



Snohomish County Council

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Councilman John Koster at 425-388-3494

Ordinance Establishing a Mobile Home Park Zone Passes County Council unanimously

Responding to communications and public testimony from mobile home park residents facing financial hardships due to mobile home park closures, the County Council today passed Ordinance # 07-029 unanimously.

Mobile home park owners point to escalating property values and subsequent property tax increases as a major reason for converting properties to other uses or selling their parks out from under park residents.

The new ordinance will help park owners who volunteer for a rezone keep their costs down by reducing their property taxes by limiting assessed values to those of a mobile home park. Washington State law requires the Snohomish County Assessor to appraise property at 100 percent of its "true and fair market value" in money according to the "highest and best use" of the property. Mobile home parks generally are not the "highest and best use" of property in zones where other uses are allowed. The ordinance creates a new urban zone, the Mobile Home Park Zone, in which mobile home parks are the only allowable use.

Councilman John Koster, author of the ordinance, said "mobile home park owners who volunteer for a rezone would see a decrease in their property's assessed value and thus a decrease in their property taxes." Park owners who opt for the rezone would be required to keep the property in the new urban zone for at least five years.

"This measure will provide some relief for some of our most vulnerable constituents as we continue our efforts to promote affordable housing" said Koster. "We are working within the parameters of the state mandated Growth Management Act. The GMA has limited the supply of land and significantly escalated the cost of buildable land. This measure is one piece of the affordable housing puzzle. We will continue to look for additional ways to provide our citizens relief."

Larry Stickney
Legislative Aide to Councilman Koster
Snohomish County Council
425-388-3494 x2575