

2023

June: The Washington State Legislature passed SB 5198, which provides residents of manufactured home communities notice of an impending sale of a manufactured home community and offers the opportunity to compete for purchase of the community as a cooperative.

The Regional Housing Council (RHC) Technical Team worked with Victoria O'Banion, from Resident Owned Communities NW (ROCNW), following a sale of a manufactured home community in Thurston County in late 2023. The RHC did not have funding available at that time to assist the residents in purchasing the community as a cooperative due to the disbursement of funds through a competitive annual cycle. This led to a broader discussion and work that continued through 2024. As a result, in 2024 the RHC approved the creation of an Opportunity Fund, which creates set-aside funding for emergent needs (such as manufactured home community sales and preservation) that may be missed opportunities if they do not fall within the regular annual RFP cycle.

2024

April: Council passes ordinance to amend current Rental Housing Code, which applies to residential tenancies (not to manufactured home tenancies). Ordinance includes relocation assistance provisions, limits to fees, requiring certain information in rent increase notices, and provides a right to install cooling devices in their units.

April: Council and staff were contacted by local manufactured homeowners who rent lot space in manufactured home communities for clarification on whether the most recently adopted Olympia tenant protections applied to their situation, and concerns about rising rents.

May: Staff were invited to a meeting with a local manufactured home community, along with state legislators, to discuss challenges at their particular community, as well as provide a policy update.

September: Land Use & Environment Committee (LUEC) members and staff hold community meeting with manufactured home community residents to learn more about their challenges and share information about Rental Housing Code protections to solicit feedback about similar protections may be helpful to them.

November: LUEC receives briefing on manufactured home policy options and community input.

2025

February: Second community meeting for manufactured homeowners hosted by City to gauge support for proposed set of policies. Community survey completed at meeting. Aside from capping rent increases, the most popular option was protective zoning to prevent displacement due to sale or redevelopment.

March: Staff presents results of community input and recommendations at a Council study session. Council directs staff to wait until after the State Legislative session ends to complete further work on this topic.

May: The Washington State Legislature passed HB 1217, which caps annual lot rent increases at 5% for manufactured home tenancies.

July: Staff presented updates from the legislative session at a Council study session and options for next steps considering these changes. Since rent caps addressed many of the economic concerns residents expressed, staff recommended exploring strategies to prevent displacement further. Council directed staff to explore options further in 2026 but expressed concerns regarding zoning changes. Council expressed interest in learning more about manufactured home communities in Olympia.