

Proposed Mobile Home Park and Condominium Conversion Standards

PURPOSE

The purpose of the changes to the standards for mobile home park and condominium conversions is to protect existing affordable rental housing units from conversion to more expensive ownership housing.

BACKGROUND

Potentially vulnerable affordable housing in the County includes rental apartment units and rental mobile home parks. Low-income tenants who cannot afford to own property outright and rely on the availability of affordable rentals generally occupy these housing types. Economic pressures push property owners to convert rental housing to ownership uses such as ownership mobile home parks and condominiums, increasing the costs and potentially displacing existing tenants.

STANDARDS FOR MOBILE HOME PARK CONVERSION

The Sonoma County Zoning Code currently requires the approval of a use permit to close or convert a mobile home park to another use. Code Changes are proposed to improve protections of renters in mobile home parks when those parks are proposed to be closed, converted to another use, or converted from a rental park to an ownership park. Changes include a requirement for consistency with the General Plan and adequate replacement rental housing in another mobile home park.

STANDARDS FOR CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION

Condominium conversions take place when a building currently used for rental housing is subdivided into individual condominium units that can be sold separately. Proposed additions to the Sonoma County Code would codify Policy HE-1i of the Sonoma County General Plan to do the following:

1. Condominium conversions may only be approved if the multifamily rental vacancy rate exceeds five percent.
2. Per Article 89 of the Sonoma County Zoning Code, 30 percent of the units in the proposed condominium conversion should be set-aside for sale to low- and very low-income households, restricted for at least 30 years.
3. The subdivider will provide an adequate Relocation Assistance Plan and offer existing tenants right of first refusal to purchase a unit. Long-term leases should be offered to residents over 60 years of age.