwood Subarea Plan boundary, shown in Map 5, includes all of the small town mixed use (STMU) zoned areas. STMU does not have a minimum allowed density. Minimum lot size relies on the building code. If there are both public water and sewer, then the minimum lot size is 6,000 square feet. However, that does not clarify the density of development that is allowed on each site. Allowed uses in STMU zone include single family residential, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, sporting goods stores, restaurants, grocery stores, fuel stations, hotels/motels, RV parks, small event centers and other small businesses, as well as schools, doctor's office, churches, etc. With sewer, multifamily residential would also be allowed. There are 195 acres of vacant land in the subarea boundary that is currently zoned for STMU and could be developed with the above listed uses.



Map 5: Existing Zoning Designations

Map 6: Existing Generalized Land Use

### **Public Facilities**

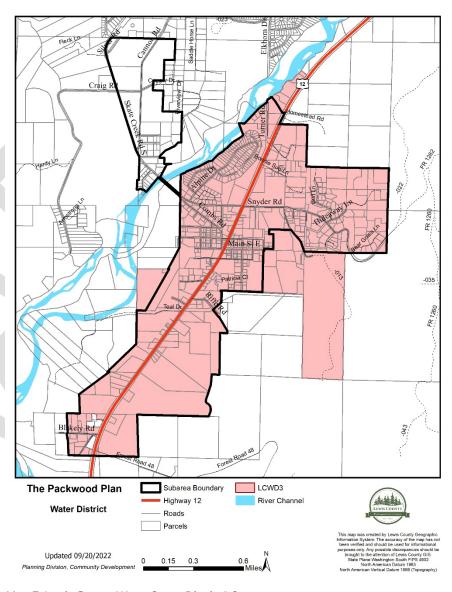
#### Water

Packwood has two community wells drawing from an aquifer that is classified as unconfined and semi-confined and serves approximately 360 individual connections. These wells can accommodate 135 more connections before there would need to be an upgrade to the system. The system, including the wells, is owned and operated by Lewis County Water Sewer District 3 (LCWSD3). Map 7 shows the water district boundary.

It is believed that the aquifer is an underground river which runs parallel to the Cowlitz River. The wells are established at 75 ft. depth. The water from the wells is pumped to a reservoir located up Snyder Road and then gravity fed back down to the individual connections. Some hookups are fed on the way up to the reservoir. If the threshold of connections is reached, LCWSD3 will likely need to add another reservoir and possibly add an additional well. Monitoring of the wells has never detected any fluctuation in the level of the aquifer, even during drought events. The water is tested regularly and has never required purification treatment. Outside of LCWSD3, properties are served by private wells.

#### Wastewater

All existing development in Packwood is currently served by private onsite septic systems. Most of the systems are conventional gravity flow septic tanks and drain fields. A large number of inadequate septic systems in the community of Packwood pose a health threat to the aquifers that provide domestic water for the area. Bacteria, virus and nitrate contaminates from these systems can cause serious health problems.



Map 7: Lewis County Water Sewer District# 3

Most of the soils in the area are highly permeable, including large areas of "Type 1A" gravelly soils. Soil Type 1A is considered extremely coarse and gravelly, resulting in a high level of permeability. Since this type of soil is so permeable it provides a minimal amount of soil treatment. The Packwood downtown area (Map 2) includes a large amount of wastewater discharged to the ground over a small area. Many of the existing onsite systems in the downtown core were installed before 1991, when the Lewis County Public Health and Social Services, Environmental Health Division, began to specify that the Type 1A soils in the downtown core are too restrictive for installations of septic systems because they fail to provide adequate treatment of sewage effluent prior to the discharge to groundwater.

In August 2022, Lewis County Public Works was provided an appropriation by the Washington State Legislature for design and construction of a public sewer system that will serve a portion of the Packwood Subarea although the exact service area was undecided at the time of plan adoption. It is anticipated that construction of the municipal sewer treatment system will be completed in 2026 and will be operated by the LCWSD3.

#### **Stormwater**

As Packwood is unincorporated, jurisdiction for stormwater regulation falls under LCC 15.45. Lewis County ensures compliance with LCC 15.45 through a permitting process, where regulated development proposals, such as subdivisions or new and re-development, are reviewed to determine if the requirements are met. Maintenance of stormwater facilities, such as detention ponds, are the responsibility of the property owner. Generally, new and re-development must meet the state Department of Ecology's Stormwater Management Manual for drainage plans to reduce impacts of stormwater on receiving waters.

