



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER



## PRESS RELEASE

Date: December 15, 2022

Contact: Jason Hoppin

Jason.Hoppin@santacruzcounty.us

### SUPERVISORS VOTE TO FURTHER PROTECT MOBILE HOME AFFORDABILITY

The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously this week to bolster affordability protections for residents of mobile home parks.

Mobile homes are a critical component of Santa Cruz County's housing stock, particularly for lower-income residents, the elderly and others on fixed incomes. General and social rent adjustments are governed by Sec. 13.31 of Santa Cruz County Code. New rules adopted this week help residents by enacting additional limits for any rent increases and add protections for residents by providing for a neutral third-party to help encourage settlement of any disputes over special rent increases.

The item was brought forward by Supervisors Zach Friend and Manu Koenig.

"Access to affordable housing impacts everyone in our community, including families, seniors and vulnerable populations," Friend said. "By enacting these reasonable changes, we can protect both residents and mobile home park operators from costly disputes while keeping the cost of housing from spiraling out of control."

Specifically, the ordinance ties future rent increases to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rather than allowing annual 10 percent increases as currently allowed under County Code. Historically, the CPI has been well under 10 percent.

While existing code does allow special rent increases above those allowed by statute under certain conditions, the new rules implement several steps to help avoid a costly court dispute, including an option for both sides to accept the analysis of a third-party expert and the use of a hearing officer to help facilitate settlement.

The independent third-party expert must be someone with no financial interest in the matter and the cost of the expert is split evenly between the park owner and the space fee fund, an annual rate set by the Board and paid by mobile home owners for costs associated with the Rent Adjustment Ordinance.