

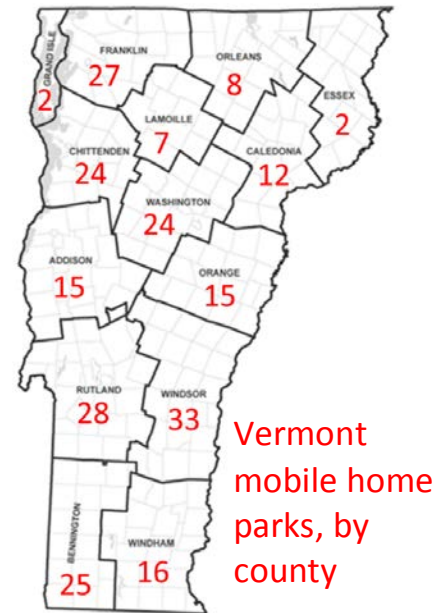
Fairness, Sustainability & Quality for Vermont's Mobile Home Parks

Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition

Mobile home parks are an essential affordable housing resource in Vermont. In 2020, one in every 38 Vermonters lived in a mobile home park (239 parks, about 7,000 households, 16,400 residents). All residents pay lot rent and 90% also own their home. Most parks are privately owned, but many have converted to resident-owned cooperatives or been preserved by nonprofits. Their affordability must be preserved and conditions improved.

In 2019, consultant John Ryan prepared the report [Sustainability Assessment of Affordable Mobile Home Parks in Vermont](#) for the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. 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.



Park needs include: major infrastructure improvements; replacement of substandard and abandoned homes; debt refinancing and forgiveness; project management resources; and co-op/nonprofit buy-outs.

COVID-19 has highlighted additional needs: Internet access; support and services for isolated, higher risk residents; rental and mortgage arrearage assistance; and costly additional COVID-related water chlorination.

Support Gov. Scott's budget for the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board at \$34.8 million, including a \$20 million one-time appropriation to help fund the following investments in this critical affordable housing resource:

Statewide capital needs include projects such as (1) improving, replacing, or installing water and sewer systems, and (2) road, grading, and drainage improvements. Gap funds will be leveraged alongside existing state and federal resources and incentivize further use of existing funding programs for infrastructure.

Tri-Park Cooperative Housing in Brattleboro is Vermont's largest mobile home park with 314 lots. Tri-Park sustained heavy damage during Irene. 42 homes are in a flood zone and urgently need to be relocated. This project includes relocating homes and residents, upgrading infrastructure, and replacing 36 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, Replacement, Repair:

Support Gov. Scott's increase to the Vermont State Housing Tax Credit to help homebuyers replace dilapidated homes and fill vacant lots with Energy Star manufactured homes or Zero Energy Modular homes (ZEMs). \$1.5 million in added funding will help homeowners with \$7,500 grants for health and safety repairs.

Affordable Financing: Below-market rate loans will be offered to park owners through the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) to support co-operative park conversions, infrastructure improvements, and to refinance existing commercial 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.

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, Replacement, Repair	\$13,300,000	\$11,800,000	\$1,500,000
Affordable Financing	\$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 which may provide some of the funding needed, including:
 - Park Replacement Reserves
 - Agency of Natural Resources
 - USDA Rural Development
 - VT Community Development
 - VT 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, Replacement, 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, Replacement, 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.