



RESIDENT-OWNED COMMUNITIES

Affordable, Sustainable Housing Solutions

WHAT IS A RESIDENT-OWNED COMMUNITY?

Manufactured housing is the largest source of unsubsidized, affordable housing in the United States.

In Oregon, there are nearly 140,000 manufactured housing units¹. This number is only expected to grow as factory-built housing gains popularity due to cost efficiency, fast construction times, and environmental benefits. Many of these units are located in investor-owned mobile home parks or manufactured home communities (MHCs). As MHCs change ownership or are increasingly sold to developers, rents increase significantly and residents who are already in financial distress may face houselessness.

There is a proven and nationally-recognized solution to preserving this affordable housing solution: resident owned communities (ROCs).

For the last 15 years, CASA of Oregon has helped manufactured park residents acquire their MHCs and adopt this model. **In Oregon, at the end of 2024:**

1,920

**ESTIMATED
HOUSEHOLDS**

3,532

**ESTIMATED
INDIVIDUALS**

28

**RESIDENT OWNED
COMMUNITIES²**

ROCs allow residents to form a nonprofit to govern their community collectively. Effectively a small business, a ROC provides for collective ownership of the land, with individual space lots being leased back to the homeowners. A board elected by the residents of the co-op assures daily operations of the park run smoothly. **This model of collective ownership not only prevents displacement of residents from affordable housing; it allows residents to exercise democratic principles while preserving affordable housing units in perpetuity.**

2021 was the high-water mark for housing preservation legislation when \$100 million was allocated to MHC preservation from the general fund. Since then, the state has made additional investments in manufactured housing preservation, but the amounts have been far lower and have dwindled significantly over time. And, they're not sufficient to keep up with the acute demand for effective housing solutions that our state faces today.

1. 2017 Oregon Data Snapshot.pdf (prosperitynow.org)

2. Source: CASA of Oregon

SO HOW DO MANUFACTURED HOUSING PARKS BECOME RESIDENT-OWNED COMMUNITIES?

1

Manufactured Park Owners issue notification of intent to sell

When a park goes up for sale, its owners are required, per Oregon House Bill 2364, to provide written notice to tenants stipulating that they have the opportunity to compete to purchase the park. The owners are also required to notify the Office of Manufactured Dwelling Park Community Relations within Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) of their intent to sell.

CASA works with them throughout this process to conduct a purchase feasibility study, and helps raise the needed capital to purchase parks, and complete life and safety infrastructure upgrades. We work with partners like OHCS and the Network for Oregon Affordable Housing (NOAH) to secure the funding.



2

Tenants respond to notification

Tenants have 15 days to respond in writing to the notification. During this time, we work closely with residents to walk them through the purchase process and help them form a tenants committee for the sole purpose of buying the community, if one is not already in existence.

At this stage, the tenants can request, in writing, that the owner provides all required financial information related to the park, including the purchase price, the total income collected for the community, and the annual cost of things such as insurance and utilities.



3

Tenants determine the course forward

After residents request the financial information from the owner, we work with them to analyze that information, conduct a feasibility analysis, and decide on a purchase price. CASA of Oregon works with affordable housing lenders like Network for Oregon Affordable Housing (NOAH) and Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), and grant funders like Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), AllCare, local governments, and others to raise the capital needed to purchase the park.

CASA also provides technical assistance to residents in complying with the other legal requirements of this process. For instance, residents have 45 days from receipt of the financial information to:

- Form a cooperative entity that is legally capable of purchasing property. Residents can also work with a nonprofit organization, such as CASA, that is legally able to purchase the park.
- Submit a written offer to the owner to purchase their community.



WHY ARE RESIDENT OWNED COMMUNITIES A SMART INVESTMENT?

The rise of Resident Owned Cooperatives signifies a **transformative approach** to affordable housing and sustainable living:

Resident Benefits

Over time, ROCs ensure lower lot rents that the residents themselves control, leaving them more income for home repairs, health care and education, and, thus, promote general well being. Moreover, these communities illuminate the transformative power of empowering individuals:

When residents take control of their destinies, they become advocates for change in their immediate surroundings and in the broader societal landscape.

Economic Benefits

Oregon is in the midst of a housing crisis: Houselessness is on the rise³ and an estimated one in four rental households spend more than 50 percent of their income on rent⁴.

Our solution both prevents houselessness and protects affordable housing. It is more cost-effective than leaving people to suffer on the streets. It is also cheaper than rental housing and cheaper than initiating new construction on affordable housing complexes.

Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) is spending an average of \$1,198.44 per bed, per month, to support daily operations across 54 homeless shelters in Oregon⁵. That's \$14,381.28 per bed, per year. **This cost is much higher than the space rent at a resident owned community:** In 2023, the average monthly space rent for ROCs in Oregon was \$486, or \$5,832 per year⁶.

3. Homelessness in Oregon increased by 8.5 percent in 2023 from 2022, according to a report released by Portland State University's Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative: Portland State releases 2023 Oregon statewide homelessness report | Portland State University (pdx.edu)

4. Construction, Housing Supply, and Affordability | Oregon Office of Economic Analysis (oregoneconomicanalysis.com)

5. <https://katu.com/amp/news/local/how-much-does-it-cost-to-operate-your-local-homeless-shelter>

6. Source: CASA of Oregon

Economic Benefits (Continued)

Of course, there are costs associated with buying a manufactured home park and converting it to a ROC. But, even the cost of developing a new manufactured dwelling park and home pales in comparison to the cost of building a new affordable housing complex.

Resident-Owned Community Acquisition & Conversion	New Manufactured Dwelling Park	New Affordable Housing Complex
TOTAL COST:	TOTAL COST:	TOTAL COST:
\$144,122,441 From acquisition to finish, including capital improvements for 28 CASA developed ROCs ⁷	\$22,000,000 With 75 new manufactured homes and a total of 87 spaces.	\$18,576,000 One 45-unit affordable housing complex in Salem, OR ⁸
PER SPACE:	PER SPACE:	PER UNIT:
\$81,904	\$252,847	\$387,000

Environmental Benefits

Cooperatives have the decision-making power to directly contribute to a greener future.

This can be achieved through:

- Smaller manufactured structure footprints
- Manufacturing in warehouses that minimize waste of building material
- Implementing energy saving measures like efficient heating and cooling systems
- Establishing recycling programs and implementing water-saving fixtures
- Incorporating manufactured dwelling park site designs and manufactured structures that are wildfire resistant.

7. Source: CASA of Oregon

8. Source: CASA of Oregon