### **Fire and Life Safety**

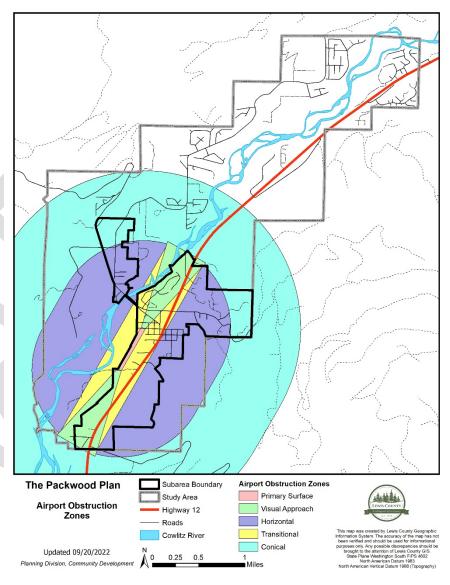
The Packwood Fire District 10 has three stations located within the study area: Station #1 (12953 US Hwy 12), Station #2 (483 Cannon Rd) and Station #3 (234 Mt. View Drive, HVP 8/11). Station #1 on Highway 12 is the main station and houses two tenders, two ambulances, two brush vehicles, one engine and one rescue vehicle. Station #3 is located in High Valley and has an additional engine. Station #2 has the old Mack and air system. Station #1 was dedicated in 2000 and was fully funded by 2015.

The service area is 320 square miles including part of Skate Creek Road and Highway 12 from White Pass to Mile Post 120. The Fire District has mutual aid agreements with all of Lewis County for both emergency services (EMS) and fire, as well as a mutual aid agreement with the Department of Natural Resources for wildland fires. The District works with the Forest Service to address fires if needed and until the Forest Service is able to respond. The District also responds to Mount Rainier National Park for both EMS and fire. Advance Life Support and airlift helicopters can fly out of the Packwood Airport, located behind Station #1. EMS attends to roughly 275 calls per year. Combined structure and woodland fires make up approximately 25 calls per year. The District is run by a five-member elected commission, one chief and one secretary. The District has 15 volunteers with two EMTs, three AEMTs, and one EMR. All volunteers do both EMS and firefighting. Response time is 10 to 12 minutes.

### **Transportation**

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) owns and maintains Highway 12, which runs through the center of the study area. Along with traffic, the right-of-way also provides area for utilities. Lewis County maintains 29 miles of roadway in the area. The majority of the roads, 27 miles, are rural local access roads and the remaining 2 miles are rural major collector. Roughly 25 of those miles are bituminous surface treatment (BST), 4 miles are hot mix asphalt (HMA) and less than 1 mile is gravel surface. In addition, there is an agreement between Lewis County and U.S. Forest Service for the county to maintain portions of Forest Service Road No. 1260 (Snyder Road) No. 1261 (Powerhouse Road) and No. 1268 (Coal Creek Road).

The Packwood Airport is 36 acres and is located at 132 Main Street W. The landing strip extends from Tail Race stream to Willame Street W. In 2000, 3,200 visitors arrived via the airport. That resulted in \$966,179 in direct economic output, which includes the wages of 17 jobs associated with the airport (Washington State Department of Transportation, Aviation Division, Packwood Airport report). In 2021, the airport had 5,300 aircraft operations; the annual range is 3,200 to 8,500 operations. There is an airport obstruction zone around the land strip (Map 8). The height of structures within this area is limited. Lewis County Code Chapter 17.80 states the exact distances and maximum height requirements. WSDOT considers residential development near airports to be an incompatible use.



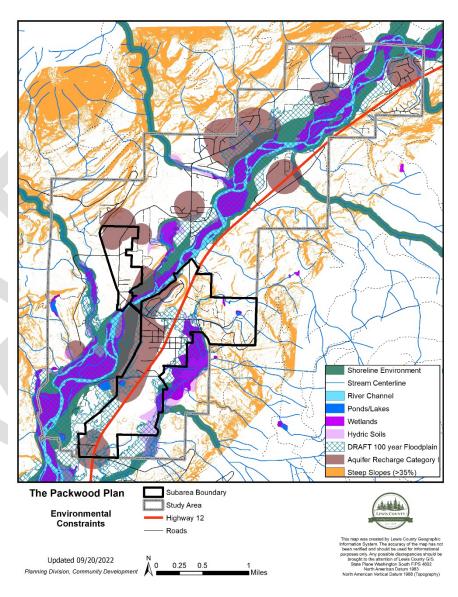
Map 8: Packwood Airport Obstruction Zones

### **Environmental Constraints**

Packwood has many environmental resources. The Cowlitz River flows through the middle of the subarea. Neighborhoods are nestled in large stands of cedar, Douglas fir and big leaf maple. Elk frequently graze in large open areas. These resources are part of the community's character.

