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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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While many Oregonians are losing homes to the cratering economy, several Redmond residents are getting a chance to own theirs.

Residents at Green Pastures, a 9-acre mobile dwelling park on the far west side of the city, recently formed a nonprofit cooperative to buy their park. The cooperative, serving those 55 and older, is the first of its kind in Central Oregon.

“This will allow them to remain in their homes,” said **Rick Crager**, deputy director of Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS). “By forming the co-op, park residents will preserve their neighborhood and prevent its sale to developers.”

Cooperatives offer stability that home ownership should provide, **Crager** said.

The move to cooperatives is “an old option rediscovered,” said **Peter Hainley**, executive director of the Community and Shelter Assistance Corporation of Oregon. The agency is putting together purchase options for manufactured dwelling park residents to buy their land.





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House Bill 2255A, which will hit the Senate floor next week, will cement the buy-in by defining homes in manufactured dwelling park cooperatives as real property. The bill, if passed, could pave the way for park residents to obtain the same financing options as conventional homebuyers and to take advantage of home loan products that will keep their homes affordable.

“Manufactured dwelling parks are an important source of unsubsidized affordable housing in Oregon,” said **Pegge McGuire**, administrator of OHCS’s Community Resources Division, which provides a host of services to manufactured dwelling park housing residents and owners.

“There are presently over 1,200 parks throughout the state,” **McGuire** said. “Overwhelmingly, these parks house people who are elderly and/or low income, and families with children.”

McGuire testified before the Senate Consumer Protection and Public Affairs Committee on behalf of HB 2255A, which, she said, will help residents purchase manufactured dwelling parks.

“This bill provides opportunities for residents of manufactured dwelling parks,” **Crager** said. “These opportunities may ultimately improve the department’s ability to preserve this valuable housing resource.”

The Green Pastures cooperative is the second in Oregon, following Victor Manor in McMinnville. Both pave the way for additional park





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conversions, one answer to fitting mobile dwelling parks into the viable housing mix for cities throughout the state.

“No new parks are being developed,” **Hainley** said. “We need to make sure sufficient land is set aside for new parks. In reality, this is not happening.”

Hainley said until public policy changes to better work with jurisdictions to develop new parks, cooperatives are a good move.

“As a result of this, we’ve been getting a number of phone calls from brokers and owners about the program,” **Hainley** said of the new cooperative. “We anticipate doing three or four of these each year.”

Next week:

The OHCS budget should go into work session, which will provide greater certainty about the resources available to support the department’s affordable housing and anti-poverty programs.