Vermont Mobile Homes and Parks Multiple Property Documentation Form Reconnaissance Study

Prepared for

Vermont Agency of Transportation

Prepared by

Mead &Hunt

www.meadhunt.com

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Executive Summary

From the 1960s onward, mobile homes have accounted for as much as ten percent of Vermont's housing stock.[1] As increasing numbers of individual units and mobile home parks approach historic age, the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has identified a need for a statewide National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) to address this resource type and streamline review of future projects under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. In the absence of an existing comprehensive study on the subject, VTrans has considered the possibility of either a resource-specific MPDF that could address pre-World War II auto camps, mobile homes, trailers, and other associated properties, or the addition of mobile home properties to a future post-World War II (postwar) context and MPDF.

In June 2020 VTrans retained Mead & Hunt, Inc. to complete a preliminary study to determine the most appropriate course of action. The goal of this initial study was threefold: 1) to understand what resources are present across the state; 2) to consider whether they may have significance either architecturally or through an association with significant trends in Vermont's history; and 3) to make a recommendation as to whether the property types are best addressed by a resource-specific MPDF or within a larger postwar study.

Ultimately, this preliminary study found that while mobile homes and parks are an important component of postwar residential development in Vermont, the property type transcends the broader postwar narrative. In order to best address the relevant areas of significance, a property-specific MPDF is recommended to encompass both pre- and postwar recreation, postwar residential development, and the ongoing importance of mobile homes as a source of affordable housing from the 1980s onward.

NOTE: The term "mobile home" is used in Vermont state law (as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6201) to refer to "a structure or type of manufactured home, including the plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems contained in the structure; that is built on a permanent chassis; designed to be used as a dwelling with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities; transportable in one or more sections; and at least eight feet wide, 40 feet long, or when erected has at least 320 square feet." While federal legislation uses the term "manufactured home" to refer to structures meeting the same criteria, the term "mobile home" is used throughout this document as it is most consistent with both colloquial use and Vermont state agency use (e.g., the Agency of Commerce and Community Development's Mobile Home Park Registry). This term does not extend to campers and recreational vehicles (RVs), as these are not intended to function as permanent dwellings.

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[1] Advisory Commission on Mobile and Manufactured Housing, *Promoting Affordable Mobile and Manufactured Housing Opportunities in Vermont* ([Montpelier]: State of Vermont, June 1992), 7, University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

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1.   Description of the Project

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has identified a need for a statewide National Register of Historic Places (National Register) Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) to address the mobile homes resource type and streamline review of future projects under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (Section 106). In the absence of an existing comprehensive study on the subject, VTrans has considered the possibility of either a resource-specific MPDF that could address pre-World War II auto camps, mobile homes, trailers, and other associated properties, or the addition of mobile home properties to a future post-World War II (postwar) context and MPDF. In order to provide VTrans with information on mobile properties and develop a recommendation, this preliminary study involved five components, which are presented in the following sections of this document:

- A summary of existing guidance from other states
- Preliminary state-specific research at Vermont repositories
- Geospatial analysis
- Selective survey of mobile home parks
- Recommendation for MPDF approach

Mead & Hunt, Inc. (Mead & Hunt) conducted a literature review to summarize existing guidance prepared by and for other states, including historic contexts, resource guides, books, and theses. This summary, presented in Section 2, discusses a variety of approaches to mobile homes and parks and helped to inform the proposed approach.

GIS analysis using parcel data, the Mobile Home Registry database maintained by the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, historic aerial imagery, and other existing datasets provided a comprehensive view of resource distribution across the state and identified several geographic and chronological trends (discussed in Section 3). This analysis also found that in addition to the 239 registered mobile home parks in the state, other concentrations of mobile homes are present, primarily recreational complexes, that also fall within the purview of a statewide mobile home study.[2]

Targeted research at Vermont repositories yielded important information on the history of mobile homes in the state and helped to understand and interpret the results of the geospatial analysis. Section 4 presents a summary of key sources used to inform the recommendations for further work and offers suggestions for how they might be synthesized in a historic context.

A selective survey of 38 out of 258 sites (registered mobile home parks and other concentrations of mobile properties) included representative examples of the variety of sizes, ages, layouts, and use types. Section 5 details the selective survey methodology and provides a list of surveyed properties, while Section 6 presents the findings and uses them to illustrate a proposed typology that Mead & Hunt believes is well-suited to the mobile home park property type in Vermont. Finally, Section 7 provides recommendations for further efforts and support for a resource-specific MPDF in a future phase.

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[2] Vermont law requires registration of any property with three or more mobile homes or mobile home lots as a park, although this does not include mobile homes used seasonally either for recreation or farm housing.

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2. Summary of Existing Guidance

The evaluation of mobile homes and mobile home parks according to National Register Criteria for Evaluation represents a relatively new topic in the field of historic preservation. States like California, Nevada, Minnesota, Texas, and Washington have begun exploring mobile homes and parks as they relate to eligibility for listing in the National Register. Additionally, the mobile home's postwar rise in popularity and the development of mobile home parks has been the subject of several recent graduate theses covering multiple states, including Georgia, Florida, Missouri, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

This summary covers the previous work concerning mobile homes and parks topically rather than on a state-by-state basis. The treatment of mobile homes and parks varies widely between states that have examined them from a preservation perspective. The degree of detail provided in each source varies. While some states have produced typologies for mobile homes and parks, others have focused on character-defining features. Sources that mention aspects of significance or integrity considerations do not look beyond the guidelines previously established by the National Register. In other words, no single source discusses how these property types could be evaluated in a way that moves through each step of the process.

Table 1 lists the sources examined and the topics covered within each report. The remainder of this summary will provide a brief discussion of each major section. The presence of an "X" in a box indicates that the source mentioned the topic indicated but does not necessarily mean that the discussion was in-depth. The presence of an asterisk next to an "X" that appears in the categories of significance and integrity signals that, though a topic was mentioned, these sources provided no guidance beyond those found in *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (National Register Bulletin 15; hereinafter referred to as NRB 15).

Table 1. Areas covered by existing sources

Source	States	Historic Context	Significance	Mobile Home Units Typology	Mobile Home Parks Typology	CDFs	Integrity	Eligibility
Survey LA: Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement Suburbanization, 1880-1980 (MPDF section)	CA	X		X	X	X		X*
Home Sweet Mobile Home Park (M.A. Thesis)	FL, GA, MO, WI	X	X		X		X	X*
Mobile Homes: the Unsung Heroes of the American Built Environment (Presentation)	GA	X						

Source	States	Historic Context	Significance	Mobile Home Units Typology	Mobile Home Parks Typology	CDFs	Integrity	Eligibility
Finding Five Million Mobile Home Parks as Historic Places (M.A. Thesis)	MN	X			X			
Red Top Trailer Park and Drive-In Restaurant, 1845 West Fifth Street (Determination of Eligibility)	MN	X		X				X*
Nevada DOT Mobile Home Evaluation Guidelines	NV		X*			X	X*	X*
The Development of Highways in Texas: A Historic Context, National Register Evaluation Criteria	TX	X				X		
The Royal Treatment: A Review of the Royal Oaks Mobil Manor (Presentation)	OR	X						
Historic Communities of Washington State (Website, photo collection)	WA							
Manufactured/Mobile Homes (Presentation)	WA	X				X		

A.   Historic context

Almost all of the surveyed sources provide a general history of the development of the mobile home and parks. These histories begin in the 1920s and 1930s with the popularization of trailer travel and the appearance of autocamps. In the 1940s trailers were used as temporary housing for military families and for workers near industrial sites that fueled the war effort. Following the war mobile homes served as temporary housing for returning troops. Unit sizes increased in the mid-1950s, and over the next several decades mobile homes became increasingly less mobile. Additionally, during this decade the number of mobile home parks increased rapidly. In the 1960s mobile homes were a popular choice for young families, and by the 1970s units and some planned parks had incorporated architectural and design elements that mimicked postwar suburban neighborhoods.

B.   Significance

Almost none of the surveyed sources discussed how to address significance for mobile homes and parks. The *Nevada DOT Mobile Home Evaluation Guidelines* mentions that period of significance for a park should span from the period between the construction of the park's first and last permanent structures. Units dating to within ten years of this period would be considered contributing to the park, which Nevada suggests should be evaluated as a district.[3] No other aspects of significance are discussed in the document.

Parker Clifton Lawrence's thesis, "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park," was the only other source to explicitly mention significance. He argues that significance may be established under National Register *Criterion A* by discussing a park's role in providing affordable housing to its community or by presenting the park within the context of the community development that took place in postwar suburbia.[4] He did not discuss approaches to *Criteria B* or *C*.

Aside from Nevada's brief guidance on period of significance and potential for significance proposed by Lawrence, no other discussion of significance was found within the survey sources.

C.   Mobile home typology

Minnesota and California have examined mobile homes and proposed simple typologies. Within both reports mobile homes are classified as buildings according to chronological periods, allowing several trends to emerge. Over time mobile homes tended to become wider and longer. They increasingly incorporated features found in site-built homes. As a result, the importance of mobility was deemphasized as the homes became larger and started to resemble traditional suburban houses.

(1)   Mobile home trends by period

Pre-1955
- Typically 30-40 feet in length
- Resemble mobile trailers more than permanent homes
- Short and narrow with small windows and aluminum siding

1955-1965
- Typically are 40-50 feet in length and up to 10 feet wide
- Begin to express a sense of permanence and are unlikely to be moved
- Windows become larger and more numerous, bay windows appear
- Feature full-height doors and layouts with individual rooms and hallways
- Additions like porches and patios appear

1965-1975

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[3] "Nevada DOT Mobile Home Evaluation Guidelines," May 2021.

[4] Parker Clifton Lawrence, "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park: Developing a Historic Context for a Modern Resource" (Master's Thesis, Historic Preservation, University of Georgia, 2014), 137.

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- Typically 55-65 feet in length and up to 12 feet wide
- Ranch-style architectural elements such as shallow-pitched gable roofs become popular[5]
- Units increasingly resemble modest site-built homes

D.   Mobile home park typology

Three sources provided classification categories for mobile home parks. These include California's "Survey LA" and two Master's theses on mobile home parks. The first of these, "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park," by Parker Clifton Lawrence examines parks in Florida, Georgia, Missouri, and Wisconsin. The second thesis, "Finding Five Million Mobile Home Parks as Historic Places," by Eduard Krakhmalnikov focuses on parks in Minnesota.

While mobile homes were sorted by age, the sources that discussed mobile home parks divided them in two major ways: by form or by function. Parks divided by form are classified by the degree of planning and intentionality applied to the park, either planned or unplanned. Parks divided by function are sorted according to the park's overall purpose and the type of residents they attract. Service parks provide amenities for residents who are likely to spend significant time in the park, like retirees. Residential parks primarily provide lots for mobile home units and are more utilitarian.

The form and function categories are not mutually exclusive and strong correlations exist between them. For example, service parks are typically planned parks due to their focus on providing pleasant atmospheres and amenities. Residential parks, particularly large ones, can also be planned, but many are small unplanned parks with few amenities or extra features.

Below is a description of each subtype found in the sources. "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park" discussed parks primarily in terms of form, while the information on classifications by function came from the guidance provided by the State of California in the Los Angeles suburban context.

(1)   Form: Planned and unplanned

- **Planned parks** are those that take cues from suburbia, often replicating the curvilinear layout of postwar neighborhoods. Within designed communities, plots and layouts are intentionally planned to provide a sense of privacy and shelter both between units and from the surrounding area. Landscaping and amenities such as a clubhouses or recreational facilities might also be present.[6]

- **Unplanned**, or "vernacular parks," are often located near the edges of town or on vacant lots within larger neighborhoods. While some degree of planning takes place to establish the park,

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[5] Mead & Hunt, Inc., *Red Top Trailer Park and Drive-In Restaurant, 1845 West Fifth Street* (Prepared for a Cooperative Program of the Minnesota Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration, December 2003), 36–37. Examples of individual mobile home units can be found at Architectural Style Guide, Mobile Homes, Washington State Examples. The site also includes a list of additional sources related to mobile homes and parks.

[6] Parker Clifton Lawrence, "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park: Developing a Historic Context for a Modern Resource" (Master's Thesis, Historic Preservation, University of Georgia, 2014), 30, 34, 36-37.

such as for zoning, permits, and infrastructure, in contrast to planned parks these parks often consist of a single arterial lane. Individual units are usually placed perpendicular to the road, and emphasis is on utility rather than on aesthetics. Individual lot size is small to allow for the maximum number of units to be placed within the park. Amenities in unplanned parks are fewer than planned parks or may be nonexistent.[7]

(2)   Function: Service and residential

- **Service-based parks** are those in which residents are expected to spend a significant amount of time. The surrounding environment plays a large part in attracting residents to these parks and they are often located near external amenities such as golf courses. Service-based parks that serve as retirement communities are particularly popular in warmer regions and many offer planned activities year round.[8] When examined from the perspective of form rather than function, most service parks can also be considered planned parks.

- **Residential parks** are those which function primarily as collections of lots that can be leased by mobile homeowners (or in some cases, a group of mobile homes that are rented individually to various tenants). Those living in residential parks spend a significant amount of time outside the park. They may be located close to places of employment to provide residents easy commutes. When compared to service parks, residential parks tend to be utilitarian. While amenities such as laundry facilities may be present, their primary purpose is the provision of housing rather than recreation.[9] Residential parks can be planned but many are unplanned, vernacular parks. Residential parks are more numerous than service parks.

(3)   Residential parks subcategories

In contrast to the sources above, which divided parks into the service-based and residential categories, in his thesis on mobile home parks in Minnesota Karakhmalnikov focuses solely on the residential category. He provides further nuance to the large category of residential parks by subdividing them according to their spatial location, which may provide clues to an individual park's development.

- **Industrial**: Parks adjacent to industrial complexes may have been established to meet the needs of wartime production. The remnants of these parks may still exist today in industrial areas.

- **Campus**: Parks on or near university campuses helped mitigate the need for housing in the immediate postwar era. Today these are largely nonextant.

- **Farm**: Parks established by farmers in need of extra income who chose to rent out small plots of land to mobile home owners. These parks may still be found today.

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[7] Lawrence, "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park: Developing a Historic Context for a Modern Resource," 36–37.

[8] *Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Residential Development and Suburbanization/Trailer Parks and Mobile Home Parks, 1920-1969*, Survey LA: Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey (Prepared for the City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources, January 2016), 11.

[9] *Trailer Parks and Mobile Home Parks, 1920-1969*, 11.

- **Roadside**: Roadside parks located on main throughfares may have developed from earlier trailer camps. These parks are typically located near gas stations or other roadside amenities. Individual lot size is small, typically limited to the amount of space necessary to unload a trailer.[10] Parks established near large transportation corridors may still be found today.

E. Character-defining features of mobile home parks

Texas, Nevada, and Washington all provided lists of character defining features for mobile parks. Inclusion of features varies greatly by park. Larger parks are generally laid out according to a plan and offer more amenities. Small parks may display only a few of the features below. Character-defining features listed for these states include:

- Park occupies a large single parcel divided into multiple smaller lots

- Early examples are generally rectilinear with parallel rows of mobile homes placed perpendicular to the drive

- More recent parks may have curvilinear streets with units arranged perpendicular or parallel to the road

- Utility hookups for individual units

- Office placed near the entrance

- Signage placed near the primary entrance

- Border demarcations either in the form of a wall, fence, or landscaping

- Community buildings, a pool, or other amenities

- Parks may incorporate a theme or style

In addition, Nevada provided a list of associated properties and features that should be considered when surveying mobile home parks. These include:

- Caretaker's house

- Bathroom or shower facilities

- Internal road system and overall layout

- Pools

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[10] Eduard Krakhmalnikov, "Finding Five Million: Mobile Home Parks as Historic Places" (University of Minnesota, 2914), 16–17.

- Laundry facilities

- Lighting fixtures

- Storage buildings

F.   Integrity

Two sources discussed integrity. The Nevada guidance sheet states that integrity should be assessed according to the guidelines set down by the National Register. It did not provide additional information. The other source to discuss integrity was "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park." Within his thesis Lawrence suggests that mobile home parks might benefit from examination as cultural landscapes. He undertakes six case studies in which he replaces the National Register's categories of integrity with those of a cultural landscape. These include:

- Natural systems and features
- Spatial organization
- Land use
- Cultural traditions
- Cluster arrangement
- Circulation patterns

- Vegetation
- Buildings and structures
- Views and vistas
- Constructed water features
- Small-scale features
- Archaeological sites, if applicable

The choice to use the categories found within cultural landscapes might provide helpful ways to discuss the organization and setting of parks. However, it may be hard to apply categories like "cultural traditions" to a mobile home park. Despite proposing a new list of characteristics that could be used to determine integrity, Lawrence does not provide an explicit argument as to why this approach would be preferable to using the seven aspects of integrity established by the National Register.