The environmental resources also create constraints (Map 9) for future development and growth. The Cowlitz River is located near the water's source on Mount Rainier and above any flow controls. The river channel migrates during fall and spring high water events, resulting in natural bank erosion and sediment deposits. During large flood events, the river can have devastating impacts on homes and businesses. Streams throughout the subarea and wetlands in the relatively flat valley manage water during the winter but can also flood. Critical aquifer recharge areas are important to protecting wells for potable water. In addition, steep slopes, particularly around the edges of Packwood, are a landslide hazard.

Preserving the environmental resources and avoiding development impacts that can result in damage to property and infrastructure is important to creating a sustainable future for Packwood.



Map 9: Packwood Environmental Constraints

### 4: VISION, GOALS AND POLICIES

Vision – Packwood is a vibrant small town that embraces history, encourages unique local businesses, provides a diversity of affordable housing options, supports existing as well as new residents, preserves the natural environment, encourages tourism and promotes family-oriented community events.

The vision is achieved by meeting the goals and policies, maps and illustrations on the following pages by implementing new and updated development regulations in Phase 2 of the subarea plan project.



Packwood Farmer's Market June 2022

### **Community**

### **Community Goal 1 – Support families living, working and playing in town.**

Families are an important part of any town because the adults are of prime working age and the children are enrolled in schools and extracurricular activities. Families support the local economy, as well as invest in social capital including sports and clubs. Since the 1990's Packwood has lost families due to the closure of the mill followed by closure of the elementary school in town. To support families moving back to and staying in Packwood, there needs to be educational opportunities including high quality schools and libraries, community spaces for recreation and gathering, youth-oriented activities, employment that pays a living wage and affordable housing options. In addition, families need safe walking and biking paths to and through the community. (*Note – housing, employment and transportation are addressed under separate goals.*)



Drawing by Kim Pawlawski

### **Policies**

- CM1.1: Support White Pass School District and Timberland Regional Libraries.
- CM1.2: Increase local childcare options.
- CM1.3: Preserve public open spaces and enhance with youth-oriented facilities including but not limited to play structures and ball fields.
- CM1.4: Encourage indoor family-oriented facilities including but not limited to a gym, movie theater and arcade.
- CM1.5: Increase the diversity of services including but not limited to medical, dental, veterinarian, barber, banking, etc.
- CM1.6: Support new retail options that provide clothing, shoes, books, crafts, etc.

### Community Goal 2 – Encourage services and facilities that allow residents to age in place.

People have longer, healthier and fuller lives when they are able to live in a community that has well established social networks including family, friends, church, community center, etc. As we age, the types of services and facilities that are needed changes. The ability to access services and facilities can become difficult due to mobility issues. (*Note – housing and transportation are addressed under separate goals.*)

#### **Policies**

- CM2.1: Work with the Economic Alliance and East County Chamber of Commerce to bring new services including medical, physical therapy, dental and in-home health care.
- CM2.2: Encourage Veterans Affairs facilities and services to be located in Packwood.
- CM2.3: Support expanded services provided by the Packwood Senior Center.

### **Land Use**

### Land Use Goal 1 - Preserve the small town uniqueness and charm of Packwood.

Packwood is a small town with history rooted in the timber industry. Historic buildings like Hotel Packwood, White Pass Museum (formerly a school) and the Packwood Station (formerly Ranger Station), exemplify the town's history. The size of existing buildings and space between each provides a small town feel. There are many locally owned small businesses that provide unique and charming products and services.

### **Policies**

- LU1.1: Encourage commercial uses to be located in Downtown Packwood along Highway 12.
- LU1.2: Support locally owned small-scale businesses not found anywhere else in Washington.
- LU1.3: Preserve and enhance historic buildings and sites.
- LU1.4: Create design guidelines for new buildings in Downtown Packwood that ensure a similar look and size (see Urban Design subsection).
- LU1.5: Establish side setbacks to maintain space between buildings in Downtown Packwood.
- LU1.6: Enhance social connections by promoting use of community buildings and spaces for gatherings and events.

