

Cortney Ingle

From: Allen Giernet <allengiernet@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 19, 2019 10:31 AM
To: Cortney Ingle
Cc: Andy Hover
Subject: Public comment for Okanogan County comprehensive plan
Attachments: Public Comment Letter Methow.pdf

Dear planning Commission members please accept and review my public comments regarding the Comprehensive Plan for Okanogan County and its relationship to The Lower Methow Valley.

I am a new community member here having spent some time searching for the location with my partner to spend the rest of our years. We searched up and down the western united states for the perfect place to call home. The criteria being, to escape the chaos, stress, noise, pollution and social disconnect of the large city we had spent the past four decades being slowly destroyed by. We ventured into the Methow Valley and immediately knew we had found our new home. We now proudly own a beautiful parcel that we call home as we enjoy the wonderful community here and set about realizing our dreams to build a long-term socio-economic addition to Okanogan County and the Methow Valley.

Overall considerations for the comprehensive plan are:

- The existing comprehensive plan as it stands lacks organization and does not reflect the unique environment that is the Lower Methow Valley. This document lumps the Lower Valley in with the entire county and does not recognize the different needs associated with this environment.
- The Lower Methow Valley will be considered a “sub area” similar to the Upper Methow Valley. This area is a distinctly unique area in relationship to the entire Okanogan County at large and should be planned accordingly. The area would extend from Lower Gold Creek Road to the Columbia river.
- This “sub area” will have its own vision statement reflecting the unique concerns and needs endemic of the environment.
- A professional land planner will be hired to write the plan. Thus, creating a concise and easy to navigate document of guidance for future use and development.
- The Lower Methow Valley will have its own advisory committee to oversee permits, planning and represent the communities interests and desires.

The existing comprehensive plan is less than functional, alternative 2 still does not remedy the problems inherent in this document. Alternatives 3 & 4 each have their merits but ultimately need some adjustments to truly reflect the needs and desires of our unique environment.

Considerations for the final document are as follows:

- **Future growth and development**– Different zoning for the area is mandatory, restricting development to being centered around population areas and maintaining large lot size restrictions for remote areas.

- **Water Quantity & Quality**– Water management is a paramount topic and should be an integral part of the comprehensive plan and detailed as it relates to this area.
- **Wildfires**- Ingress and Egress are paramount to properties and life. Open roads must be maintained for public use. See alternative 4 “Wildfire Protection” for more details.
- **Excavation and Grading**– These activities should also include Mining and Mineral usage. Restriction and permitting must be developed and enforced for this work and environmental impact studies will be necessary for larger projects. This type of activity should be detailed in the comprehensive plan as it applies to this area.
- **Agriculture**– One of the unique attributes and economic resources of our area is the agriculture endemic to this area. This needs to be considered and included with clear future guidelines for the Lower Methow Valley.
- **Forest land and public lands**– These are important components of our environment. The wellbeing of wildlife and humans alike are dependent upon these destinations. Provisions for access and management of these locations are an integral part of this or any comprehensive plan.
- **Recreation**– This is an intrinsic part of the quality of life. The Lower Methow Valley affords a wide variety of opportunities and as such is an integral part of any comprehensive plan developed for this area. Outdoor recreation as an alternative economic resource which should be supported and promoted for this area.
- **Outdoor light and noise pollution**– Alternative 4 suggests an ordinance for dealing with increased light pollution due to development. Along with this should be consideration for noise pollution as continued growth and development will contribute to both of these problems. Extensive health studies have shown the detrimental results of exposure to increased noise levels. Adding ordinances for development especially commercial operations to address these growing concerns will be an important part of the new comprehensive plan.
- **Air quality**– This should be a part of the excavating, grading, mining and mineral use components of the comprehensive plan as well as its own consideration in regards to other forms of air pollution.

In closing I would like to state my support for the development of a sub area for the lower Methow Valley. The creation of an Advisory Committee. Hiring a professional land planner to develop our Vision and Comprehensive Plan reflective of our unique environment. A complete overhaul of the existing Comprehensive plan and development of a plan that truly reflects our unique area. I would encourage the commission to look to the Upper Methow Valley plan for general guidance. Lastly it is imperative that the Planning Commission members and ultimately the County Commissioner consider every public comment and act upon the overall requests of our community accordingly.

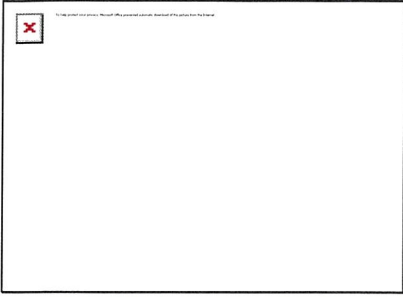
I have also attached a copy of this letter in pdf format.

Thank you for your time, efforts and consideration of my concerns regarding our lovely valley and home.

Sincerely,

Allen Giernet

Allen Giernet - Creative Inspirations



m - 818.321.4399 / f -818.716.3658

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