G.   Eligibility

Two sources, the California MPDF and the Nevada guidance sheet, discussed the topic of eligibility. Both California and Nevada suggest that if a park is demonstrated to possess significance according to National Register Criteria, considerations to determine integrity may include:

- The majority of permanent structures are a minimum of 50 years old and have good or excellent integrity

- Most of the park's units were manufactured during the period of significance, though some may date from other periods

- The park was originally developed to serve as a mobile home park

- The park represents an excellent example of the type with distinctive features

- The park retains character-defining features from the period of significance as well as original boundaries and unit configurations

- The park must retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association.

As noted in the Significance section above, neither state provides useful guidance on how parks might be determined significant. The eligibility considerations above also do not move beyond the current guidance available in the NRB 15.

Two sources, "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park" and the Determination of Eligibility for Minnesota's Red Top Trailer Park provide determinations of eligibility for mobile home parks. (In the case of "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park" the determinations are provided as case studies and integrity is assessed using cultural landscape characteristics instead of those set down by the National Register.) In both cases eligibility was determined using the preexisting guidelines.

H.   Conclusion

Mobile homes and parks represent distinct property types that have only just begun to receive attention within the field of historic preservation. Thus far the guidance presented by states and individuals that have examined these properties is largely borrowed from the guidance in National Register bulletins. While most of the sources provide historic contexts specific to mobile homes and parks, the guidance included alongside these contexts fails to move beyond a reiteration of generic approaches that have been applied to other properties. Furthermore, no one source covers all the steps necessary to evaluate the eligibility of these property types for listing in the National Register.

While similarities exist, the historic context within which mobile homes and parks developed differs from that of site-built homes and suburban neighborhoods. While this context is generally understood, there has been no major attempt to develop aspects of significance unique to these property types, to assess integrity according to the significance, or to examine how eligibility might best be determined for mobile home units and mobile home parks. While some historians have explored the theme of community development or the ways in which mobile homes have provided access to affordable housing, none have developed guidance on applying themes specific to *Criterion A*. There is general agreement that mobile homes should be approached like other individual properties for evaluation, but the semi-mobile nature of their construction has meant that units tend not to survive as long as site-built homes or have been substantially modified to make them livable. Therefore, it is also worth examining how mobile homes and parks might be significant under *Criterion C* in ways that consider their specific characteristics and historical development.

Our review of state guidance concludes that there is no thorough guidance at the statewide level for the evaluation of mobile homes. While current National Register guidelines are applicable to these property types, mobile homes and parks must be examined within the context in which they developed. To date, this has not been done in a comprehensive approach that examines the property type and subtypes, National Register themes and areas of significance, registration requirements, and integrity considerations to effectively evaluate them for potential National Register eligibility.

3. Geospatial Analysis Methodology

Two sources provided the bulk of the information used to inform this reconnaissance study: the Statewide Standardized Parcel Data parcel polygons (obtained through the Vermont Center for Geographic Information [VCGI]) and the Mobile Home Registry Database provided by the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD). Additional datasets obtained through VCGI assisted with identification of possible historical trends, including the Outdoor Recreation Sites Inventory (from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources [VT ANR]) and VT Data - Historical Census Municipal Population Counts 1791-2020. The following sections detail the use of these data sources to analyze and understand the spatial distribution and historical development of mobile homes and mobile home parks in Vermont. This analysis was then used to inform archival research, helping to couple the trends provided by the data with contextual information from a variety of sources. In addition to individual mobile home units, analysis identified three broad categories of mobile home properties, which are discussed in greater detail in the following section and in the typology presented in Section 6:

- Year-round mobile home parks
- Seasonal/recreational mobile home parks
- Residential lots in subdivisions containing a mobile home unit

A. Parcel data

Using the Statewide Standardized Parcel Data parcel polygon dataset (Parcel Data), Mead & Hunt identified all parcels associated with mobile homes, recorded as either landed or unlanded (within the CAT field, values 'Mobile Home/la' and 'Mobile Home/un'). "Landed" refers to parcels that include both the land and mobile home unit together, while "unlanded" refers to mobile homes that are considered real property but the owner of the unit does not own the land on which it stands (each unlanded unit is stored as a copy of the parcel polygon on which it rests).

Using both landed and unlanded categories (to include both park-based and individually sited units), the analysis captured parcels that were recorded in the statewide dataset as associated with one or more mobile home units as primary dwellings. The results of this selection (see Figure 1and Figure 2) show a wide distribution of mobile homes (both individual and located within parks) across the state. Most counties in the state contain between five and eight percent of the statewide total; Chittenden and Essex Counties, due to their high and low populations, are outliers.

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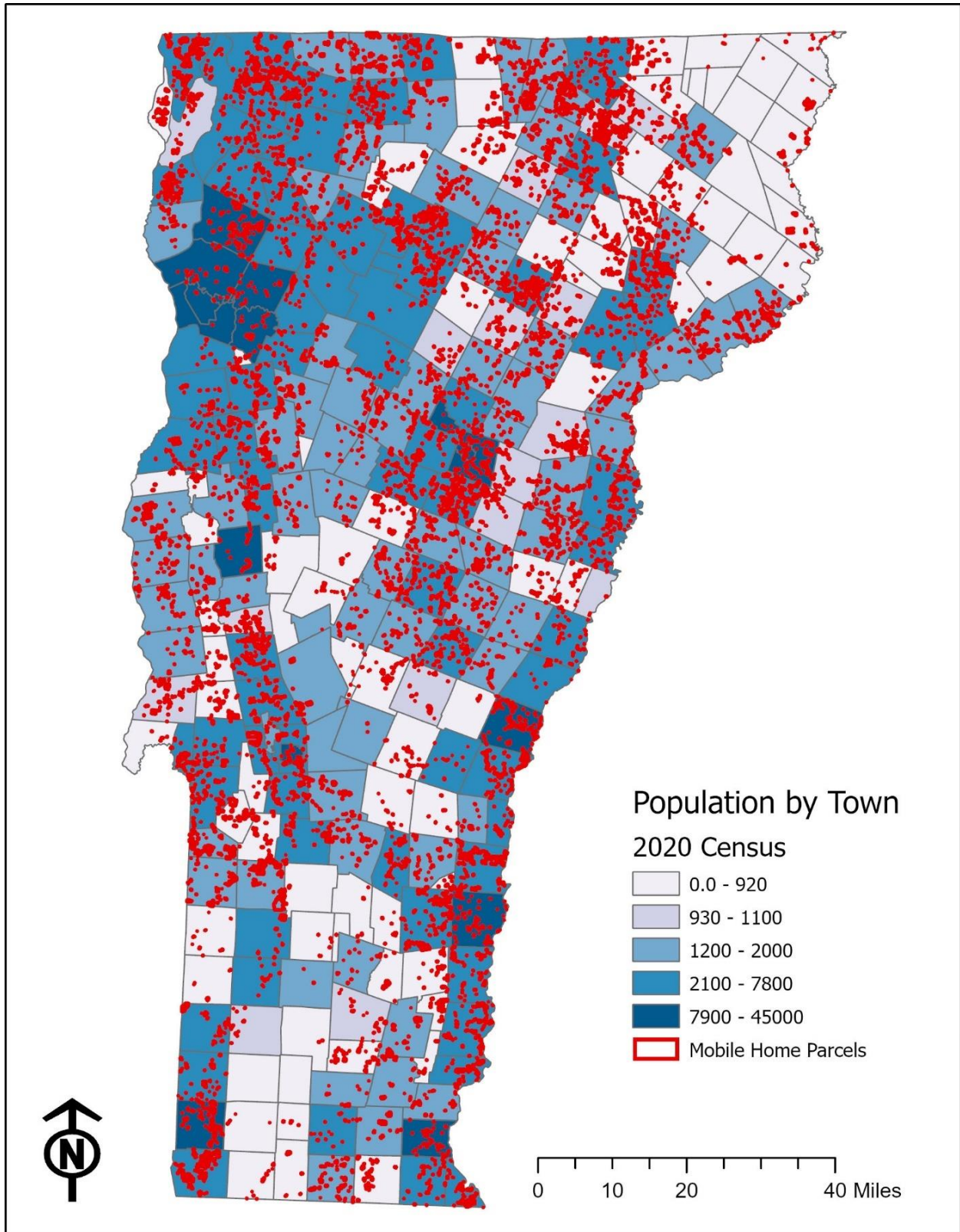
Figure 1. Map of Vermont showing population of individual towns and locations of parcels with one or more mobile homes.
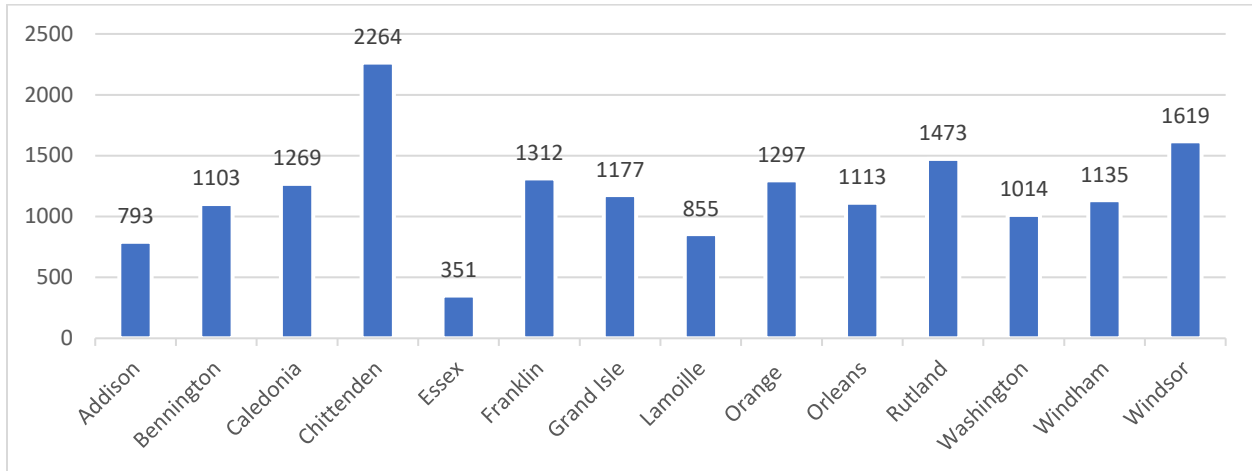
Figure 2. Number of parcels with mobile homes (landed and unlanded) by county.

(1)   Mobile home distribution and density

After calculating the centroid of each parcel, the resulting points feature was used to create a density map (see Figure 3). This made it easy to identify clusters of mobile homes, including many parks (when a parcel has many unlanded units on it, these points "stack" and show up as dense areas). This also revealed numerous concentrations of mobile homes that are not among the 239 registered year-round mobile home parks in the state (see the following section).

Additional analysis of the attribute table for the parcel polygons provided statistics on ownership; approximately 10 percent of all units in Vermont are owned by an individual or corporate entity with a primary address outside of Vermont. While several of the denser areas of out-of-state ownership in Bennington County represent mobile home parks owned by non-resident individuals or entities, most correlate to seasonal communities that do not meet the legal requirements for registration with the ACCD (see the following section).
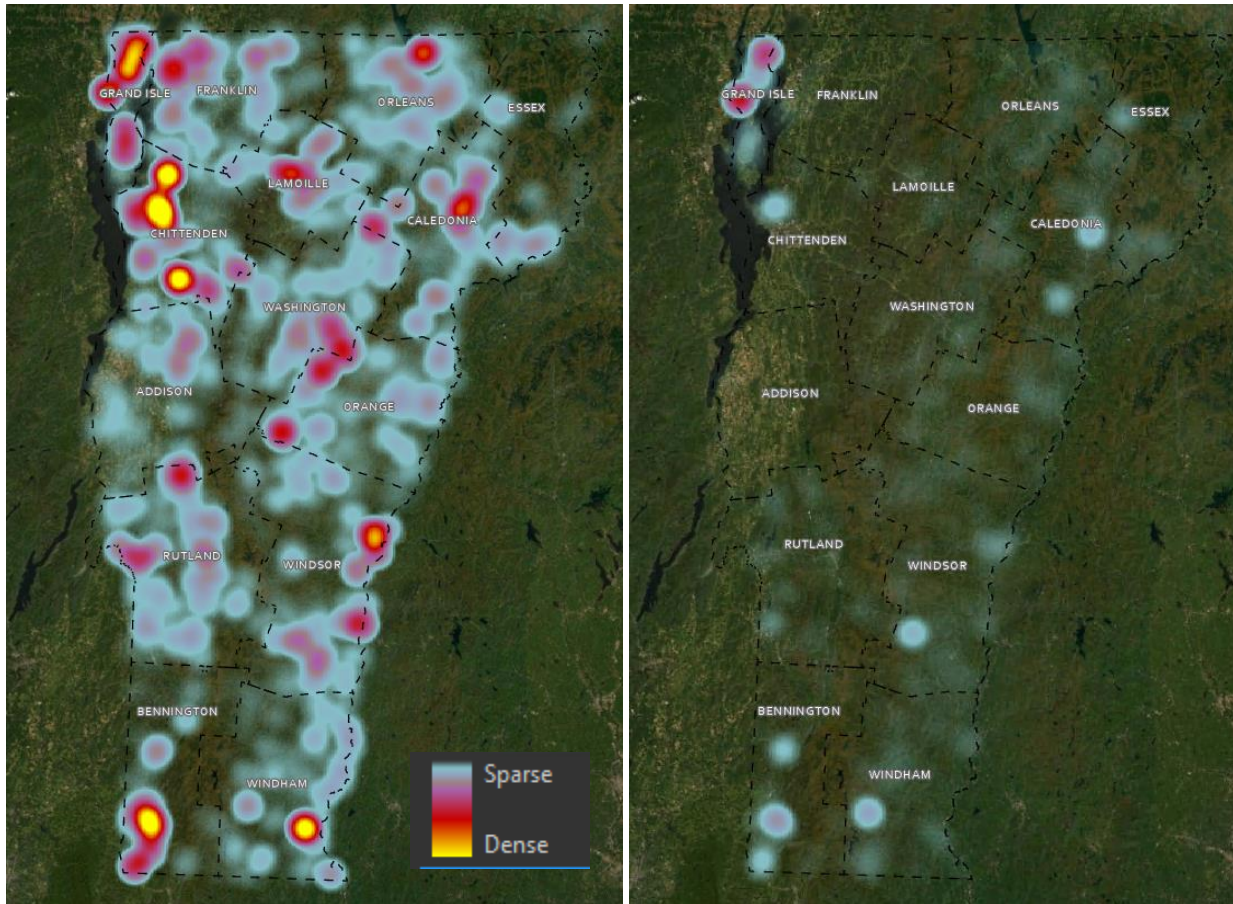
Figure 3. Density map showing overall concentrations of mobile homes (at left) and mobile home parcels owned by individuals or entities outside of Vermont (at right).

(2)   Relationship to population

To better understand whether the distribution of mobile homes is a direct reflection of overall population, Mead & Hunt then examined the relationship between the number of parcels with a mobile home (both landed and unlanded) and population at the town level. Figure 4 presents a map showing the ratio of parcels containing mobile homes to the total population as of the 2020 census.[11] This clearly shows that some areas have a higher ratio of mobile home parcels to residents, such as the towns of St. George, Starksboro, and Bennington, and much of Grand Isle County. It also highlights those with a very low ratio, including a large area of south-central Vermont as well as Waterbury, Burlington, and the north side of the Interstate Highway (I-) 89 corridor between both cities. This map is most useful for understanding trends in a town-by-town sense, and while it shows that the number of mobile homes per capita is not consistent across the state, it does not provide an easy, at-a-glance understanding of the relationship between population *density* and mobile home distribution at a state level.

Another way to visualize this relationship and understand which areas had a higher or lower concentration of mobile homes relative to population is to display the data using bivariate symbology. Figure 5 shows each town in the state shaded according to both the 2020 population and the number of

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[11] Count of mobile home parcels within the town boundary divided by the 2020 population.

parcels containing a mobile home. Using these two color ramps combined, it is much easier to see both the overall population distribution across the state *and* which areas have larger numbers of mobile homes. Dark purple areas have both large populations and larger numbers of mobile homes, while white areas have small populations and few mobile homes. Pink areas have larger populations but few mobile homes, while blue areas have small populations but more mobile homes. The map indicates that there are many towns such as South Burlington, Stowe, Montpelier, Norwich, and Woodstock with more residents but comparatively few mobile homes, while the opposite is true in Isle La Motte and several towns in the Northeast Kingdom. This suggests that future study and context development may benefit from a more regional approach. As every one of the towns with large populations and few mobile homes abuts one or more towns with a large number of mobile homes, future work may also examine the socio-economic relationship between these areas.