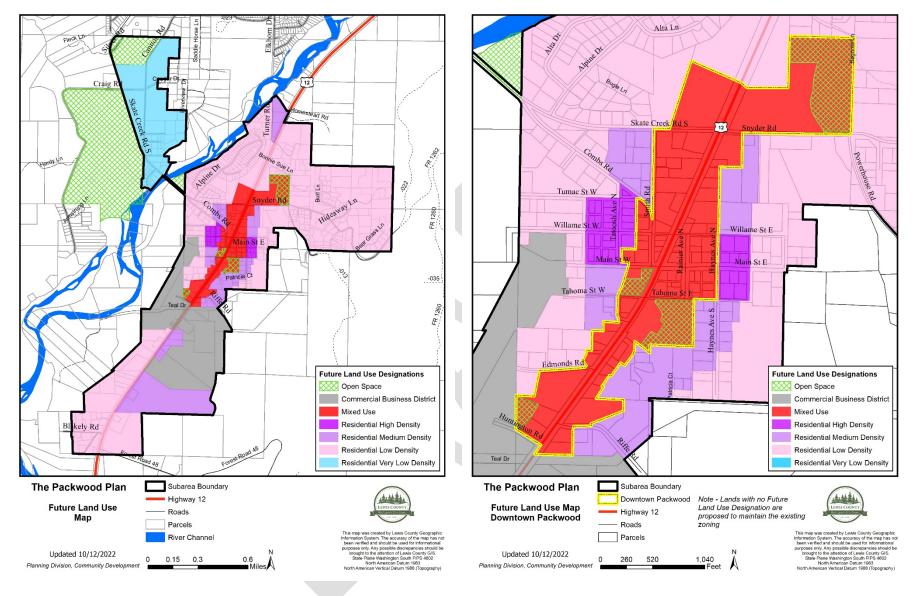
### Land Use Goal 2 – Contain higher density development near Downtown Packwood and prevent sprawl.

Packwood is located in the Upper Cowlitz River Valley and is surrounded by national forests, wildlife areas and parks. This in and of itself helps to contain future development. However, there are also large lots (greater than 5 acres) and small agricultural operations located between the forests and the town that create the rural setting for Packwood. These rural areas are important to the residents, business owners and tourists.

#### **Policies**

- LU2.1: Encourage mixed use commercial and multifamily residential development in Downtown Packwood.
- LU2.2: Encourage higher density residential development near Downtown Packwood.
- LU2.3: Develop new very low density residential west of the Franklin Bridge between Skate Creek Road and the existing residential developments of High Valley.
- LU2.6: Maintain rural density of development surrounding the subarea.

Table 1: Future Land Use Designations							
Designation	Code	Description					
Open Space	OS	The focus of these areas is recreation for the general public and habitat for wildlife. Areas should be programmed for community gathering and outdoor play. Play structures, sports fields and courts, picnic tables, benches and gazebos are encouraged. Trees and native vegetation should be protected and enhanced.					
Commercial Business District	CBZ	The focus of these areas is commercial, office space and small scale manufacturing uses. Larger commercial buildings, 10,000 to 20,000 sq. ft., should be located in here. Medium to high density residential uses should be allowed and buffered from commercial or manufacturing uses. Connectivity and pedestrian access should be prioritized. The Packwood Airport is included in the Business District.					
Mixed Use	MU	The focus of these areas is small scale (<10,000 sq. ft.) commercial and the highest density residential uses. Lots facing Highway 12 include ground floor commercial or office space and second story apartments or condos. Entrances should be facing Highway 12 and surface parking should be 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.					
Residential High Density	RH	The highest density residential uses should be located near Downtown. The scale of apartments or condos should be up to 10 units in a courtyard style around a common open space. Row houses, fourplexes, triplexes and duplexes should be encouraged. Use of traditional single family structures as 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.					
Residential Medium Density	RM	Row houses, fourplexes, triplexes, duplexes and ADUs, as well as tiny home villages, should be encouraged. Institutional uses (e.g., churches, libraries, schools) and neighborhood-scale commercial uses should be allowed. Maximum lot size should be 5,000 to 7,500 sq. ft.					
Residential Low Density	RL	The focus of these areas is traditional single family residential uses. Duplexes and ADUs should be encouraged to increase affordable housing options. Institutional uses (e.g., churches, libraries, schools) and neighborhood-scale commercial uses should be allowed. Maximum lot size should be 7,500 to 10,000 sq. ft.					
Residential Very Low Density	RVL	The focus of these areas is traditional single family residential uses at a scale consistent with historic					



