

Warrenton: Rehab expected to extend the life of the complexes at least another 30 years

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Most residents in Alder Court have returned to their units, often the only option for a population with an average income of less than \$14,000. The residents pay no more than 30 percent of their gross monthly income to stay in the apartments. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development covers the difference.

"It's a tremendous change," said Arthur Nelson, who has lived at Alder Court for almost 10 years. "For one, we don't have to deal with mold. It's better insulation, heating. It's a lot cleaner."

In addition to the apartment being safer, the power bill has been less than half of what it's previously been at this point in the year, Nelson said.

The rehab is expected to extend the life of the Alder Court, Canim and Wapiti complexes at least another 30 years.

Michael Magee, an architect overseeing the project, said there are a lot more rehabs of affordable housing com-

plexes recently.

"There is a lot of stock out there that was built in the '70s and '80s that is coming due," he said. "Ten years ago, we hardly saw any rehabs."

State and federal agencies have put an emphasis on preserve existing housing before building new, said Todd Johnston, the executive director of the housing authority.

To finance the rehab, the housing authority competed for and was awarded \$10.8 million in federal low-income housing tax credit equity through WNC Inc., an affordable housing investment firm. The agency also received \$1.2 million in state affordable housing tax credits and a \$505,000 grant from Housing and Urban Development's home investment partnerships program.

WNC provided the money up front for the renovations in exchange for tax credits and an ownership stake with the housing authority on the properties through Alder Court LLC. After 15 years, ownership of the complex reverts to the housing authority.



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Workers with Bremik Construction are renovating affordable housing at the Alder Court Apartments complex in Warrenton.

"If we hadn't done this project, it would have been not too much longer before some of the units would have been uninhabitable," Johnston said.

The housing authority could have lost the federal subsidies and the low-income housing designation, potentially causing the apartments to be sold and converted to market-rate property. "It would be a real loss to the community," he said.

NW Natural: 'Getting out of the tsunami zone is really important'

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Warrenton Fiber has sold most of its property along Dolphin Avenue but still has a 14-acre plot of industrial-zoned land nearby, said John M. Nygaard, a representative of Warrenton Fiber.

The company is also planning a 74-unit subdivision in the area.

"We are looking to try and do a business park of sorts there," he said. "There seems to be a lot of municipal services that are attracted to the area, which is great."

Nygaard sees the area as a major site of future development at higher ground, especially if the school district is able to relocate.

"It's certainly something that's on our minds," he said. "Getting out of the tsunami zone is really important."

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