Imagery Source:Earthstar Geographics

Figure 4. Map showing town-level ratio of parcels with mobile homes to total number of residents as of the 2020 census.

Figure 5. Map showing relative quantities of residents (pink axis) and mobile home parcels (blue axis). Where that relationship is balanced, towns appear in shades of purple; where it is not, towns appear in shades of blue (low population but more mobile homes) or shades of pink (large population but few mobile homes).

B.   Mobile Home Registry data

After analyzing the parcel data to understand trends related to overall mobile home distribution patterns, Mead & Hunt then turned to the Mobile Home Registry database for 2020 and mapped the locations of all 239 registered mobile home parks (boundaries were derived from the existing parcel polygons layer). Information in the database was then used to examine whether any physical or chronological trends emerged at the local or regional level.

(1)   Distribution

Unlike mobile home distribution, registered mobile home park locations and the number of mobile homes strongly correlate to areas with higher population density, most notably Chittenden County, but also the Barre/Montpelier area, central Lamoille County, St. Johnsbury/Lyndon, White River Junction, Rutland, Bennington, and Brattleboro. The three northeastern counties have far fewer parks, and the majority are clustered in the St. Johnsbury/Lyndonville and Newport/Derby areas. Grand Isle County also has very few registered year-round parks; however, many mobile homes are found within unregistered seasonal parks. Figure 6 presents the total number of mobile home parks by county.
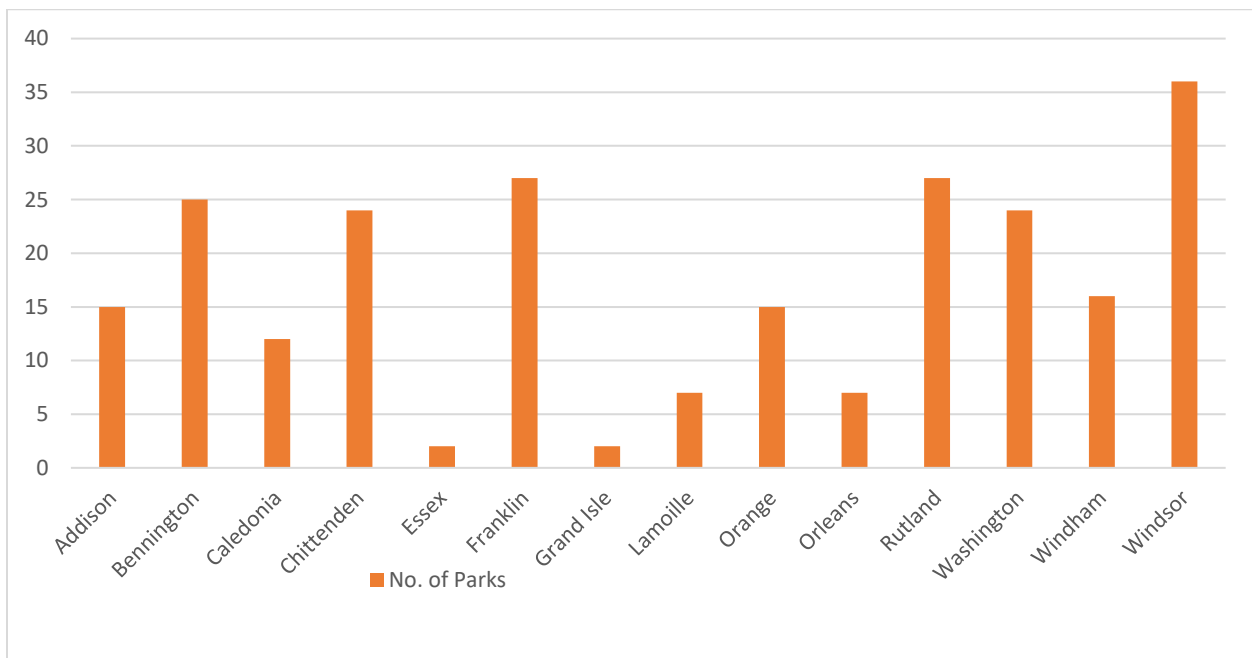
Figure 6. Chart showing the total number of registered mobile home parks by county.

In considering trends related to park sizes, however, only Chittenden County has a concentration of very large parks (see Figure 7). With the exception of the Mountain Home mobile home park in Brattleboro, all the parks with 120 or more lots are located in Chittenden County, and other regional concentrations are comprised of larger numbers of small or medium-sized parks (compare Bennington and Windham Counties in Figure 7). When looking at this larger body of small and medium-sized parks, data suggests that development varies from one county to the next as far as whether an area's needs are met by a few larger parks (as in Lamoille County) or a larger number of smaller parks (as in Rutland County), and county population is not a strong predictor of average park size (see Figure 8).

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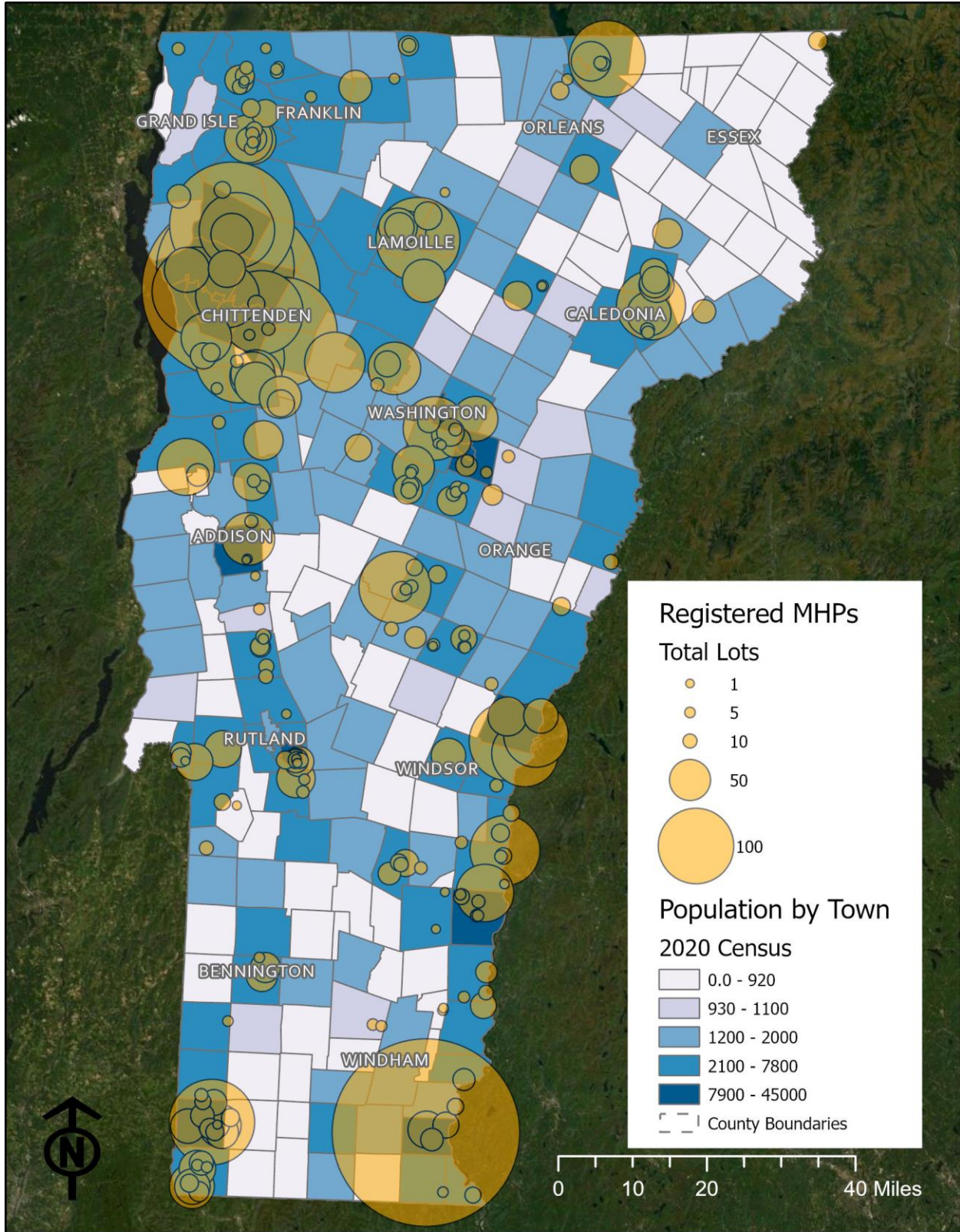
Figure 7. Mobile home parks symbolized by size (number of lots).
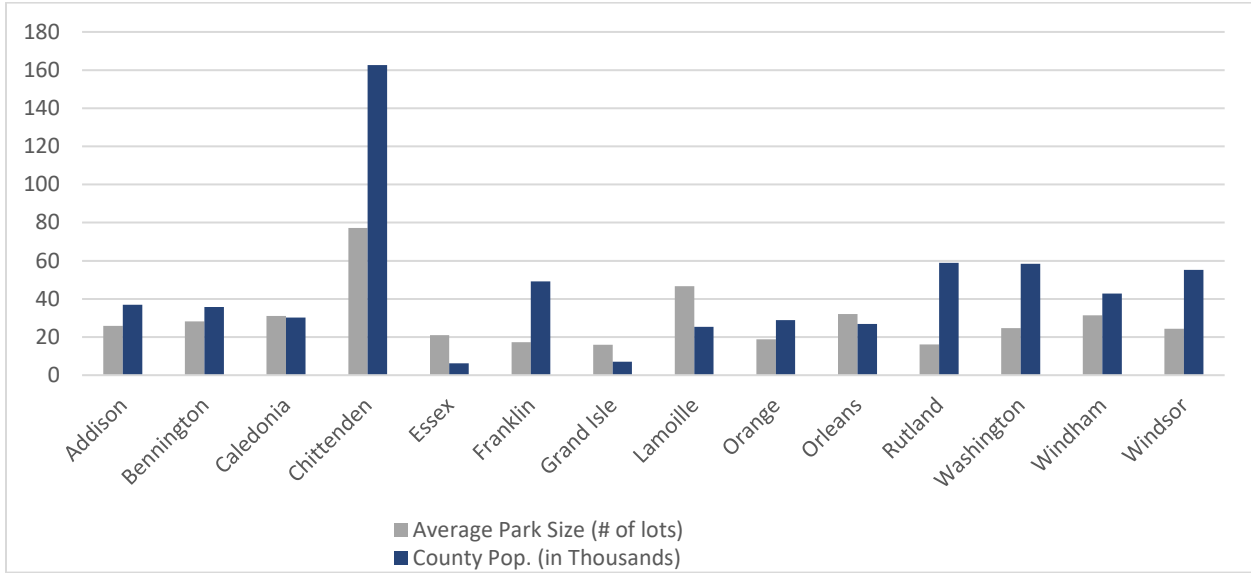
Figure 8. Chart showing the relationship between average park size in each county and the county population.

Ratios of park-based to individually-sited mobile homes vary considerably at the county level. In ten out of 14 counties, fewer than half of the mobile homes recorded in the parcel data appear to be located within registered parks (see Figure 9; percentages for each county were derived by dividing the total number of park-based lots by the total number of parcels containing mobile homes). The majority of mobile homes in Essex, Orleans, and Orange Counties are sited on individual lots, whereas more than 80 percent of mobile homes in Chittenden County are located within parks. Of note, while very few of the mobile homes in Grand Isle County are located in a registered mobile home park, more than half are actually sited on one of the nine large parcels that are not registered as mobile home parks but function as seasonally occupied communities of permanently sited mobile homes.
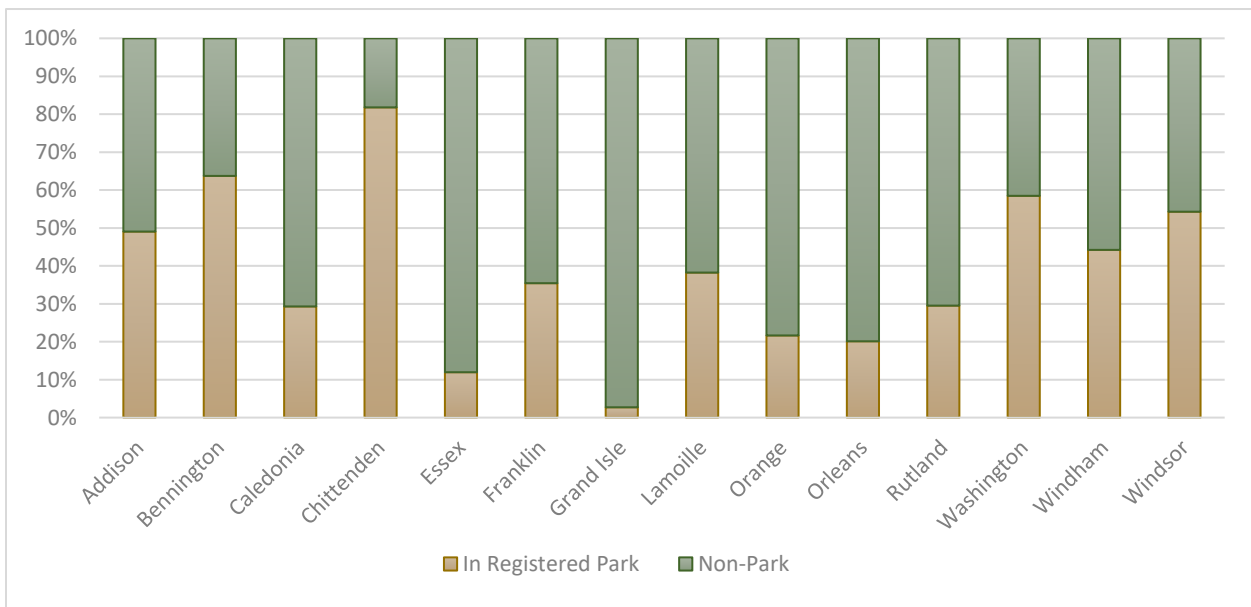
Figure 9. Chart showing ratio of park-based to individually sited mobile home parcels by county.

(2) Proximity to transportation corridors

A spatial analysis examining the relationship between mobile home parks and transportation corridors found that parcels containing mobile homes and mobile home parks are more likely to be close to a main transportation corridor (defined for these purposes as a State, U.S., or Interstate Highway). In fact, 90 percent of registered parks are located within one mile of a main transportation corridor, and 80 percent are within one-half mile.[12] In looking at individual parcel data, approximately 74 percent of all landed and unlanded mobile homes are also located within one-half mile of a main transportation corridor.[13] Those that are further from one of these main corridors are well-distributed throughout the state and no regional trends were discernable in this respect. While this information is mainly useful in understanding the relationships between transportation corridors and mobile homes, it also emphasizes the degree to which the vast majority of these resources have the potential to fall within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) of a VTrans project in the years to come. Just over one-third of all parcels statewide are within one-quarter mile of a State, U.S., or Interstate Highway. In comparison, half of all mobile home parcels and more than two-thirds of all registered mobile home parks fall within this range.

