

Fairness, Sustainability & Quality for Vermont's Mobile Home Parks Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition

Mobile home parks are an essential affordable housing resource in Vermont. In 2019, one in every 38 Vermonters lived in a mobile home park (238 parks, 7,096 households, 16,400 residents). All residents pay lot rent and 90% of residents also own their home. Most parks are privately owned, but many parks have converted to resident-owned cooperatives or been preserved by nonprofits.

In 2019, consultant John Ryan prepared the report [*Sustainability Assessment of Affordable Mobile Home Parks in Vermont*](#) for the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. It is based on interviews with park owners and managers about park sustainability.

At a glance:

- Surveyed 52 parks in 40 communities, with 2,000 households, ranging in size from 7 to 172 lots.
- Median lot rent is \$325/month.
- Median assessed value of homes is \$20,080.
- In 2017, 23 parks reported negative cash flow.
- 300 - 400 homes are estimated to be substandard.
- Deferred capital needs are estimated at \$10 million.

In response to the demonstrated need in mobile home parks, the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition proposes the following investment to support this critical affordable housing resource:

Statewide capital needs: Includes projects such as (1) improving, replacing, or installing water and sewer systems, and (2) road, grading, and drainage improvements.

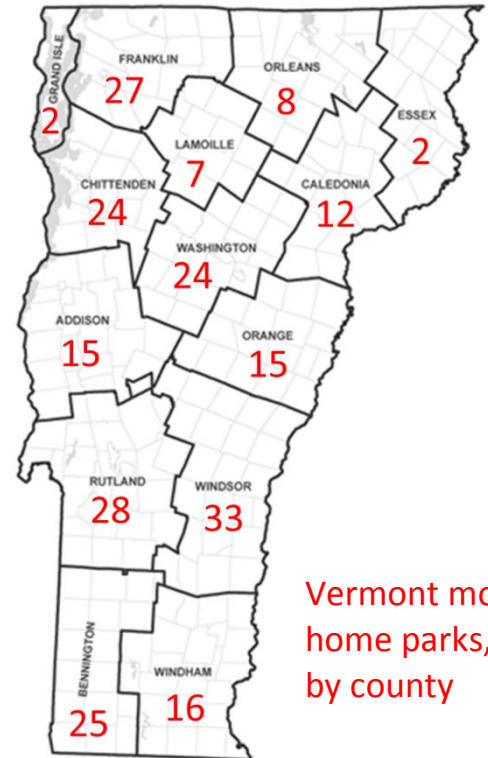
Tri-Park: Tri-Park Cooperative Housing in Brattleboro is Vermont's largest mobile home park with 314 lots. The community sustained heavy damage during Irene. Forty-two Tri-Park homes are in a flood zone and urgently need to be relocated. This project includes home and resident relocation, park infrastructure improvements, and 36 replacement homes.

Small scale capital needs: Includes projects such as disposal of abandoned homes, installation of new foundations on vacant lots, tree trimming and removal, and installing road aprons.

Homeownership, new and repairs: Provide funding to (1) fill vacant lots with Energy Star or zero energy modular homes by lowering the cost for buyers, and (2) make available grants averaging \$7,500 to homeowners with health and safety repair needs.

Affordable financing: Below-market rate loans will be offered to park owners through the Vermont Housing Finance Agency to finance infrastructure improvements and to refinance existing debt. Affordable loans will enhance financial sustainability. Loans will be made available to non-profits, cooperatives, and for-profit owned parks.

Program management and marketing: Hire redevelopment professionals to (1) support park owners in defining capital needs and to apply for public and private funding, and (2) update the mobile home park "brand" and make it easier for home-seekers to find vacant lots around the state.



Vermont mobile home parks, by county

Items	Amount	Potential Existing Sources*	Funding Gap
Statewide Capital Needs	11,000,000	8,250,000	2,750,000
Tri-Park Redevelopment	3,900,000	1,150,000	2,750,000
Small Scale Capital Needs	2,000,000	1,500,000	500,000
Homeownership, New & Repair	13,300,000	11,800,000	1,500,000
Interest Rate Buy-Down	1,000,000	-	1,000,000
Program Management & Marketing	400,000	-	400,000
Total	31,600,000	22,700,000	8,900,000

*Existing sources will provide some of the funding needed, including from:
 Park Replacement Reserves
 Agency of Natural Resources
 USDA Rural Development
 Vermont Community Development Program
 Conventional Debt
 Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

Park case studies:

Otter Creek Park, Vergennes



Nonprofit ownership - Addison County Community Trust
73 households

Which line items will support this park?

- *“Homeownership, New and Repair”* can enable current residents to repair existing homes and support new residents to place new homes on vacant lots
- *“Statewide capital needs”* can help fund new park roads. New roads will improve drainage to prevent water pooling on residents’ lots, reduce winter road maintenance costs, reduce wear and tear on residents’ cars, and end the expensive cycle of patch jobs to the current road.

Cold Springs Park, West Fairlee

Private ownership

16 households

Which line items will support this park?

- *“Homeownership, New and Repair”* can enable current residents to repair existing homes, continue placing new zero energy homes on vacant lots, and improve pride within the community
- *“Program management and marketing”* can support park owner access to the affordable financing offer as they upgrade water and septic infrastructure



St. George Cooperative, St. George



Co-op ownership - Residents purchased park in 2019
120 households

Which line items will support this park?

- *“Statewide capital needs”* can help fund water system upgrades for improved resident health and safety.
- *“Affordable financing”* can reduce the cost of debt incurred on water line improvements, resulting in better park operational economic sustainability.