

Adam Zack

From: Housing Lopez <housinglopez@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 4:58 PM
To: Comp Plan Update
Subject: Public comment on vacation rental permit caps
Attachments: Housing Lopez public comment on vacation rental caps.pdf

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Hello,

Please find attached Housing Lopez's public comment on the vacation rental permit caps being considered by the Planning Commission and County Council.

Thanks,
The Housing Lopez Board of Directors



County Council & Planning Commission,

The Housing Lopez Board would like to make the following comment on the proposed caps on vacation rental permits:

[Housing Lopez](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to solving the affordable rental housing crisis on Lopez Island by developing dedicated, sustainable, affordable rental housing communities. We are community members and volunteers with expertise in this area who want to ensure that the island works for all of us. Construction of our first development project, which is a step towards addressing this crisis, is currently underway.

Although developing new housing is critical to solving the affordable rental housing crisis, **maintaining the existing supply of rentals is also a necessary part of the puzzle; the cost of replacing a long term rental lost to conversion to a vacation rental is very high.** The total development cost for each of the six units in our first development project, for instance, is approximately \$360,000 -- some of which was funded by County dollars.

The proposed maximum for Lopez of 174 vacation rental permits, compared to the current 130, represents a drastic increase that could be destabilizing for our community. As you likely already know, a significant and troubling proportion of Lopez households are already cost-burdened by rent (47%, according to the [2015 United Way of the PNW ALICE Report](#)), and many working families on Lopez are forced to move multiple times a year, live in substandard housing, or even leave the island behind.

As such, if the Council is to accept the proposed caps, **we advocate for a phased increase in the cap on vacation rental permits on Lopez over the course of several years.** We believe that this will help protect the existing long term rental housing stock, which is already deeply inadequate, from conversion as we work to develop new rentals.

We would be happy to discuss this issue in further detail. You can reach us at housinglopez@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

The Housing Lopez Board

John Taylor, Barbara Schultheiss, Jeffrey Daggett, Richard Manderbach, Bill Johnson, Linda Floodeen, Melora Hiller, and Doug Stevenson