(3) Age of parks

Statistical analysis of the Mobile Home Registry data indicated that almost two-thirds of the registered parks were established between 1956 and 1970, and that nearly one-third were established in the five-year period from 1966 to 1970 (see Figure 10), after which park establishment appears to have dropped precipitously (assuming that subsequent park closures did not disproportionately affect newer parks).
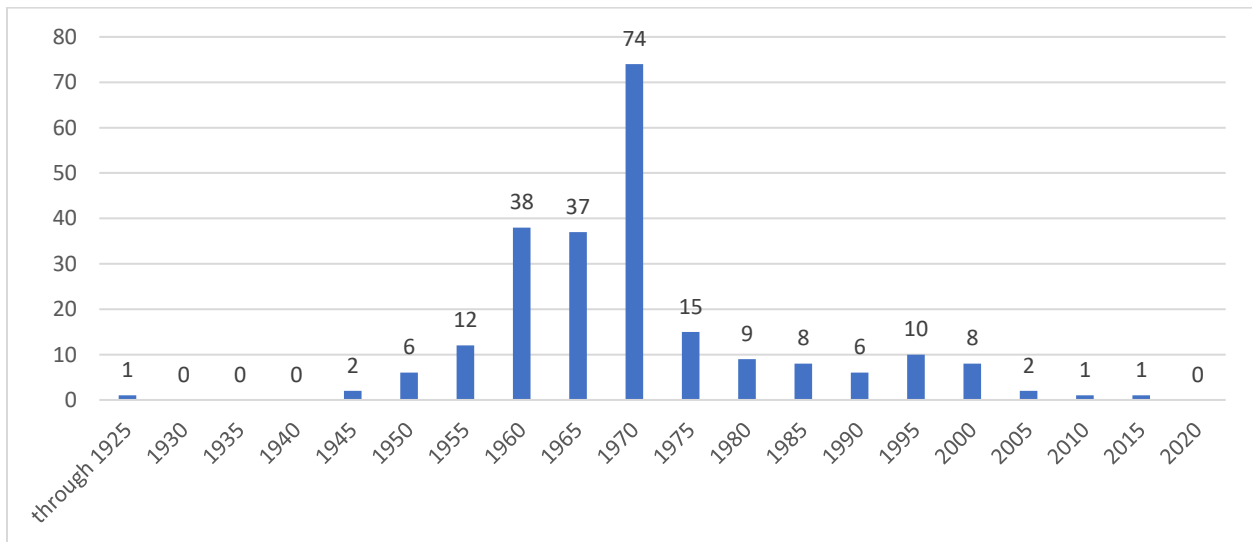
Figure 10. Histogram showing the number of mobile home parks established in each five-year period (axis label indicates end year; eight parks have no recorded establishment date).

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[12] Only 12 parks are located more than two miles from a main transportation corridor and none are more than five miles away.

[13] Just over 2,000 mobile home parcels are located more than two miles from a highway, and only 61 parcels statewide are located more than five miles from a main highway.

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No strong geographic distribution patterns were evident when considering age; most pre-1950 parks appear to be near major travel corridors (U.S. Highways), but no strong concentrations are visible due to the low overall number of resources from this period (see Figure 11). While only 15 percent of mobile home parks in Vermont are located within one-half mile of an Interstate Highway, nearly 78 percent of these parks were established between 1956 and 1970, compared to just over 62 percent of all parks statewide. Thus, parks currently adjacent to the Interstate Highway corridor are more likely to have been established during the main period of Interstate Highway construction and development in Vermont.
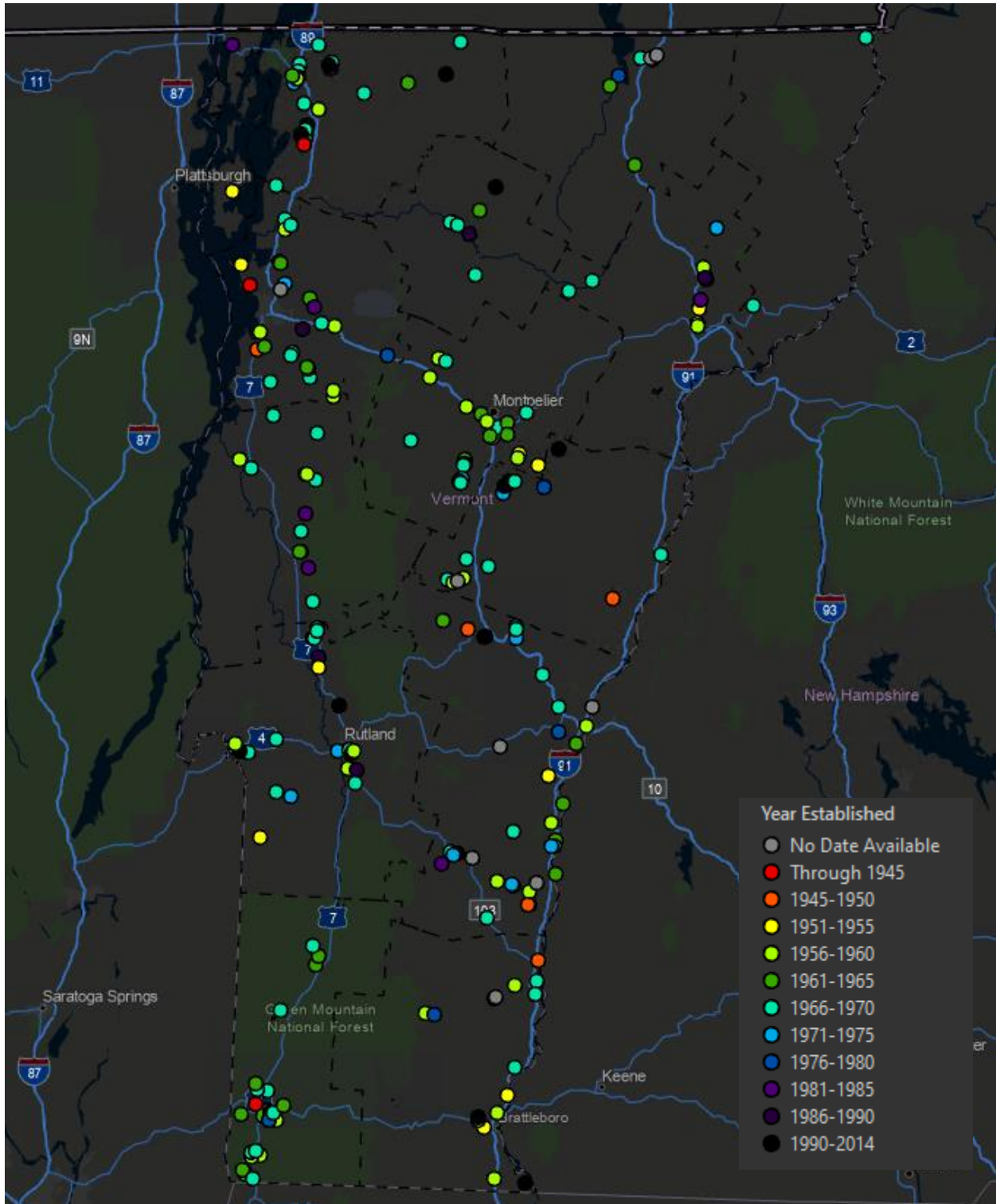
Figure 11. Registered parks color-coded by age.

(4)   Additional concentrations

After reviewing the density map at the town level (approximately 1:80,000 scale), Mead & Hunt identified 16 additional concentrations not registered as parks. Likely used as seasonal communities, these properties consist of multiple mobile homes on a single parcel. The vast majority of these unregistered

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concentrations are located in close proximity to a recreational attraction; more than half are located on the shore of Lake Champlain, while several are close to ski resorts in southern Vermont (see Figure 12).
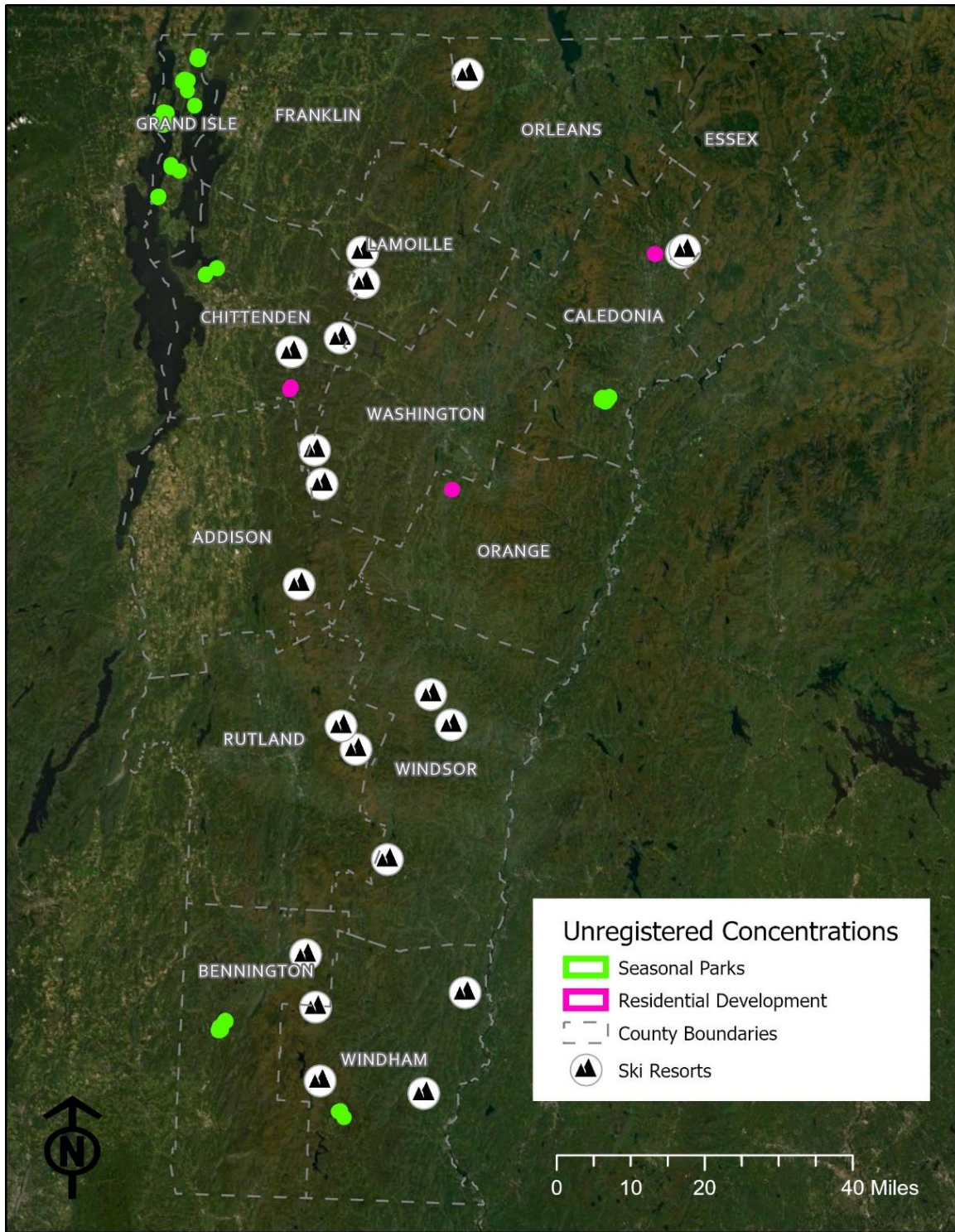
Figure 12. Unregistered concentrations of mobile homes are shown in light green; icons indicate locations of major ski resorts.

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While several of the seasonal parks appear to be a mix of mobile homes, permanently sited recreational vehicles (RVs), and transient RVs in a campground setting (see Section 6), many are visually indistinguishable from year-round registered parks, although they are more likely to contain amenities such as swimming pools and docks. These properties were added to the pool of resources used to develop recommendations, and a sample were included during the selective survey fieldwork.

In addition, town-level density map review identified three groupings of mobile homes that are simply residential neighborhoods; these consist of 16 or more contiguous, individually owned, landed mobile homes on typical residential lots and streets. Unlike the seasonal parks, parcel data indicates that these mobile homes appear to be the primary residences of the owners in most cases. Two of the three (located in Williamstown, Orange County and Huntington, Chittenden County) are visually indistinguishable from adjacent site-built residential development, while the third (located in Lyndon, Caledonia County) has a rigid layout that is visually similar to many of the mobile home parks surveyed as part of this preliminary study. Refer to Section 6 for additional typological discussion of these unregistered concentrations of mobile homes.

C.   Summary of geospatial analysis

The results of the geospatial analysis provided some useful insights and pointed toward several areas for further consideration:

- **Mobile homes parcels are more likely than other parcels to be located adjacent to main transportation corridors**. Half of all mobile home parcels and more than two-thirds of all registered mobile home parks in Vermont are located within one-quarter mile of a State, U.S., or Interstate Highway, compared to one-third of all parcels statewide within this proximity.

- **Distribution of mobile homes and mobile home parks across Vermont mirrors overall population trends in many areas, but this is not universally true.** Consider examination of areas that fall outside the general trend, as well as relationships between towns with very few mobile homes that are surrounded by towns with many mobile homes and parks.

- **No strong statewide trends emerged regarding relationships between population and mobile home park size**, indicating a varied approach to development of mobile home parks from one area to the next (more small parks vs. a few larger parks).

- **Most mobile home parks in Vermont were developed during the Interstate Highway era** (1956 through the 1970s). Preliminary research indicates that some may have evolved out of pre-World War II auto camps or postwar seasonal campgrounds. New park establishment dropped precipitously after 1970, likely due to new state regulations implemented in that year (see Section 4).

- **In addition to year-round mobile home parks, seasonal mobile home parks are found in proximity to recreational areas,** primarily Lake Champlain (Grand Isle County), and to a lesser degree adjacent to ski areas.

4. Preliminary State-Specific Research

In order to inform the recommendation for future work, Mead & Hunt obtained research materials from several sources, including University of Vermont (UVM) Library Special Collections, UVM Howe Library, and the Vermont State Archives. Historical orthoimagery from the early 1960s was available through VCGI and was consulted (along with subsequent imagery) to determine the early layout of pre-1965 parks and the prior land use of parks constructed from 1965 onward. The following sources provided a wealth of information on the complex interactions between the economic and environmental factors affecting mobile home development in Vermont and several key sources are summarized below, grouped by source type. These highlight Vermont's chronic shortage of affordable housing, the state's exceptional reliance on mobile homes as a source of affordable housing from the 1960s onward, and the relationship between tourism and recreation and mobile home park development.

A. State government documents

State Plan For Housing, [State of Vermont], 1968
This report does not discuss mobile homes but provides relevant background information that is helpful in understanding the need for and appeal of mobile homes in the 1960s and 1970s. It summarizes a number of relevant population trends over the course of the 1950s and 1960s, including the reversal of outmigration, rapid population growth, and the shift from farm to non-agricultural land use in many areas—and the resultant "partial urbanization" of communities that lacked typical urban controls. The primary focus of the report, however, is the chronic housing shortage (projected to continue for at least a decade) and the fact that it primarily affected low- and middle-income Vermonters. As of 1960 more than 30 percent of all existing housing stock in Vermont was considered to be dilapidated, deteriorating, and/or lacking adequate plumbing. Just over 93,000 dwellings statewide were considered "sound" and had complete indoor plumbing. In addition, nearly 73 percent of all dilapidated homes were occupied. A table also provides town-by-town statistics on deteriorated and dilapidated housing and would be helpful to compare to areas with high concentrations of mobile homes. Further, the report discusses the disproportionate numbers of elderly Vermonters, and notes that at that time Vermont had no public housing for the elderly and only two low-cost housing projects (in Brattleboro and Burlington). Crucially, the plan recommends that a minimum of 3,138 housing units per year are needed, and that these units are needed across the state, not just in urban areas. This helps to contextualize the establishment of mobile home parks outside of major population centers such as the Burlington, Barre, and Rutland vicinities.[14]

Report of the Governor's Committee on Manufactured Housing, [State of Vermont], 1969
The report presents the initial findings of this committee, formed in 1969 to address the need for a state policy on the location and development of mobile homes and parks. The report details the "dilemma" faced by Vermont at a time when low- and middle-income residents faced a shortage of affordable housing and increasing numbers of new mobile homes were shipped to the state to meet this need (the quantity shipped annually nearly quadrupled over the course of the 1960s). Despite the importance of

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[14] Lester Eisner, *State Plan for Housing* ([Montpelier]: State of Vermont, Office of Local Affairs, 1968), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

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mobile homes providing adequate housing for many Vermonters, concerns had arisen about the aesthetic and environmental impacts of mobile homes on the state's scenery and the unsafe and unsanitary conditions in many of the state's existing mobile home parks. The committee ultimately recommended a new state law regulating individual mobile homes as well as parks. The law was to require that all parks be screened from adjacent roads and properties, thus encouraging development of new parks in wooded areas away from valley bottoms. It would also require review of new park plans by a state agency. Density limits would be imposed within each park, and it was suggested that a minimum lot size apply to individual mobile homes as well [note: the Mobile Home Park Act (10 VSA Chapter 153) went into effect in June 1970]. The passage of this law is likely to mark a shift in the design and siting of mobile home parks established afterward and the material in this report helps to provide a "before" picture.[15]

