

## Erika Shook

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**From:** Cindy Wolf  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:55 AM  
**To:** Ingrid Gabriel  
**Subject:** Fwd: Vacation Rental Moratorium

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**From:** Yonatan Aldort <yonatanaldort@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2021 2:33:05 PM  
**To:** Council Public Comment <councilpc@sanjuanco.com>  
**Subject:** Vacation Rental Moratorium

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Jamie Stephens  
Cindy Wolf  
Christine Minney

February 15, 2021

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to you to express my support for the moratorium on new vacation rental permits and the increase in short term rental regulations I hope it will yield.

I became involved in the vacation rental issue because I saw my community struggling with an intractable housing shortage that was being made worse by the wholesale conversion of neighborhoods into what are effectively independently operated resorts. San Juan County has long had an affordability problem, and the explosion of web-based platforms like AirBnB and VRBO has just exacerbated it. But this issue has gone beyond affordability to become one of quality of life as well.

Neighborhoods with no neighbors, excessive traffic, party houses, negative environmental impacts, and more have been the impact of an over-proliferation of short term rentals, particularly on my home of Orcas Island, where about 50% of the county's vacation rentals are currently located.

Vacation rentals have many upsides, but too much of anything can become a problem. In San Juan County, where there are physical limits to housing development, I believe we must be very judicious with all of our resources. The current policies for vacation rentals need to be improved and updated. Permits running with the land leads to speculation and drives up already sky high real estate prices. The lack of any density considerations allows whole residential neighborhoods to be essentially converted into commercial hospitality zoning. Enforcement of existing policies has been largely non-existent. Most of all, without any current cap in place on how many permits one person or corporate entity may own, or indeed on how many can exist countywide, the sky's the limit for vacation rental growth.

Because vacation rental permits are outpacing new construction, each year they become a larger percentage of San Juan County's overall housing stock. There are some who believe that all growth is good growth and oppose any further regulation of vacation rentals. This mindset ignores the reality that our businesses are struggling to even find enough employees to stay open and countless individuals and families are being squeezed out of the place they call home. This is an unsustainable way of doing business, and it needs to change. Please act to maintain the moratorium and implement sensible regulations that will balance the needs of our communities now and into the future.

Thank you,

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