

Town of Skykomish
Oct 14th, 2019

To the Mayor and Town Council,

My family have been proud part-time residents and property owners in Skykomish for the last 12 years and have been pleased to see the commitment to the community and economic growth in the town. We purchased two abandoned homes, one which was no longer livable and in foreclosure and another that had not been used for two years and was falling into disrepair. We invested in building a new home in town for our family and fixing up and maintaining the smaller cottage for guests to visit (friends and short term renters) to experience the charm and community that we have grown to love about Skykomish.

Short Term rentals should be a vital resource to Skykomish and its economic growth and their regulation should pursue and enable this positive contribution. Short-term rental regulation should minimize the down-sides while maximizing the upside for the town by bringing in much-needed tourism dollars. This is a priority listed in Skykomish's 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

"As the opportunity to reestablish a resource-based economy has diminished, Skykomish has reshaped its vision to include revitalizing the local economic base by encouraging both businesses that serve the local community and commercial services that support and take advantage of outdoor recreation and tourism."

With the listed goal of:

"Goal LU-G7 Encourage land uses and the development of commercial services that support tourism and capitalize on Skykomish's proximity to recreational options"

We love inviting others to enjoy the charm and beauty of Skykomish and encourage them to support local businesses like the Whistling post, the Deli, and visit the train depot (potential donations). Most share newly discovered love of Skykomish with others. A few examples of our guest's experiences in town are found at the end of this letter. We take pride in ownership of our STR and vet each guest through the pre-built background and review process that is part of the Airbnb platform (the only place we list our home).

Renting out our home has had significant direct economic impact to our town. In the last 18 months we have had 74 stays hosting over 150 unique people. The impact of this is:

- Estimated spend of \$45 at local businesses for each stay (food, gas, etc) is over \$3k
- \$4k+ in cleaning fees paid to a local resident
- \$500+ annually in lawn maintenance and snow removal
- Hundreds of dollars in home maintenance

If the other STR's are performing similarly, the impact on the town is significant.

Below are the highest priority concerns we have related to the proposed ordinances:

- **MORATORIUM:** Limiting the STR permits based on an annual or rotating lottery limits the ability for long term planning that is necessary when considering homeownership. Allowing someone the option to rent out their home or a room on a short term basis gives the ability to own that may not be an option otherwise economically.
- **INSPECTIONS:** While having a home be safe is important for everyone the overhead of bringing our town's historic older homes up to current standards is not economically viable. This will restrict available rentals and have proportionally reduce the town's economic vitality.
- **RESPONSIBLE PARTY:** It is in the owner's best interest to properly service their home and their guests or run the risk of plummeting reviews and being removed from the STR platforms. Placing restrictive measures on how someone services their guests is onerous and overly legislative to solve a problem that would ultimately solve itself. If you don't take care of your home and your guests you will not have more guests moving forward. This is solved by a free-market approach - not regulation.
- **OVERALL:** All Skykomish homeowners risk lower appeal of their home when reselling as a result of these restrictions and it is a concerning move when the town government begins to regulate who we can have in our home. A core tenant of Skykomish's comprehensive plan is "The community envisions a town that remains relatively small, simple, and intimate, *with a minimum of regulation and taxation*"

Sincerely,

Jenn and Dante Martin



Alicia

Jul 14 – 15, 2018



Overall Rating



Public review

The setting was beautiful. We were surrounded by mountains and trees in a charming little railway town. The cabin was cozy and clean. Located close enough to the town center to walk into town. There was plenty of privacy and other than an occasional train, it was very quiet. We visited in the summer, but if you are a skier this would be a great spot in the winter. If we visit again we will bring more of our own food because food options in town are limited, however the hotel in town did have a very nice Sunday brunch.

Compliments





Kelsie

Oct 12 – 14, 2018



Overall Rating



Public review

Jenn's cabin was an ideal location for enjoying the charm of Skykomish and the surrounding area. The house itself is cozy and comfortable. We appreciated having access to WiFi and firewood for the wood stove. Jenn was a pleasure to work with and communication was prompt. Check-in was hassle free. We visit this area annual and would love to call Jenn's cabin "home away from home" on future trips.

Private note

Hi Jenn! We had a lovely stay at your





Matthew

Feb 1 - 3



Overall Rating



Public review

Cozy spot in the cute town of Skykomish: we enjoyed cross country skiing at nearby Stevens pass: kids enjoyed the wii and big screen tv; had a nice fire; can walk to town easily for meals and essentials.

Private note

Thanks for the stay we enjoyed cross country skiing and the wii games

Compliments