Housing in Vermont, Planning Division, Vermont Agency of Development and Community Affairs, 1983
Unlike the 1968 plan, this report does specifically mention mobile homes. It provides a summary of progress over the preceding 15 years, including a reduction in substandard housing, which declined from 15 to five percent over the course of the 1970s. It notes that mobile homes accounted for an increasing share of the state's housing stock, with overall numbers rising by more than 50 percent between 1970 and 1980. In particular, it points to the increasing proportion of owner-occupied mobile homes (as compared to renter-occupied units). As of 1980, 8.2 percent of homeowners lived in mobile homes. The report uses this as evidence that homeownership was becoming even less accessible to lower-income families during this period. When compared with the data on increases in seasonal housing stock (which grew at twice the rate of year-round housing), this paints a picture of the ongoing struggle for affordable housing for Vermont residents. Additional useful information is summarized as well, including residential housing prices by county, and comparison of Vermont's housing stock to national averages; the state had nearly twice the national average of pre-1940 dwellings and mobile homes comprised 6.8 percent of all housing stock in Vermont, compared to a national average of just 4.3 percent. Again, this highlights some of the circumstances the state faced during this period that set it apart from national trends or comparisons with mobile home development in other states.[16]

Report to the Governor/legislature by Advisory Commission on Mobile and Manufactured Homes, [State of Vermont], 1987
The report notes that mobile homes were the fastest-growing form of housing in the state from 1970 to 1980, accounting for 6.8% of all year-round housing at the end of that decade. Although the passage of the Mobile Home Park Act in 1970 required development permits to be issued by the ANR, it did not apply to preexisting parks, and enabled owners of existing parks to expand without any agency review. This led to concerns for ongoing water and sewer issues in older parks, and the commission recommended that this exemption be removed. This information helps to understand the sharp drop in new park establishment after 1970, as the state review process made this more time-consuming for developers and

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[15] Norman Williams and Robert A. Fetz, *Report of the Governor's Committee on Manufactured Housing* ([Montpelier]: State of Vermont, December 15, 1969), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

[16] Roy C. Haupt, *Housing in Vermont* ([Burlington, Vt.]: State of Vermont, Agency of Development and Community Affairs, October 1983), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

may have instead promoted enlargement of existing parks instead.[17] Additional recommendations included expansion of state protections to park residents in the event of park closure or change of ownership. The report chronicles changes in laws regulating land use, including the 1975 amendment to the Vermont Planning and Development Act that prohibited distinguishing between mobile homes and site-built single-family homes in municipal zoning, and notes that local zoning continued to obstruct the development of mobile home parks in many areas. This suggests that mobile home and park development during this period remained strongly influenced by land use policy at the town level.[18]

Promoting Affordable Mobile and Manufactured Housing Opportunities, Advisory Commission on Mobile and Manufactured Homes, 1992
The Commission was reestablished in 1990 to help guide state policy related to mobile homes, which accounted for ten percent of all housing units in Vermont at that time. This report discusses a number of issues, including the ongoing need for mobile homes as a source of affordable housing; the impact of Act 250 on the development, expansion, and rehabilitation of parks; and local planning and zoning laws regarding mobile home parks. The document also references a recently submitted report on conversion of mobile home parks into condominium communities; this may be useful in understanding the state's subsequent encouragement in converting privately owned parks into cooperatives or transferring ownership to a non-profit or land trust.[19]

Mobile Home Study, Vermont Agency of Development and Community Affairs, 1974
The document provides statistics on the increase in mobile homes from 1970 to 1973 at the county and regional level.[20]

Mobile Homeowner's Bill of Rights, 1974, Office of the Attorney General Consumer Fraud Division
This brief pamphlet intended for mobile home residents details the rights and responsibilities of mobile home residents and park owners as established under the Bill of Rights passed by the Vermont General Assembly in 1974.[21]

1993 Directory of Mobile Home Parks; 2001 Registry of Mobile Home Parks, Report and Findings of the Vermont Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs

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[17] Sources at the time referred to this as the effects of the "grandfather clause," although this term is no longer considered appropriate due to its roots in southern states' laws limiting African Americans' right to vote.

[18] Advisory Commission on Mobile and Manufactured Homes, *Final Report to the Governor and the Legislature on Mobile Homes and Mobile Home Parks* ([Montpelier]: Advisory Commission on Mobile and Manufactured Homes, December 1987), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

[19] Advisory Commission on Mobile and Manufactured Housing, *Promoting Affordable Mobile and Manufactured Housing Opportunities in Vermont*.

[20] Agency of Development and Community Affairs State of Vermont, "Mobile Home Study" ([State of Vermont], 1974), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

[21] Consumer Fraud Division Office of the Attorney General, "The Mobile Home Owner's Bill of Rights" ([State of Vermont], June 1974), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

Mobile Home Park directories include information about any amenities provided in each park, such as streetlights, pool, laundry, community space, playgrounds, and more.[22]

B.   U.S. Forest Service and Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station studies

Analysis of the Campground Market in the Northeast, Report II: Privately Owned Areas, Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 679, May 1974
This report addressed trends in private campgrounds in New England. The author implied that rapid growth of the campground industry in the early 1960s may have created an oversupply, and also stated that the energy crisis may have reduced vacationers' willingness to travel. In turn this encouraged campground owners to look to seasonal leasing of individual sites rather than shorter-term rentals. This information may explain the development of seasonal mobile home parks and suggests the relationship between campgrounds and mobile home parks continued to evolve in the interstate era.[23]

Mobile Homes in Vermont, Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, 1972
This research report provides valuable statistics on mobile homes, including rankings of towns and cities based on numbers of mobile homes and mobile homes as a percentage of total housing units. This highlights many communities that may serve as a focus for future research; Colchester, Milton, Bennington, Brattleboro, and Berlin had the largest total number of mobile homes as of 1970, while more than 50 percent of all housing units in the town of St. George were mobile homes. The document provides information about how widely varying local regulations governing mobile homes affected the development of this housing type (some towns, such as St. George, restricted mobile homes to parks, while others held them to the same one-acre standard as site-built homes, effectively preventing park development). In some cases, such as Jericho, zoning ordinances expressly prohibited all mobile homes. The document also discusses the typical aesthetics of mobile home parks during this period.[24]

[*Untitled list of private and public campgrounds*] compiled by UVM Extension Economist M.I. Bevins, 1972
Among the numerous campground facilities across the state, the document includes many with "trailer park" in the name, several of which appear to have evolved into seasonal mobile home parks. Additional study may indicate whether some have since become year-round mobile home parks.[25]

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[22] Vermont State Housing Authority, "Directory of Mobile Home Parks in Vermont" ([State of Vermont], 1993), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections; Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs, "2001 Registry of Mobile Home Parks," February 2002, University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

[23] Malcolm I. Bevins et al., *Analysis of the Campground Market in the Northeast; Report II: Privately Owned Areas*, Northeast Regional Research Publication (Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Vermont, May 1974).

[24] Robert O. Sinclair and Terence Fiske, *Research Report: Mobile Homes in Vermont* (Burlington: Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Vermont, October 1972), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

[25] M.I. Bevins, "Campgrounds in Vermont (Operational in 1971)" ([University of Vermont], January 10, 1972), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

C.   Journal articles

The results of a study undertaken by Federal Reserve Bank economist Carol S. Greenwald in 1969 are presented in her article entitled "Mobile Homes in New England," published in the *New England Economic Review*, May/June 1970. The article provides vital regional context to understand mobile homes and mobile home park development in Vermont as compared to other New England states. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island saw far less mobile home development per capita in the late 1960s than the national average, while New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine saw far more (the author attributed this disparity to the income differential between the northern and southern New England states). New site-built homes were thus less affordable to many families in northern New England, and the report suggests that the existing supply of older homes in these areas did not provide a higher standard of housing than mobile homes (presumably due to dilapidation or lack of modern amenities; see the 1978 report on housing quality). Of note, Vermont received a noticeably higher number of mobile homes per capita in 1969 than any other New England state, and mobile homes accounted for the vast majority, if not all, of new housing starts in many Vermont communities during this period.[26]

The article also discusses mobile home parks, noting that those in New England do not typically follow the pattern of "large, new, well-designed mobile home parks like those [in] California, Florida, and Arizona" and are frequently converted trailer camps. However, it points out that Vermont had just passed legislation that set statewide standards for mobile home parks intended to preserve "the traditional scenic environment of the state." A map at the rear of the report provides an extremely valuable snapshot of the state in 1970, showing individual towns color-coded according to the ratio of new mobile homes to new site-built homes for 1969 as well as which towns prohibited mobile homes and which ones had at least one mobile home park. It also places Vermont in context alongside other New England states in this regard.

D.   Private campground information

Newspaper research indicated that Vermont expected its first large influx of trailer campers in the 1937 summer season. This suggests that many of the trailer camps that might have later become mobile home parks were likely established from this point onward. Articles indicated that trailer camps need not be an expansion of cabin courts but could be independent as long as electricity and water were provided.[27] A review of periodicals from the late 1930s through 1950s, such as *Automobile and Trailer Travel Magazine* (later *Trailer Travel Magazine*), may provide the locations of trailer camps established during this period.

New England Tourist Camp and Cabin Directory, National Tourist Camp Owners Association, 1932-1933 The directory includes a mere seven sites in Vermont (Barre, Bennington, Canaan, Montpelier, Rutland, South Hero, and St. Albans), and does not include the location of the one prewar registered mobile home park (North Avenue Co-op), reportedly established in 1923.[28] While additional research may correlate the

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[26] Carol S. Greenwald, "Mobile Homes in New England," *New England Economic Review*, June 1970, 2–27.

[27] "Atmosphere Is Advised for Cabins," *The Burlington Free Press*, April 17, 1937, 4; "Tourist Home Operators to Raise Prices This Season," *Rutland Daily Herald*, May 7, 1937, 6.

[28] The Mobile Home Registry lists the date of establishment as 1923, however in her compilation of research and interviews with the original owners, former UVM Historic Preservation Program student Lisa Phinney gives a date of

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location of some of these seven sites with later mobile home parks, this suggests that some early trailer camps, such as the forerunner of the North Avenue Co-op, may have been more informal and/or were established later on.[29]

Vermont Private Campgrounds (Maps), The Vermont Association of Private Campground Owners and Operators (VAPCOO)
VAPCOO published annual maps with the locations of 70+ campgrounds around the state. Information on each campground identifies amenities, trailer accommodations, number of sites, and dates of operation. The collection includes maps from 1972 onward. Several of the mobile home parks and seasonal concentrations identified in the GIS analysis appear on these maps, and future research may identify which sites may have evolved into mobile home parks.[30]

E.   Additional housing studies

Central Vermont Regional Housing Needs: Analysis and Allocation Plan, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, 1978
Covering Washington County and the northernmost three towns in Orange County, this report contains a wealth of information at the regional and town level regarding population growth, the housing shortage, the condition of existing housing, socio-economic conditions, and the substantial impact of the conversion of many formerly year-round homes into vacation properties. Housing condition tables separate mobile homes and give useful information on the condition of these properties (good, needs repair, dilapidated) at the time of the census. Of 25 towns and cities in the region, more than half the mobile homes in ten communities were classified as "needs repair" or "dilapidated", and in nine communities, more than 15 percent of mobile homes were considered "dilapidated." This can shed some light on the likelihood of survival for mobile homes constructed prior to 1970, which is presumed to be low.[31]

Housing Quality Data for Vermont, UVM Center for Rural Studies, 1972
Using data compiled from the 1970 federal census, Table 2 in the document presents the number of permanent structures and mobile homes for each town in the state, as well as the percentage of all occupied units that are mobile homes. Tables 4 and 5 contains totals and percentages for all dwellings based on whether they are equipped with piped hot and cold water and flush toilets. As with the 1968 *State Plan For Housing*, and the Greenwald article, this data helps to contextualize the appeal of mobile

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1943. She notes that by the early 1920s, "occasional campers" may have used the farm field at this location, and the original owner also stated that this use began in 1939; see https://www.uvm.edu/histpres/HPJ/phinney/intro.html.

[29] Raymond C. Palmer, "New England Tourist Camp and Cabin Directory, 1932-1933" (National Tourist Camp Owners Association, 1932), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

[30] "Vermont Private Campgrounds, Maps" (Vermont Association of Private Campground Owners and Operators, 1988 1972), [Camps and camping in Vermont].

[31] *Central Vermont Regional Housing Needs: Analysis and Allocation Plan* (Montpelier, Vt.: Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, May 1, 1978), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

homes as a higher standard of housing than some older site-built homes, and also provides a snapshot of mobile home totals at that time.[32]

F.   Summary

Based on preliminary research and the results of the geospatial analysis, it appears that mobile home and park development in Vermont can be understood to follow several broad chronological trends:

- Prewar trailer camps served tourists; many likely date from the late 1930s onward (additional research will be required to identify and correlate the locations with later mobile home parks).

- The postwar period saw an increase in both trailer camps and seasonal campgrounds offering trailer accommodations.

- Mobile homes and parks proliferated throughout the 1950s and 1960s to meet demand for affordable housing. Some of these parks may have been converted from trailer camps established from the late 1930s through 1950s.

- State efforts to regulate mobile homes and parks began in the late 1960s and legislation took effect in the early 1970s, governing siting and design of parks. This coincides with the passage of Act 250 and stems from some of the same concerns, as well as the health and safety of park residents.

- Population growth and rise of vacation properties in the 1970s contributed to ongoing shortage of affordable housing; mobile homes account for an increasing share of housing units and owner-occupied homes. Following the passage of Act 250 and the Mobile Home Park Act, far fewer parks are subsequently established, but those from this period may reflect new standards.

- From the 1990s onward, mobile homes continued to provide affordable housing to Vermonters, and state officials considered the impact of Act 250 in inhibiting mobile home park development. This period also saw a move toward cooperatives, non-profits, and land trusts assuming ownership of privately owned parks.

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[32] Roy C. Haupt, *Housing Quality Data for Vermont* (Burlington, Vermont: University of Vermont, Center for Rural Studies, 1978), University of Vermont Library, Special Collections.

5.   Selective Survey Methodology

Prior to developing a typology and formalizing a recommendation, Mead & Hunt conducted a selective survey of mobile home parks across Vermont.[33] The sample set was intended to represent a cross-section of the overall pool of both registered mobile home parks and unregistered concentrations. It contains examples that span the ranges of age, size, layout, and purpose (year-round residential and seasonal use) and includes examples from 13 out of 14 Vermont counties.[34]

Using current aerial imagery, Mead & Hunt first examined each of the 239 registered parks and 19 unregistered concentrations of mobile homes and recorded observations related to road layout, mobile home spacing and orientation, associated structures, and setting. This information was used to develop a tentative typology. By combining these observations with information in the Mobile Home Registry Database, such as the total number of lots and the year of establishment, a total of 39 sites for survey was selected (presented in Table 2 and Figure 13). These include the largest and smallest parks in the State, representatives of different eras of park development, and several that illustrate evolution and expansion over time.

Fieldwork was conducted over a one-week period from August 9 to August 13, 2021. Surveyors drove all roads within each park, obtained photographs showing typical streetscapes from multiple angles, and documented the presence of amenities such as pools, community centers, and playing fields, as well as offices, signage, lighting, mailboxes, and any landscaping or other related resources. The resulting information was used to prepare a discussion of potential typological considerations, presented in the following section, that may guide future efforts.

Table 2. Selected survey sites

Site name	County	Town name	Physical address	Year established	Total lots
Otter Creek Park	Addison	Vergennes City	Panton Road	1960	73
High Manor Park	Addison	Waltham	1202 Green Street	1966	23
Willows Mobile Home Park	Bennington	Bennington	211 Northside Drive	1945	24
Gore Road Mobile Home Park	Bennington	Bennington	Gore Road, Bennington	1960	38
McGill Avenue Mobile Home Park	Caledonia	St. Johnsbury	11 McGill Avenue	1955	10
Riverview Estates	Caledonia	Lyndon	Rte 114/East Burke Road	1957	30
BCP Mobile Home Park	Caledonia	Hardwick	Route 16, East Hardwick, VT	1989	7
Unnamed (Folsom vicinity)*	Caledonia	Lyndon	Locust, Ingalls, & Woodbury Lanes	n/a	n/a
Strong's Mobile Home Park	Caledonia	Hardwick	52 Molleur Drive	1970	3

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[33] Selective survey did not include individual mobile homes located outside of parks.

[34] No examples were selected within Essex County, which has only two registered parks.