Map 10: Future Land Use Map

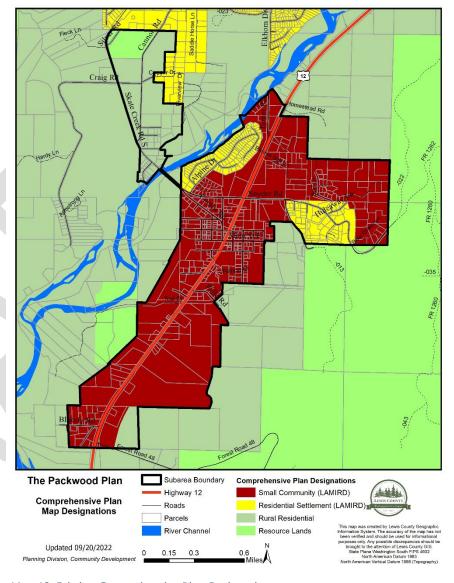
Map 11: Future Land Use Map - Downtown Packwood

Map 12 shows the existing Lewis County Comprehensive Plan map designations. The designations for most of the subarea are Small Community and Residential Settlement. Small Community is described as "detached residential, commercial or industrial structures in an existing settlement. Some attached buildings are also present. Predominantly small scale, though some larger commercial, institutional or industrial buildings may be present." The level of urbanization is considered "moderate." Residential Settlement is described as "detached residential structures in a residential settlement." The level of urbanization is considered "low to low/moderate." Both designations are a LAMIRD Type I under the Growth Management Act.

The Future Land Use Maps (Map 10 and Map 11) are intended to show how zoning should change over the 20-year planning horizon to achieve the Land Use goals and policies stated in this section. The maps depict the future development types and densities described in Table 1. The goal is to concentrate development in and near Downtown Packwood. The 100-year floodplain and wetlands are taken into consideration with the intent of not increasing residential development beyond what is currently allowed in these critical areas. New zoning rules, created during Phase 2, would impact new development or redevelopment. Existing legal nonconforming development and uses may stay, be maintained and be replaced in the current footprint.

The future land uses described in Table 1 are consistent with the description of Small Community and Residential Settlement.

Therefore, for those areas the Future Land Use Map is consistent with



Map 12: Existing Comprehensive Plan Designations

the existing Lewis County Comprehensive Plan. The other lands within the subarea are currently designated Other Rural Residential with detached residential uses on standard rural lots typically 5-20 acres in size. The designation for those lands will need to be amended in the Lewis County Comprehensive Plan during Phase 2 to implement the Future Land Use Map.

### **Urban Design**

The purpose of design guidelines is to create a common look for Packwood that retains the small town charm and character that exists today. The guidelines can provide direction on the general design of new structures.

The current urban design of Downtown Packwood is referred to as "Northwest Mountain." Northwest Mountain is a mix of rustic and regional architecture that has historic roots in logging and mining towns. Northwest Mountain style is unique to and exemplifies the look of small mountain towns in Washington State. Many existing buildings in Packwood already showcase this style including the Hotel Packwood, the Sports Hut and the Visitor Center. Northwest Mountain style can also include more modern looking buildings that still fit with the character of traditional mountain towns. The common difference between traditional and modern Northwest Mountain architecture is a pitched roof (traditional) vs a flat-slant roof (modern) and the extensive use of glass windows (modern).





Historic Hotel Packwood

Sports Hut

Guidelines should be applied to new development on properties that front Highway 12 in Downtown Packwood and should be incorporated into major alterations to existing development along Highway 12 to the extent practical. While encouraged for residential development, the guidelines should not be required for structures that do not front Highway 12. In general, to meet the guidelines buildings should make extensive use of wood and stone in the exterior facades. The color palette for siding, if not natural wood/stone, should be brown, green or gray hues that match the natural landscape. Exposed exterior support beams or accent walls are encouraged.

### **Traditional Northwest Mountain Design - Commercial**



Cowlitz River Lodge, Packwood, WA



Unknown Location



Public Library, Sutton, AK



Packwood Post Office

### **Modern Northwest Mountain Design - Commercial**



Rustic Goat Restaurant, Anchorage, AK



Unknown Location



Grouse Mountain Lodge, Montana

### **Traditional Northwest Mountain Design - Residential**









### **Modern Northwest Mountain Design - Residential**









### Housing

### Housing Goal 1 – Provide a range of affordable housing for residents at all income levels.

Affordable housing is a primary concern of residents and business owners. Affordable housing means everyone in Packwood is able to find housing that meets their income constraints. In practice, that means ensuring a wide range of housing types that meet the needs of minimum to median wage earners. Packwood also has a high number of seasonal workers. In the winter, people come to work at White Pass Ski Resort. In the summer, people come to work at Mount Rainier National Park or for the Forest Service. These people need 6-month rental options that are affordable.

A diversity of housing types can be designed to fit the rural character of Packwood by limiting the overall size (footprint, height and bulk) of housing structures and requiring development densities similar to existing neighborhoods. A traditional single family house can be divided into two, three or four dwelling units and stay within the same footprint. Figure 1 depicts different housing types that fit the small town character of Packwood while allowing diversity of options.

### **Policies**

HS1.1: Encourage high and medium density housing in and near Downtown Packwood that is designed to fit "small town" character.

HS1.2: Provide design guidelines that allow multiple dwelling units to be included within a single structure that looks like a traditional single family home (Figure 2).

HS1.3: Encourage a diversity of single family housing types including duplexes, tiny home villages and accessory dwelling units throughout Packwood.

HS1.4: Encourage similar residential development patterns and lot sizes between established neighborhoods.

HS1.5: Support options to alleviate property cost burden for people on fixed incomes.

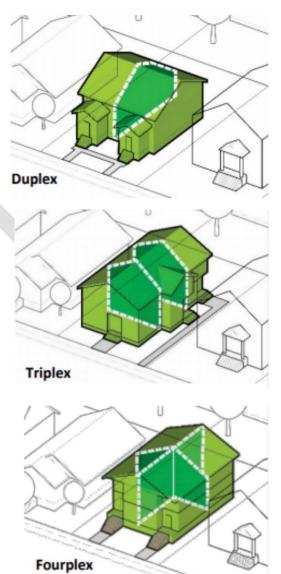


Figure 1: Housing types on single family lot

Note – Housing units could be stacked as well as side-by-side.

### **Economic Development**

### Economic Development Goal 1 - Support a range of locally owned businesses to meet the needs of residents and tourists.

Residents need many services during their everyday lives including grocery, medical, dental, pharmacy, banking, electrician, plumber, clothing, salon, etc. When these essential services are located a long way away (20+ miles), it can result in people leaving Packwood and choosing to live in another community or results in many vehicle trips that are costly and contribute to climate change. Locating services where people live has many benefits that support families living in Packwood and people being able to age in place.

Tourism, the primary economy of Packwood, is supported by the service industry including grocery, restaurants, sporting goods stores, gift stores and local events and attractions. Tourists also need some services that residents require including medical, pharmacy and banking. Short term rentals (STRs) support tourism and owners of STRs need house cleaners, handymen, electricians, plumbers, etc.

### **Policies**

- ED1.1: Increase commercial uses in Downtown Packwood and at the historic mill site.
- ED1.2: Provide infrastructure that supports grocery, restaurants, medical, dental, veterinarian and other specialty services.
- ED1.3: Discourage franchise businesses that can outcompete locally owned businesses.
- ED1.4: Create a mentoring program between new and existing business owners.

### **Economic Development Goal 2 – Support employment options that provide living wage jobs.**

In 2021, a living wage job in Washington State was roughly \$42,000 per year or \$20 per hour. In 2022, the minimum wage was \$14.49 per hour. Affordable rent or mortgage for someone making a living wage is \$1,260 per month; for minimum wage affordable rent is \$750 per month. Most service industry jobs (e.g., restaurant server, house cleaner, etc.) pay a minimum wage not a living wage.

#### **Policies**

- ED2.1: Work with the East Lewis County Public Development Authority and Economic Alliance to attract new medical, dental, pharmacy, veterinarian, banking, electrician, plumber and other skilled labor industries to Packwood.
- ED2.2: Work with the East Lewis County Public Development Authority and Economic Alliance to provide rental space for new start-up small businesses.
- ED2.3: Work with the East Lewis County Chamber of Commerce to provide education and mentorship for new business owners.
- ED2.4: Support Packwood Timberland Library continuing education programs for local residents.

### **Transportation**

### Transportation Goal 1 – Make the streets more accessible and safe for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Highway 12 is used by pedestrians, and to a lesser extent bicyclists, to access businesses in Downtown Packwood. Streets should be safe and accessible, particularly during the peak seasons with a high volume of tourists. Traffic needs to be travelling at slow speeds when approaching downtown. The Franklin Bridge (Stake Creek Road) should provide better pedestrian and bicycle access between the residential neighborhoods on the west side of the Cowlitz River and downtown.

### **Policies**

- TR1.1: Create pedestrian and bicycle routes along Highway 12 in Downtown Packwood and along Skate Creek Road from Highway 12 to Cannon Road (Map 13).
- TR1.2: Add crosswalks at primary intersections that cross Highway 12 in Downtown Packwood (Map 13).
- TR1.3: Add lighting along Highway 12 in Downtown Packwood.
- TR1.4: Add traffic calming along Highway 12 between Skate Creek Road and Huntington Road (Map 13).
- TR1.5: Reduce the speed limit to 25 mph on Highway 12 in Downtown Packwood.
- TR1.6: Improve snow removal to maintain safe walkways and adequate parking in Downtown Packwood.