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Site name	County	Town name	Physical address	Year established	Total lots
Woodland Shores Park RLLP	Chittenden	Colchester	1518 Porters Point Road	1952	56
Breezy Acres Mobile Home Park	Chittenden	Colchester	3691 Roosevelt Highway	1962	191
Williston Woods Coop Housing Corp	Chittenden	Williston	126 Williston Woods Road	1983	112
Westbury Park	Chittenden	Colchester	289 Coventry Road	1972	250
Simonds Mobile Home Park	Franklin	St. Albans	RD 2 Nason Street, St. Albans	1967	60
Gosselin's Mobile Home Park	Franklin	St. Albans City	102 Lower Newton Street	2014	13
Cooper's Bay Mobile Home Park	Grand Isle	Grand Isle	East Shore Road, Grand Isle	1954	24
Alburg RV Resort*	Grand Isle	Alburg	Blue Rock Road	c.1963	120+
Sterling View Mobile Home Park	Lamoille	Hyde Park	Route 15, Hyde Park	1988	113
Mobile Acres Mobile Home Park	Orange	Braintree	Route 12A	1969	95
Grenier Mobile Home Park	Orleans	Derby	Roy Street	unknown	9
Valley View Mobile Home Park	Rutland	Brandon	Franklin St. Route 7 South	1955	10
Billings Mobile Manor	Rutland	Rutland City	So. side of Curtis Ave.	1964	34
FWMHP, LLC	Rutland	Castleton	81 Cramton Road	1970	44
Allen Street Mobile Home Park	Rutland	Rutland City	33 Allen Street	1971	18
Brookside Mobile Home Park	Rutland	Rutland City	Mussey Street, Rutland	1978	26
Prestons Park	Rutland	Rutland City	Curtis Avenue	1980	12
Mussey Street Mobile Home Park	Rutland	Rutland City	209-215 Mussey Street	1993	14
Eastwood Manor Mobile Home Park	Washington	Berlin	US Route 2, Berlin	1965	9
Northfield Falls Mobile Home Park	Washington	Northfield	VT Route 12	1965	51
LaGue Inc.	Washington	Berlin	Off Green Mountain Drive, Berlin	1967	36
Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park	Washington	East Montpelier	Route 14, East Montpelier	1970	56
Tucker Mobile Home Park	Washington	Northfield	Fairgrounds Road, Northfield	1975	32
Mountain Home Park	Windham	Brattleboro	42 Village Drive - Off Route 9 West	1958	264

Site name	County	Town name	Physical address	Year established	Total lots
Deepwood Mobile Home Park	Windham	Brattleboro	Deepwood Drive	1991	42
Unnamed grouping*	Windham	Wilmington	Cross Country Circle	unknown	31
Chambers Mobile Home Village	Windsor	Hartford	1 Chambers Lane	1960	84
Woodside Manor	Windsor	Hartland	Blake Drive, Hartford and Hartland	1965	87
Country Estates Mobile Home Park, LLC	Windsor	Weathersfield	Route 5	1965	92
Tall Timbers MH Community, LLC	Windsor	Hartford	40 Moosewood Way, Quechee	1977	105
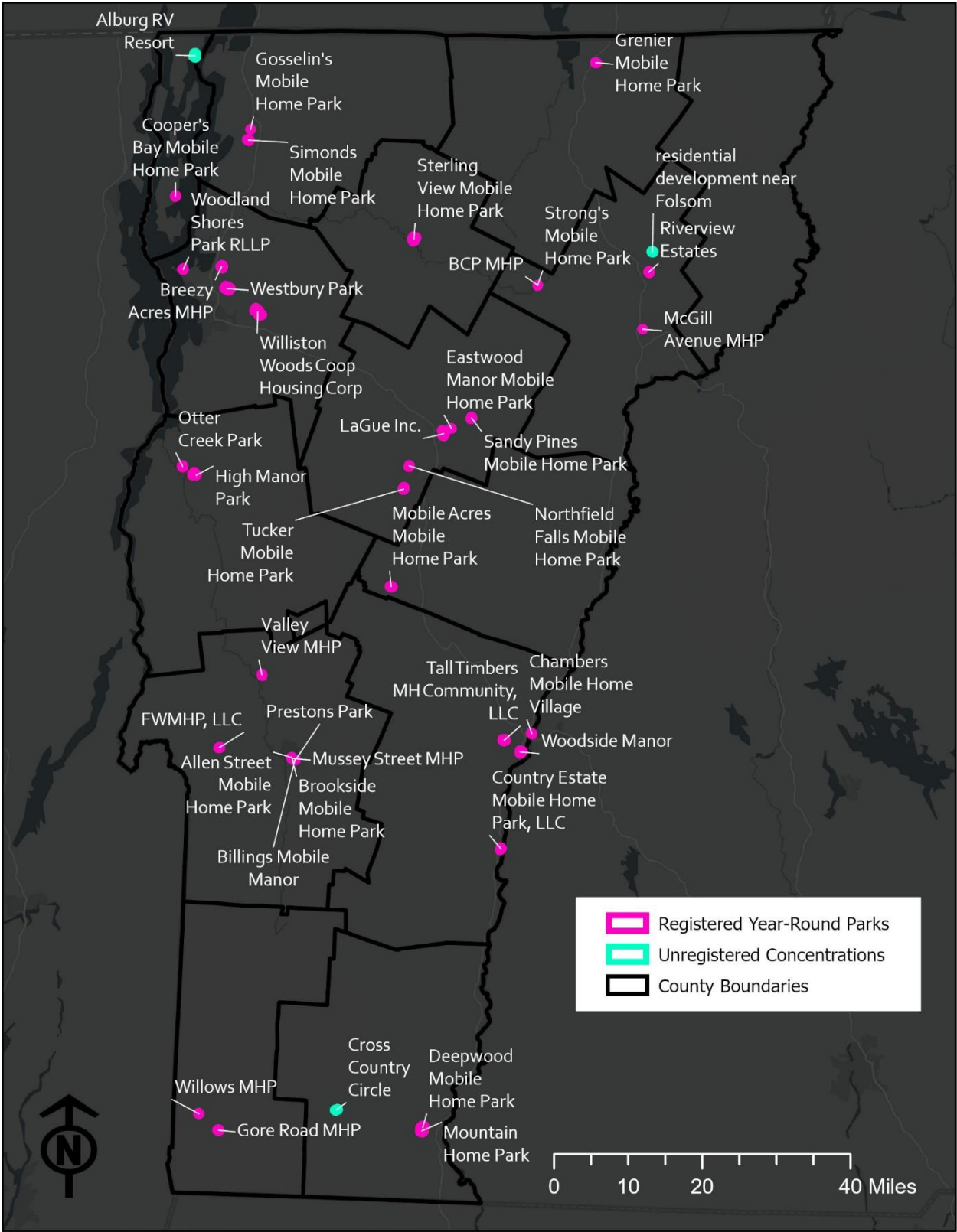
Indicates concentrations of mobile homes that are not registered as year-round parks

Figure 13. Map showing locations of selective survey properties.

6.   Results of Selective Survey

The vast majority of Vermont's mobile home parks appear to represent properties intentionally developed as sites where five or more mobile homes may be permanently located. Vermont does not require registration for mobile home parks that are only used seasonally. In addition to the registered year-round residential parks, the geospatial analysis identified other concentrations of mobile homes that are used as seasonal residences but otherwise share the physical characteristics of the registered parks. In all cases observed by Mead & Hunt during the geospatial analysis and selective survey phases, these parks were not typologically distinct from year-round parks and can be understood using the same typological considerations. These parks are likely to be located adjacent to recreational attractions, such as on lakeshores or near ski resorts, and individual evaluation should take both immediate setting and proximity to such attractions into account.[35]

To better understand this pool of mobile home parks, Mead & Hunt recommends that future typological efforts consider two primary factors: design approach and scale. These considerations are detailed below. In addition, a smaller number of parks and concentrations of mobile homes fall outside the parameters of this framework; these are discussed as "ad hoc" parks and subdivisions comprised of mobile homes at the end of this section.

A.   Typological considerations

GIS analysis and the field survey of mobile home parks in Vermont revealed that parks can be considered to fall along two axes: design approach and scale. Each axis is a spectrum rather than discrete "buckets"; most parks will fall closer to one end of the design axis, while the positioning of a park on the scale axis should take into account both the total number of units and the overall footprint of the occupied portion of the park parcel (see Figure 14).

Mobile home parks generally fell within two design approaches that can be discerned in their general layout. Those that prioritize efficiency of space are laid out in fairly rigid, regular patterns with densely spaced units oriented perpendicular or slightly angled relative to the drive. This design approach is referred to as "A" for purposes of this document. A second approach, referred to as "B," mimics the arrangement of site-built houses in suburban subdivisions, and is less apt to make advantageous use of the proportions of individual mobile homes.

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[35] Some seasonal parks may include transient RV sites and campgrounds as well, but this is not a universal characteristic, and is also a feature that these parks share with some registered year-round parks. Aside from site considerations and site-specific amenities (such as docks for waterfront sites), a slightly lower incidence of paved roadways was the only other noteworthy difference between the seasonal and year-round park category.

Figure 14. Representation of proposed dual-axis typology for Vermont mobile home parks. Clockwise from upper left: Eastwood Manor, Berlin; Breezy Acres, Colchester; Williston Woods, Williston; Deepwoods, Brattleboro.

B.   Design approach

In additional to scale, each park has a design approach that dictates the use of space and the layout of individual units and roadways. Approach A prioritizes special efficiency; examples are laid out in dense, rigid patterns that maximize the number of units along the roadway frontage, often with units placed perpendicular to the drive on or at a slight angle. This accommodates a greater number of units per acre and provides increased revenue in a for-profit mobile home park; as most parks in Vermont were established under a for-profit model, this design approach is more commonly represented. In contrast, the layout of units in Approach B typically references the arrangement of houses in suburban subdivisions. This suburban-mimetic approach creates a layout that, unlike the first approach, could be applied to site-built or mobile homes. These parks do not attempt to maximize the number of units per foot of roadway frontage but instead arrange units with a spacing reminiscent of a site-built house on an individual parcel (although this hypothetical parcel is often smaller than a typical individual residential parcel). Units are generally placed parallel to the roadway on spacious lots with larger setbacks.

(1)   Approach A: Prioritizing spatial efficiency
Common characteristics of parks under Approach A are as follows:

- Dense, efficiently arranged units, often perpendicular or at a slight diagonal to one or both sides of the roadway, that maximize the number of units along the street frontage.

- Can be small, medium, or large in scale.

- Roadways are typically linear or grid-like.

- Spacing between units is often rigid and close, generally no more than twice the width of a singlewide mobile home.

- Minimal examples typically feature signage, utilities boxes, sheds, and mailboxes. Streetlights may be present.

- More elaborate examples may feature all of the above plus:
    - Landscaping, fencing, covered mail shelters.
    - Street lighting.
    - Community buildings and other amenities such as laundry facilities.
    - Pools, parks, common spaces, picnic areas.
    - Shelters for municipal/regional bus service.

(2)   Approach B: Suburban influenced layout
Common characteristics of parks under Approach B are as follows:

- Resemble suburban-style, site-built home subdivisions and frequently have some or all units oriented parallel to the road.

- Individual unit lots are spacious, and units are often set back from the main drive by lawn space.

- Units may have individual driveways and/or garages.

- Likely to be medium or large in scale.

- Roadways are typically looping, winding, or curvilinear, shortening sight distance and increasing privacy.

- Smaller examples are likely to incorporate, at minimum, signage, utility boxes, mailboxes, and streetlights.

- More elaborate examples feature all of the above plus:
  - Landscaping, fencing, covered mail shelters.
  - Street lighting.
  - Community buildings and other amenities such as laundry facilities.
  - Pools, parks, common spaces, picnic areas.
  - Bus service.

Although each park falls somewhere along the axis between spatial-efficiency and suburban-mimetic, some may fall closer to the midpoint than either pole, such as parks that may have units arranged perpendicular to the roadway but with much wider spacing and a more sprawling, less regular street plan. It is also possible for a park to exhibit characteristics of both designs. This is especially true in cases where the property may have evolved and expanded over time. For example, a tightly spaced gridded park may be enlarged to include several looping drives with a more suburban-style layout. In such cases, the park may be placed in the category that it most closely resembles or considered a hybrid.

C.   Scale

The scale of a mobile home park is determined by several factors, and an understanding of scale is important to ensure that an appropriate metric is used to consider each park as an example of the property type. A smaller park may not exhibit as wide a range of design features (for example, an elaborate roadway plan) but may be a good example of a design approach applied at that scale if those absent design features are not typically found among smaller parks. While number of units contained within a park primarily determines the scale of an individual park, the layout of the park can impact the scale. While two parks might contain 30 units each, one park might be laid out as single arterial drive off the main road with units placed in close, perpendicular rows along both sides, while the other might be laid out along two large loops with units sited parallel to the road similar to site-built homes in a subdivision. In this case, though both mobile home parks contain the same number of units, the first park is classified as a small-scale park, while the second park is a medium-scale park because it takes up more space than the small-scale park. Thus, when determining scale, the total size of the park, the size of individual unit lots, road layouts, and the presence of common areas and amenities should be considered in addition to the total number of units.

D.   Additional configurations

Most mobile home parks encountered within the state of Vermont can be described using the axes of scale and design. However, outside of these categories, concentrations of mobile homes exist in several other configurations. These include small, ad hoc parks and mobile home subdivisions.

(1)   Ad hoc parks

Ad hoc parks consist of a small number of units (five or fewer) placed on a small lot. In urban areas they might take the form of an individual neighborhood lot divided into space for multiple mobile homes. Rural examples of the type can often be found on farmsteads where a small parcel of land is leased to mobile home residents. Unit placement is irregular, and particularly in urban areas, emphasis is placed on fitting the greatest number of units in a small space rather than on aesthetics. Ad hoc parks qualify as registered mobile home parks with residents that occupy their units year-round.

(2)   Mobile home "subdivisions"

Mobile home subdivisions are indistinguishable from postwar residential neighborhoods of single-family homes except that the residences within are mobile homes instead of site-built houses. In contrast to the "Approach B" mobile home parks, most subdivisions are not registered parks. The majority of examples are concentrations of landed mobile homes sited among other postwar residential development, either within urban areas or in rural areas where a former agricultural parcel has been subdivided. In a few isolated cases, a group of landed units within the subdivision may be owned by a single landowner and the units are rented out individually to tenants; thus, a portion of the subdivision is registered as a park (the Grenier Mobile Home Park in Derby is one such example).[36] The main distinguishing characteristic is that each property is on a separate legal parcel (unlike other park ownership models, in which each mobile home is privately owned but the land beneath is held in common or by a park owner and is not subdivided) and with the exception of rental units owned by the same landlord, parcels are not associated with each other in any formal way. While most are not registered mobile home parks, these collections of mobile homes within subdivisions can be found in locations across Vermont and are most easily distinguished from mobile home parks by examining parcel data.

E.   Selective survey examples

The following section provides descriptions of some of the mobile home parks examined as part of the selective survey. These examples are presented by scale and style and are intended to demonstrate the range of parks encountered by the survey team. The small-scale examples include parks established in the early postwar period and after reforms were applied to mobile home parks in the 1970s. All fall into the spatial-efficiency design category (Approach A). The selection of medium-scale parks includes examples of both spatial-efficiency (Approach A) and suburban-mimetic (Approach B) mobile home parks; however, the examples of suburban-mimetic parks are modest examples that may not exhibit the elaborate roadway plans or generous spacing found in larger examples of the style. The large-scale parks selected include not only strong examples of both design approaches, but also hybrid parks that incorporate elements of both styles. Large-scale examples from both pre- and post-1970 are shown.

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[36] This example may represent the acquisition of several properties within the subdivision by a landlord, or it may represent the breakup of an earlier park as residents either purchased their lots or sold their units to the current owner, who now rents them to tenants.

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Several examples were also selected to show the relationships sometimes present between mobile home parks and associated properties such as mobile home sales lots and RV campgrounds. Table 3 includes the classification of parks within the selective survey pool; bolded items are included in the following section as illustrations of various scale/style configuratons.

Table 3. Selective survey results

Site name	County	Town name	Year established	Scale	Style/Approach
Otter Creek Park	Addison	Vergennes City	1960	Large	A
High Manor Park	Addison	Waltham	1966	Medium	B/ hybrid
Willows Mobile Home Park	Bennington	Bennington	1945	Small	A
Gore Road Mobile Home Park	Bennington	Bennington	1960	Medium	A
McGill Avenue Mobile Home Park	Caledonia	St. Johnsbury	1955	Small	Ad-hoc
Riverview Estates	Caledonia	Lyndon	1957	Medium	A
BCP Mobile Home Park	Caledonia	Hardwick	1989	Small	Ad-hoc
Unnamed (Folsom vicinity)*	Caledonia	Lyndon	n/a	n/a	subdivision
Strong's Mobile Home Park	Caledonia	Hardwick	1970	Small	Ad-hoc
Woodland Shores Park RLLP	Chittenden	Colchester	1952	Small	A
Breezy Acres Mobile Home Park	Chittenden	Colchester	1962	Large	A
Williston Woods Coop Housing Corp	Chittenden	Williston	1983	Large	B
Westbury Park	Chittenden	Colchester	1972	Large	B
Simonds Mobile Home Park	Franklin	St. Albans	1967	Large	B
Gosselin's Mobile Home Park	Franklin	St. Albans City	2014	Small	Ad-hoc
Cooper's Bay Mobile Home Park	Grand Isle	Grand Isle	1954	Medium	B
Alburg RV Resort*	Grand Isle	Alburg	c.1963	Large	A (seasonal)
Sterling View Mobile Home Park	Lamoille	Hyde Park	1988	Large	hybrid
Mobile Acres Mobile Home Park	Orange	Braintree	1969	Medium	A
Grenier Mobile Home Park	Orleans	Derby	unknown	Small	B/ subdivision**
Valley View Mobile Home Park	Rutland	Brandon	1955	Small	Ad-hoc

Site name	County	Town name	Year established	Scale	Style/Approach
Billings Mobile Manor	Rutland	Rutland City	1964	Medium	A
FWMHP, LLC	Rutland	Castleton	1970	Medium	A
Allen Street Mobile Home Park	Rutland	Rutland City	1971	Small	A
Brookside Mobile Home Park	Rutland	Rutland City	1978	Small	A
Prestons Park	Rutland	Rutland City	1980	Small	A
Mussey Street Mobile Home Park	Rutland	Rutland City	1993	Small	Ad-hoc
Eastwood Manor Mobile Home Park	Washington	Berlin	1965	Small	A
Northfield Falls Mobile Home Park	Washington	Northfield	1965	Medium	A
LaGue Inc.	Washington	Berlin	1967	Medium	A
Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park	Washington	East Montpelier	1970	Medium	B
Tucker Mobile Home Park	Washington	Northfield	1975	Medium	B/ hybrid
Mountain Home Park	Windham	Brattleboro	1958	Large	hybrid
Deepwood Mobile Home Park	Windham	Brattleboro	1991	Small/medium	B
Unnamed grouping (Cross Country Circle)*	Windham	Wilmington	unknown	Small	A (seasonal)
Chambers Mobile Home Village	Windsor	Hartford	1960	Medium	A
Woodside Manor	Windsor	Hartland	1965	Large	A
Country Estates Mobile Home Park, LLC	Windsor	Weathersfield	1965	Large	A
Tall Timbers MH Community, LLC	Windsor	Hartford	1977	Large	B

* Indicates concentrations of mobile homes that are not registered as year-round parks.

** This park is a group of some, but not all, of the parcels within a subdivision; these parcels and the units on them are owned by one landlord and rented to tenants.

F.   Approach A: Examples prioritizing special efficiency

(1)   Small-scale, year-round park: Willows Mobile Home Park, Bennington

The Willows Mobile Home Park, established in 1945, currently provides lots for 24 units, which are spaced closely together around a single loop (see Figure 15 and Figure 16). This example was selected as one of the four extant registered parks with a recorded date of establishment from the mid-to-late

1940s. Like the others from this period, it is small, lacks amenities or landscaping, and the configuration of units appears to have changed since the early 1960s. Though a sign marks the park entrance, it displays few other design elements. It is a good example of a small-scale mobile home park where the primary design concern appears to have been fitting the maximum number of units within the space available; while the general road layout has continued to dictate the overall footprint of the park, the arrangement of units has changed as mobile home size has increased. Additional research may identify whether this park was established as a trailer camp, which seems likely given its location along Route 7A.

Figure 15. Current aerial image of Willows Mobile Home Park at right, with 1962 imagery at left for comparison.[37]

Figure 16. Willows Mobile Home Park as it appears in 2021.

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[37] All aerial imagery from the Vermont Center for Geographic Information.

**(2)	Small-scale, year-round park: Eastwood Manor, Berlin**

Eastwood Manor was established near the town of Berlin (Washington County) in 1965. The park consists of a single drive with nine units arranged perpendicular to the driveway on either side (see Figure 17). The design of this park is extremely minimal; however, it is located adjacent to a mobile home sales business, Village Homes, which may have furnished some of the models found in the park today (see Figure 18). A review of orthoimagery indicated that several other parks in Vermont are similarly located near mobile home sales facilities. Although parcel data lists separate corporate entities as owners of Eastwood Manor and the adjacent sales lot, other parks and sales lots do share a common owner; further research may confirm whether this was the case with Eastwood Manor historically as well.

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar, Microsoft

Figure 17. Current aerial image of Eastwood Manor mobile home park.

Figure 18. Eastwood Manor mobile home park (above) and Village Homes mobile home sales (below).

(3)   Small-scale, year-round park: Allen Street mobile home park, Rutland

Established in 1971, the Allen Street mobile home park provides another example of a small-scale park. The park contains 18 units spaced uniformly around a single loop with several units placed parallel to the roadway within the loop (see Figure 19). In contrast to the earlier examples of small-scale parks above, the Allen Street park displays several design elements. In addition to signage, the park features fencing, landscaping, streetlights, and individual driveways for each unit (see Figure 20). While still an example of a spatial-efficiency layout, the Allen Street park displays a high degree of design for a small-scale park, making it unusual within the study pool.

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 19. Current aerial image of the Allen Street mobile home park.

Figure 20. The Allen Street mobile home park showing the park's mature trees, ornamental streetlights, and individual unit driveways.

(4)   Small-scale, year-round park (with expansion): Woodland Shores Park, Colchester

The Woodland Shores Park was established in 1952 and serves as an example of a small park that was later expanded. The 1962 aerial of the park (see Figure 21, left) shows that in its earlier days Woodland Shores consisted of a single loop within which units were arranged in at a slight diagonal to the roadway. From the current aerial (see Figure 21, right) it is possible to see that while this original configuration still

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exists, the park has been expanded to the northeast. While the open portion visible in the 1962 image may have originally been intended to accommodate expansion, the majority of the park's units are located in the wooded area further to the northeast and the open space has been retained (see Figure 22). This may reflect the influence of new state guidance after 1970 intended to improve aesthetics and livability for mobile home parks. These newer lots are arranged similar to the older lots, and today both areas are shaded by ample tree cover. Today Woodland Shores contains 52 units, making it a medium-sized park; however, it is included in this section as an example of the how small parks are often expanded over time.

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 21. Current aerial image of Woodland Shores at right, with 1962 imagery at left for comparison.

Figure 22. View of the original (1952) section of Woodland Shores.

(5)   Small-scale, seasonal park: Cross Country Circle, Wilmington

This unregistered concentration consists of 31 mobile homes arranged along an unpaved loop (see Figure 23). Located less than five miles from Mt. Snow, the site was not occupied at the time of the site visit, suggesting that it is used for winter sports rather than summer recreation. The units are sited at an angle or perpendicular to the roadway and are densely spaced; most are one single-wide width from

adjacent units (see Figure 24). One lot is occupied by a small camper, but others are single-wide mobile homes, several of which have been expanded with porches or raised rooflines.

Figure 23. Aerial view of Cross Country Circle

Figure 24. Typical streetscape within Cross Country Circle.

(6)   Medium-scale, year-round park (with expansion): Riverview Estates, Lyndon

Established in 1957, Riverview Estates park in Lyndon is an early example of a medium-sized park that has expanded its footprint over time but not appreciably increased the total number of units. Today the park houses 30 units arranged around two loops. Like the Woodland Shores park above, a comparison of the Riverview Estate parks layout today (see Figure 25, right) with its 1962 layout (see Figure 25, left) shows that the park expanded over time. The older layout of the park, which consisted of approximately 26 units arranged at a slight diagonal along both inner sides of the central loop, has been modified. Units are now placed primarily along the outside of the loop (see Figure 26) or along the second, wider "loop." This is likely because the length of units increased over time, making it impossible to retain the original layout.

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar   Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 25. Current aerial image of Riverview Estates at right, with 1962 imagery at left for comparison. A modular/mobile home sales business is visible adjacent to the southwest.

Figure 26. View of the Riverside Estates mobile home park with lighting atop utility poles.

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(7)   Medium-scale, year-round park (with associated campground): Mobile Acres, Braintree

The Mobile Acres park in Braintree was established in 1969. It is medium in scale, with a spatial-efficiency layout that consists of several loops and drives along which 77 occupied units are arranged (see Figure 27 and Figure 28).[38] The presence of several patterns of unit orientations may indicate multiple phases of development. More importantly, Mobile Acres is an example of a mobile home park situated alongside a campground, visible in Figure 27 to the south and west of the park. The orange boundary signifies the current park limits, and much of the park is physically separated from the campground by a row of buffer trees. Both the park and campground are accessible from the same drive, which leads to the main road.

Mobile Acres was selected as an example of a property that historically combined both seasonal/recreational and year-round residential use. Historic maps published by VAPCOO indicate that the campground and mobile home park coexisted in the early 1970s; although the campground and mobile home park are now owned by separate entities, the campground was reportedly established in 1968 and the original owner developed both properties.[39]

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 27. Current aerial imagery showing the park and associated campground.

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[38] The area closest to the main road can accommodate nearly 20 percent more units, but aerial imagery shows that these lots have been vacant for at least 25 years; due to the density of the 77 occupied lots, this park is considered medium in size.

[39] Josh Pelland, "Abel Mountain Campground," *Abel Mountain Campground*, accessed August 23, 2021, http://abelmountain.com/.

Figure 28. Mobile Acres park (above) and the adjacent campground (below).

(8)   Large-scale, year-round park: Breezy Acres, Colchester
Breezy Acres, established in Colchester in 1962, is a good example of a large mobile home park that displays a clear and rigid design (see Figure 29 and Figure 30). The park's aerial (see Figure 29) shows that the park's 191 units are primarily arranged at a diagonal to either side of six looping drives. Units not arranged within these loops are placed perpendicular to the roadways in order to maximize the number of lots within the park. Rows of trees were planted along the center of each loop and along the outer edges of the park. A manager's office and large brick park sign are also present on the parcel (see Figure 31). A mobile home sales facility (Brault's Mobile Homes) is located adjacent to the park.

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 29. Modern aerial of the Breezy Acres mobile home park.

Figure 30. Typical streetscape showing densely arranged units at an angle to the roadway.

Figure 31. View of the Breezy Acres mobile park (left) and the entrance sign (right).

(9)   Large-scale, seasonal park: Alburg RV Resort, Alburg

Historic orthoimagery shows that the property was established between 1962 and 1964, by which time the orderly arrangement of units and roadways set back from the waterfront was already established (see Figure 32). The partially wooded site includes a waterfront promenade, boat docks, and beach, as well as a pool and community center. Non-transient mobile homes occupy the southern half and are individually owned; other areas accommodate transient RVs and tenting (although one permanent site was found to contain a large RV that may no longer be transient, see Figure 33). The property displays many of the characteristics of a spatial-efficiency year-round residential park, including the rigid layout and angled, closely spaced units, and the relationship between the permanent units and the transient camping area is not unlike examples such as Mobile Acres in Braintree.

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 32. Current aerial image of the Alburg RV Resort.

Figure 33. Typical streetscape in southern portion of Alburg RV Resort; note the RV permanently sited.

G.   Approach B: Examples with suburban-influenced design

(1)   Medium-scale, year-round park: Deepwood Mobile Home Park, Brattleboro

Established in 1991, the Deepwood Mobile Home Park essentially functions as an expansion of the Mountain Home Mobile Home Park (see the next section). With a total of 47 available lots, it consists of a single roadway that winds up the west side of a hill (see Figure 34 and Figure 35). Individual units are sited at a variety of angles that appear to accommodate topography, and the sinuous roadway and dense trees screen most units from adjacent ones, creating a sense of separation although lot sizes are not especially large (most units are within two to three single-wide widths of their neighbors). This example is the smallest of the selective survey pool to embody the neighborhood style.


Figure 34. Aerial image showing the Deepwood Park boundary in blue. The Mountain Home Park boundary is shown in pink to the south.

Figure 35. Typical streetscape within the Deepwood Mobile Home Park showing winding roadway and wooded setting.

(2) **Medium-scale, year-round park: Tucker Mobile Home Park, Northfield**

The Tucker Mobile Home Park in Northfield is an example of a medium-scale mobile home park that incorporates some characteristics found in the suburban-mimetic parks. Set back from the main road and accessed via a bridge over the Dog River, the 32 units within the park are arranged along two long drives, one of which is slightly undulating, and units are spaced more generously than in parks that emphasize spatial efficiency—often three times the width of a single-wide mobile home (see Figure 36 and Figure 37). Unit lots include individual driveways, streetlights, and mature trees. Though not as striking as the examples of large scale, neighborhood style parks to follow, Tucker Mobile Home park demonstrates what the incorporation of less rigid and dense planning elements on a modest scale looks like within Vermont's parks and serves as a contrast to the tightly packed, spatial-efficiency examples above.
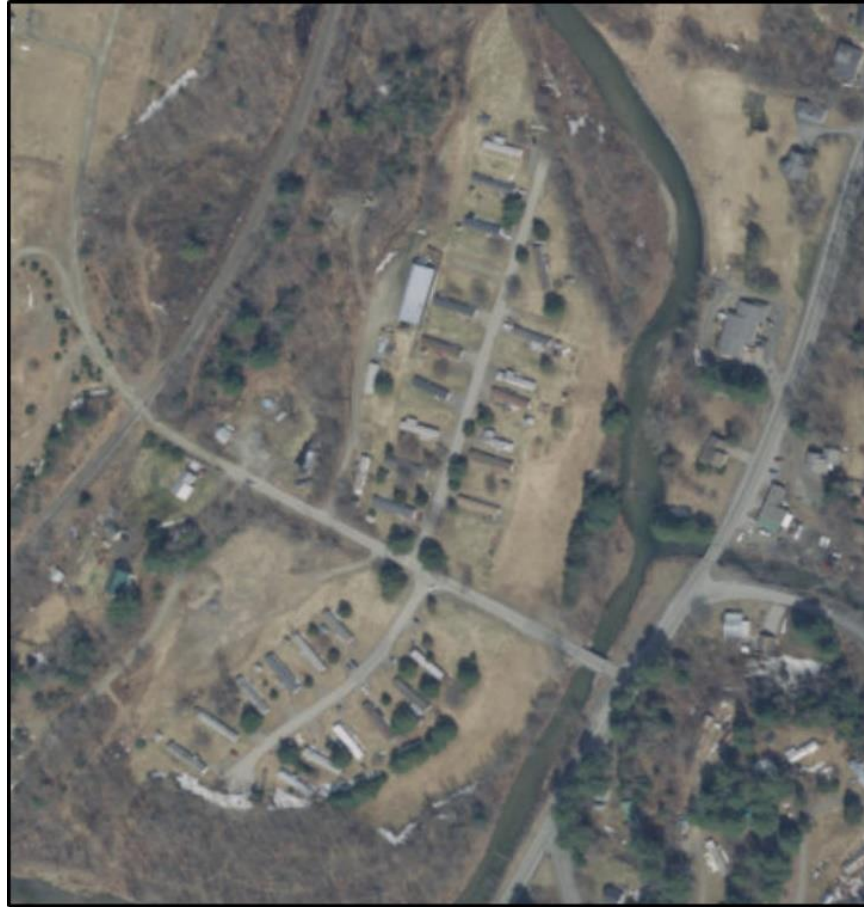
Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 36. Current aerial of the Tucker Mobile Home Park.

Figure 37. View of the Tucker Mobile Home Park including streetlights, driveways, and landscaping.

(3)   Large-scale, year-round park: Tall Timbers, Hartford

Established in 1977, this is an example of a post-1970 (after the passage of the Mobile Home Act/Act 250) park that appears to reflect new recommendations for development of sites in wooded areas not visible from main road (see Figure 38). The park's 105 lots are spread out over large, wooded area set back one-third of a mile from U.S. Highway 4 and completely screened from its surroundings. The vaguely cruciform plan includes several short drives and one loop, ensuring that most of the park is secluded from any given vantage point within it. Despite these more suburban-mimetic features, the layout is still somewhat dense and perpendicular. Units have individual driveways and are spaced approximately two single-wide widths apart (see Figure 39). A community center and pool are located at the center of the street plan, which also includes signage and ornamental lighting located adjacent to most units.

Imagery:Maxar

Figure 38. Current aerial imagery showing Tall Timbers.

Figure 39. Representative streetscapes showing signage, driveways, decorative lighting, and mature trees.