### Transportation Goal 2 - Improve street connectivity in and near Downtown Packwood

#### **Policies**

- TR2.1: Maintain and expand historic block pattern near Downtown Packwood (Map 13).
- TR2.2: Add streets near Downtown Packwood to improve neighborhood connectivity and emergency vehicle access (Map 13).
- TR2.3: Designate parking within the Highway 12 right-of-way in Downtown Packwood (Figures 2 and 3).

Transportation Goal 3 – Parking along Highway 12 and local streets near Downtown Packwood is based on peak season demand and is designed to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as access to local businesses and community amenities.

#### **Policies**

- TR3.1: Designate on-street parking that makes efficient use of Highway 12 right-of-way and provide safe pedestrian access to businesses.
- TR3.2: Require new surface parking for business facing Highway 12 to be located behind or to the side of the primary building.
- TR3.3: Designate on-street parking on local streets near Downtown Packwood, where ever possible.
- TR3.4: Require on-site parking for new residential development

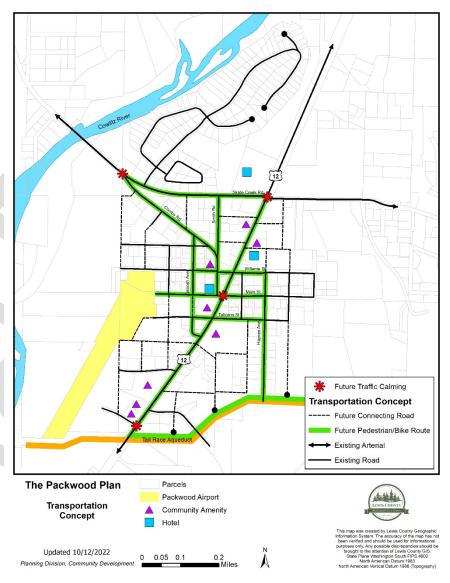
### **Packwood Transportation Concept**

Downtown Packwood is bisected by Highway 12. Along Highway 12 there are many community amenities including (from north to south) Arbor Health Clinic, Blanton's Grocery Store, US Post Office, Packwood Timberland Library and Park, White Pass Historical Museum, Fire District 10 Station, Packwood Community Hall and Packwood Senior Center. In addition, between the amenities and the hotels are multiple restaurants and shops. All of these are accessed by residents and tourists; however, there are no multimodal facilities, save for one crosswalk at Highway 12 and Main Street, for people to walk or bike between destinations. Map 13 is the transportation concept.

Increasing the walkability of Downtown Packwood will have multiple benefits. First, it will create a safer environment for residents and tourists by designating walking and biking routes and calming traffic as it moves through town. Second, by getting people out of their cars, it will increase opportunities for people to frequent local businesses. Studies have shown that when people are encouraged to walk a downtown area, they tend to stop at more businesses and spend more money, thus improving the local economy.

This concept does not suggest what kinds of facilities should be used to create walking and biking routes or to calm traffic. There are many options that can be explored in a future study to determine what types of facilities are appropriate for Packwood.

The concept also proposes new street alignments that will extend the existing downtown block pattern and provide access to new residential development over time. This will improve safety by providing access for fire and emergency vehicles.



Map 13: Packwood Transportation Concept

### **Highway Design Examples**

Below are two examples of roadway concepts that could be implemented on Highway 12 in Packwood. These are intended to depict what is possible within a 100-foot right-of-way, but are not exhaustive of the options that would meet the goals and policies for transportation.



Figure 2: Highway 12 Cross-Section Concept, Rochester, WA (Source: Thurston Regional Planning Council)



Figure 3: Back-in Angle Parking Concept (Source: <a href="https://carfromjapan.com/article/driving-tips/guideline-for-easy-parking/">https://carfromjapan.com/article/driving-tips/guideline-for-easy-parking/</a>)

### **Environment and Recreation**

### Environment and Recreation Goal 1 - Protect, maintain and enhance the natural environment for people and wildlife.

Packwood is nestled between Mount Rainier and the Goat Rocks wilderness. The Cowlitz River flows through the community. Wildlife including elk, bear, coyote, cougar, bald eagle and many others live in and around Packwood. People and wildlife can coexist by setting aside undeveloped wild places and having safe interactions by not approaching or feeding wildlife, but observing them from a safe distance.