(4) Large-scale, year-round park: Williston Woods

Williston Woods mobile home park was established near Williston in 1983. The park contains 112 units that primarily oriented parallel to the park's long, looping drives (see Figure 40). Williston Woods provides a clear example of a suburban-mimetic park; units are set back from the drive and many are accompanied by separate garages and driveways (see Figure 41 and Figure 42). The park also contains a community center with large parking lot (see Figure 43) and other features such as landscaping and decorative streetlights.

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Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 40. Current aerial of Williston Woods mobile home park.

Figure 41. Typical streetscapes in Williston Woods. Individual driveways, garages, landscaping elements, and streetlights are visible.

Figure 42. Typical streetscapes in Williston Woods. Individual driveways, garages, landscaping elements, and streetlights are visible.

Figure 43. The community center at Williston Woods.

(5)   Large-scale, year-round park: Westbury Park, Colchester

Westbury Park, established in Colchester in 1972, is the clearest and most extreme example of the application of suburban residential design aesthetics to mobile home park design of those within the sample pool. Its wooded setting acts as a buffer between Westbury Park and nearby Fort Ethan Allen and several industrial parks. The park displays a suburban-style street layout with a wide boulevard with central grassy/wooded median leading in from the main road and branching side streets, several of which lead to loops, circles, and cul-de-sacs. Its 250 units are primarily oriented parallel to the roadway or at an angle (see Figure 44). Westbury Park features a woodland setting with mature trees and spacious individual lots that allow for wide spacing of units (see Figure 45 and Figure 46). The park includes decorative light standards, street signage, and a large sign at the entrance. The central boulevard terminates at a pool and community center at the rear of complex (see Figure 47), which appear to be part of the original design.

Figure 44. Aerial view of Westbury Park (red border indicates general boundary).

Figure 45. Typical streetscape in Westbury Park show the wooded setting and widely spaced, secluded units, along with ornamental lighting.

Figure 46. Typical streetscape in Westbury Park show the wooded setting and widely spaced, secluded units, along with ornamental lighting.

Figure 47. The community center (left) and pool (right) at Westbury Park.

(6)   Large-scale, year-round (A/B) hybrid: Mountain Home Park, Brattleboro

The most extreme example of a hybrid-style mobile home park is Mountain Home Park in Brattleboro, established in 1958. With 264 units, it is now the largest park outside the greater Burlington Metro area (see Figure 48, Figure 49, and Figure 50). The 1962 orthoimage (see Figure 48) shows the portion closest to the main road with fairly regularly spaced units along series of roadways in a flat valley, but also shows additional units along driveways winding up the wooded slope at the west side of the frame. A cleared field at the southeast corner of the frame was subsequently developed to accommodate more units in a typical spatial-efficiency setting, while the hillside portion was also expanded substantially (several of the northernmost units shown in the current view are part of the Deepwoods Mobile Home Park, a recent expansion in the neighborhood style).

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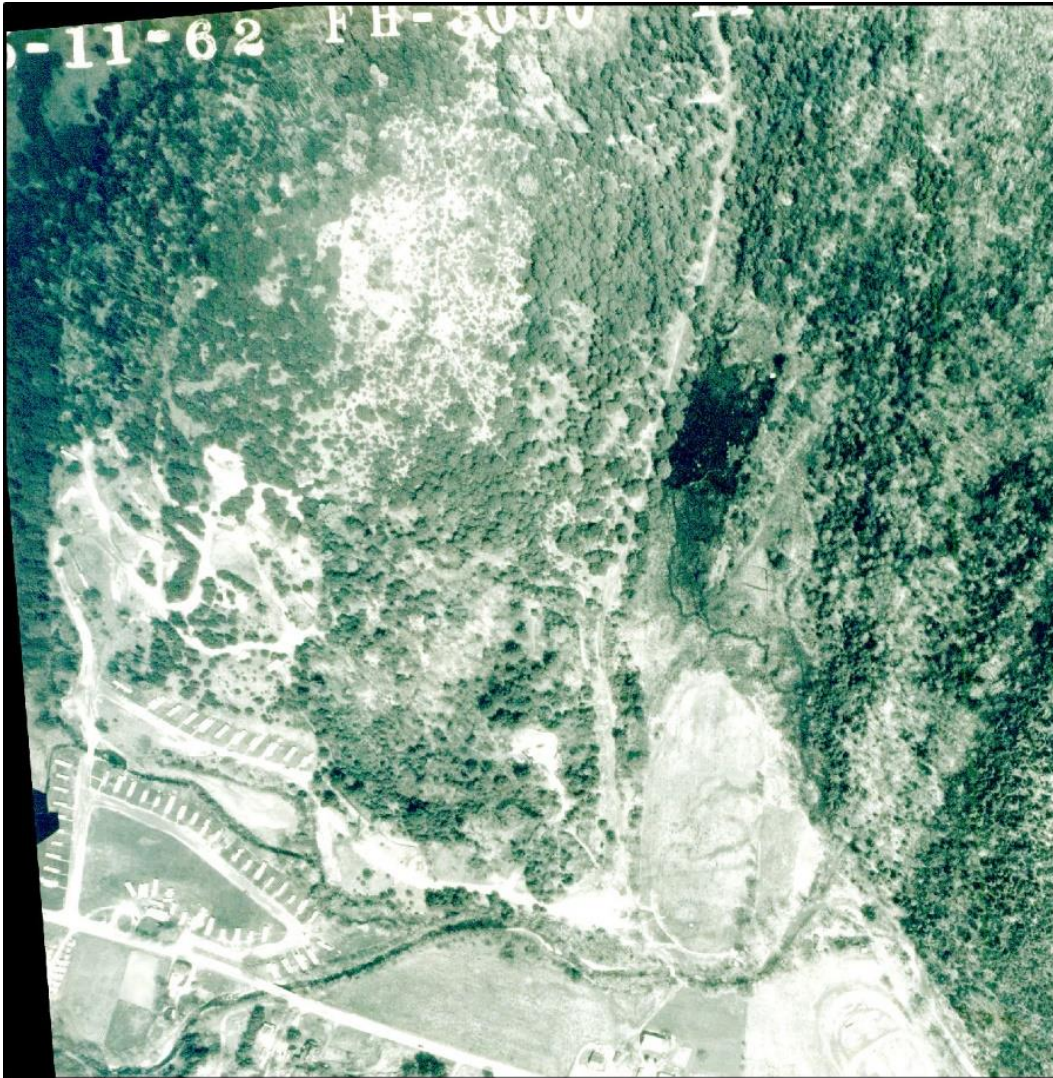
Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

*Figure 48. Aerial view of Mountain Home Park in 1962.*

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 49. Current aerial view of Mountain Home Park.

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Figure 50. Angled units in the upland portion of the park (above) and perpendicular to the road in closer arrangements in the flat portion of the park (below).

H.   Ad-hoc park

The McGill Avenue Mobile Home Park (1955) in St. Johnsbury is an example of an ad-hoc mobile home park. Nine units are arranged irregularly on the lot wherever they will fit; the orientation of units perpendicular vs. parallel to the roadway is dictated by the available space on either side of the driveway (see Figure 51 and Figure 52), and the parcel also contains a large c.1900 building that now functions as an apartment building and a carriage barn, both located at the southwest corner. Aside from a buffer of trees placed between the park and the commercial and residential areas on each side, the park has no other special features or amenities.
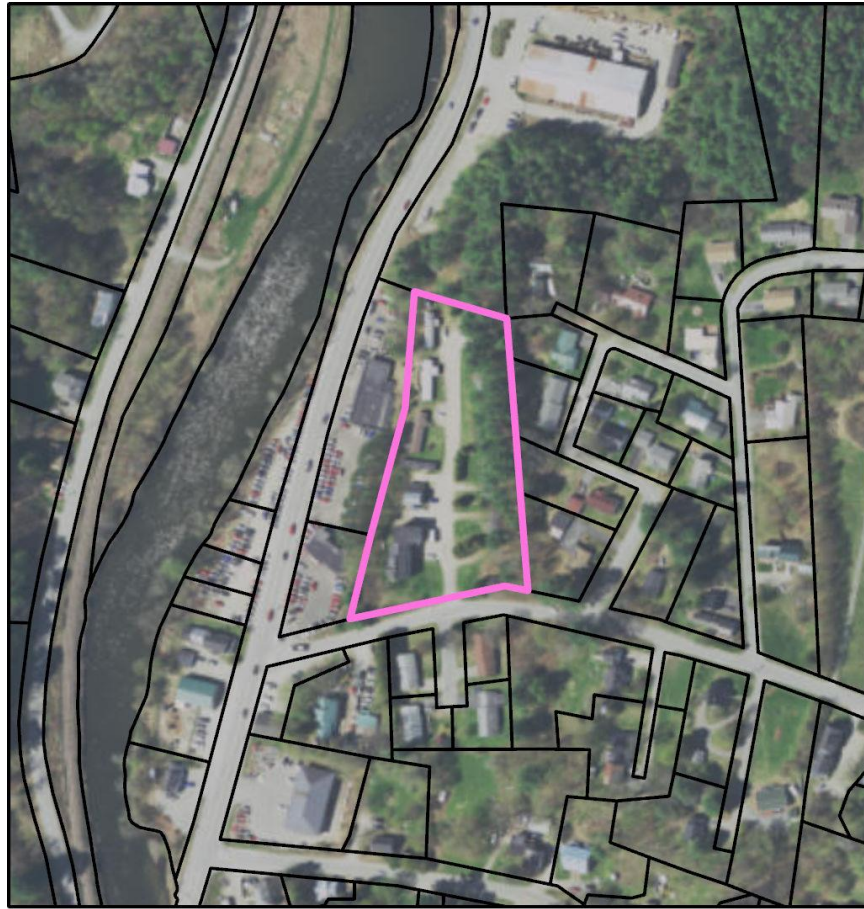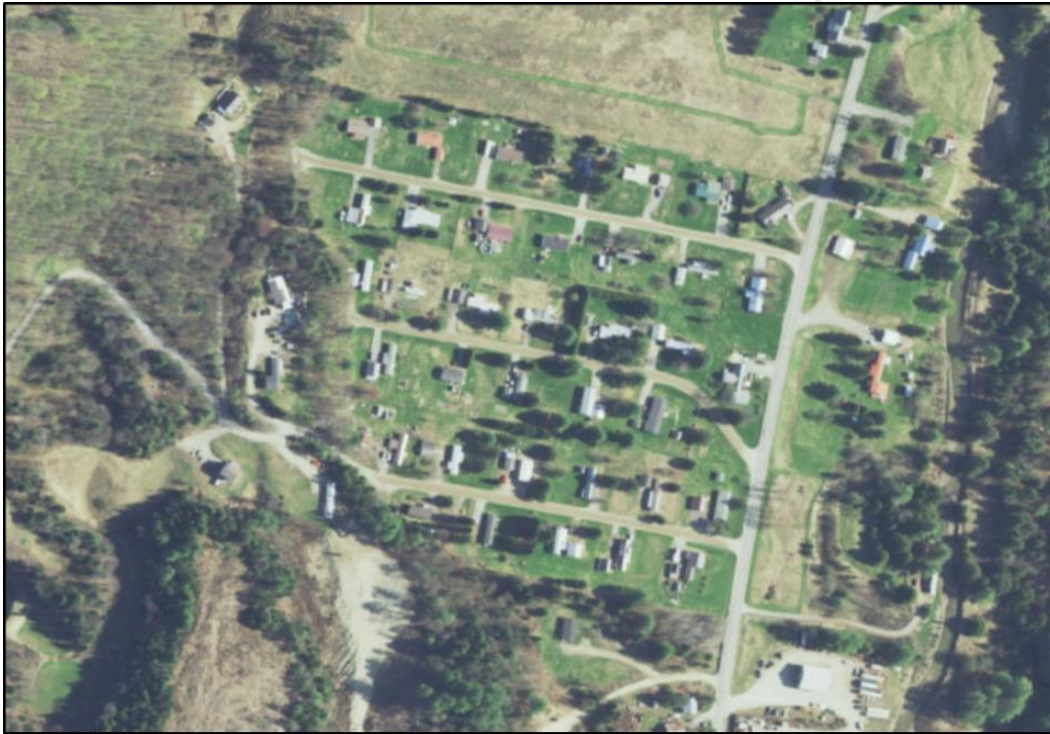
Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 51. Aerial of the McGill Avenue park.

Figure 52. The McGill Avenue park. Units are arranged perpendicular and parallel to the drive on either side to maximize the number contained within the park.

I.   Subdivision

Located in the unincorporated community of Folsom, town of Lyndon, this collection of mobile homes comprises the residences located along Locust, Ingalls, and Woodbury Lanes (off of Calendar Brook Road, just north of its junction with U.S. Highway 5.) Although the area may appear at first glance to be a mobile home park with widely spaced units (see Figure 53), each mobile home is a landed unit located on its own associated parcel (see Figure 54). This residential development represents a subdivision comprised of individual mobile homes.

Imagery:VCGI, Maxar

Figure 53. Current aerial imagery of the residential subdivision on Locust, Ingalls, and Woodbury Lanes.

Figure 54. Typical streetscape within the subdivision.

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7.   Recommendations for Future MPDF approach

The primary purpose of this preliminary study of mobile homes and mobile home parks in Vermont is to provide VTrans with a recommended approach for further work. The study accomplished the three identified project goals: to understand what mobile home and mobile home park resources are present across the state; to consider whether they have the possibility to be considered significant for the National Register either architecturally or through an association with significant trends in Vermont's history; and to make a recommendation as to whether the property types are best addressed by a resource-specific MPDF or within a larger postwar study.

Although most of the extant resources are likely postwar and could be addressed within a larger postwar study, Mead & Hunt recommends that the scope of a more general postwar context or theme study may not allow for the detailed and nuanced discussion of the forces and factors that drove the development of this specific resource type, and existing studies that have done so have relegated the discussion of mobile homes to several pages in the document. In addition, while mobile homes and mobile home parks are an important component of postwar residential development in Vermont, the property type transcends the broader postwar narrative. In order to best address the relevant areas and periods of significance, a property-specific MPDF is recommended to encompass both pre- and postwar recreation, postwar residential development, the ongoing importance of mobile homes as a source of affordable housing from the 1980s onward, and the move toward cooperatives and other non-profit park ownership models. Also, since the majority of mobile home parks are proximate to major highways and therefore are likely to be included in the APEs for VTrans projects, this more distinct, resource-specific MPDF could be completed sooner than a statewide postwar context and registration requirements.

The research, analysis, and survey data compiled for this document identified a number of relevant topics related to mobile homes and mobile home parks to explore in the future MPDF.

Mobile home park development

- Trailer camps (late 1930s to the 1950s).

- Seasonal communities.

- Co-location of mobile home parks and campgrounds.

Mobile homes, affordable housing, and environmental justice

- Early conversions of trailer camps and campgrounds to year-round parks in the 1950s.

- Rapid influx of mobile homes—individually and within parks—and establishment of new parks in the 1960s.

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- Impact of new state regulations intended to improve park living standards and balance environmental/aesthetic needs in the 1970s.

- Impact of federal regulations on the design, construction, and financing for mobile homes and possibly mobile home parks. Preliminary research indicates that HUD and FHA primarily influenced the mobile home industry and there may be others as well. Additional research as part of an MPDF may yield information related to changes in FHA lending policy regarding mobile homes that may have had an impact on loan accessibility.

- Efforts to empower residents and prevent park closures through de-privatizing of parks (cooperatives, land trusts, and non-profits) in the 1990s.

A future MPDF should consider these topics, which may be addressed under National Register areas of significance such as Entertainment/Recreation, Community Planning & Development, Transportation, and/or Politics/Government. It is likely that parks would be evaluated as historic districts, and in addition to these themes under *Criterion A*, an MPDF should also consider mobile home parks under *Criterion C* in the area of Landscape Design, if applicable. While context development as part of an MPDF may reveal additional areas of potential significance under *Criterion A* for individual mobile homes, Mead & Hunt believes these properties are easily understood using the existing National Register guidance for site-built homes, coupled with an appropriate state-specific context for mobile homes. Property type-specific guidance may be developed to provide a basis for evaluation of individual units under *Criterion C: Architecture*, and could examine overall trends regarding size, construction method, and owner improvements such as raised rooflines, porches, and the addition of aftermarket accessories (decorative skirting, porticos etc.).

VTrans can consider potential phases for this MPDF as follows:

1. Develop a historic context

2. Develop registration requirements/integrity considerations

3. Pilot surveys to apply the MPDF (two to five mobile home parks and a small number of individual mobile homes)

4. Revise the context, registration requirements, and integrity based on findings of the pilot survey

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