#### **Policies**

ER1.1: Protect important natural areas including Skate Creek Park; Cowlitz River and tributary streams (Hall Creek, Skate Creek, Butter Creek, Lake Creek, Hinkle Tinkle Creek), and stands of large trees in downtown Packwood.

ER1.2: Preserve open spaces in and near Downtown Packwood, including Packwood Station riparian area, library park, museum playground and ball fields and Packwood Community Hall park, for recreational use.

ER1.4: Provide education about proper interactions with wildlife.



Skate Creek Park

### Environment and Recreation Goal 2 – Foster year-round recreational experiences for all ages and abilities.

Thousands of tourist come to Packwood annual to experience natural, hike Mount Rainer and the Goat Rocks, ski, mountain bike, fish and hunt. However, most of these activities are located outside of Packwood. In-town recreational activities, particularly for full time residents and families, will continue to build community.

#### **Policies**

- ER2.1: Maintain and improve PUD Ballpark, museum playground and ball fields, library park and Packwood Community Hall park for recreational uses focusing on families and improved access for all abilities.
- ER2.2: Encourage use of public spaces for community events including music, movies, town picnics, organized sport events, etc.
- ER2.3: Increase indoor recreational opportunities such as basketball courts, mountain bike park, rock climbing, etc.
- ER2.4: Provide safe walking, biking and rolling routes and trails in and around Packwood.
- ER2.5: Add accessibly improvements for the hearing and sight impaired to recreational facilities.
- ER2.6: Increase information about and wayfinding to recreation locations and events.
- ER2.7: Enhance views of Mount Rainier, Tatoosh Wilderness and Goat Rocks Wilderness, such as burying utility lines and capping building heights.







Example of power lines obscuring view of Mount Rainier and Butter Butte

### **Public Facilities**

### Public Facilities Goal 1 – Improve facilities and infrastructure to support planned growth.

Much of the desired future uses and development cannot be accommodated by on-site well and septic systems and will require municipal water and sewer. Lewis County Water Sewer District 3 serves most of the current Small Town Mixed Use and Small Town Industrial zones. Sewer is anticipated in a similar vicinity as the water district service area. However, additional facilities and infrastructure will be needed to support affordable housing and local businesses.

#### **Policies**

- PF1.1: Provide municipal wastewater treatment to properties within a similar geography as the Lewis County Water Sewer District 3 service area.
- PF1.2: Plan for expansion of the municipal water system and wastewater system over the 20-year planning horizon.
- PF1.3: Encourage installation of high speed fiber optics internet to all residents and business in the subarea.
- PF1.4: Provide full trash and recycling service to Packwood's residential neighborhoods including but not limited to Downtown, High Valley and Timberline.

PF1.5: Support continued use and growth of the Packwood Airport.

### **5: NEXT STEPS**

Phase 2 of the Packwood Subarea Plan will coincide with the Lewis County Comprehensive Plan periodic update, which will be completed in 2025. Implementation is expected to include amendments to the Comprehensive Plan policies and maps, zoning designations and development regulations, all of which must be consistent with the vision, goals and policies of this document.

Community engagement will continue to be a primary focus of the Phase 2 process. The <u>Packwood Subarea Plan Public Participation Plan</u> will be updated to include Phase 2. The existing Community Advisory Committee members will be invited to participate in a similar capacity; however, membership will be opened to allow new members from the community.

Implementation of the Packwood Subarea Plan will also include actions that are outside of the subarea planning scope. The following priority actions were identified during public engagement activities. The community encourages Lewis County and other agencies, organizations and property owners to move forward with these actions within five years of adopting the subarea plan. Implementing these actions will set the stage for meeting all of the goals and policies and achieving the 20-year vision for Packwood.

### **Priority Action Items**

- 1. Construct a municipal sewer system that serves at least Downtown Packwood and can be expanded over 20 years to help achieve the adopted subarea goals and policies.
- 2. Decrease speed limit on Highway 12 from 35 mph to 25 mph between Skate Creek Road and Huntington Road.
- 3. Add crosswalk striping and lighted signs at the intersections of Highway 12 and Skate Creek Road and Main Street.
- 4. Create safe pedestrian/bike path(s) along Highway 12 from Skate Creek/Snyder Road to Huntington Road.
- 5. Create design guidelines for Downtown Packwood to ensure that new buildings will protect small town character.
- 6. Maintain Skate Creek Park as a public natural area.

# **Packwood Subarea Plan**

# **Staff contact**

Mindy Brooks, 360-740-2610 <a href="mindy.brooks@lewiscountywa.gov">mindy.brooks@lewiscountywa.gov</a>

