PORTLAND, OR
AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED & THE ROLE OF MANUFACTURED HOUSING

The state of affordable housing in the Portland metro area (defined in note below) is comparable to Oregon with some minor variations. According to the Prosperity Now Scorecard, the homeownership rate in the Portland OR-WA metro is 61.5%.\(^1\) While higher than some of the larger West Coast metros like Seattle or San Francisco, it is lower than rates in similarly sized metro areas such as Cincinnati and Pittsburgh. Furthermore, the homeownership rate for households of color in the Portland metro is 46%, compared to over 65% among whites.\(^2\) Home affordability is also relatively low in Portland, with median annual incomes almost five times lower than median home values.\(^3\) Similarly, over 30% of homeowners and 50% of renters are cost-burdened, paying 30% or more of their monthly income on housing costs.

In the Portland metro area, manufactured housing plays a limited but important role in addressing the region’s housing affordability issues. At less than half the average cost per square foot compared to site-built homes,\(^4\) manufactured housing is one of the largest sources of unsubsidized affordable housing in the country. Despite making up about four percent of the area’s total housing stock, manufactured homes make up over eleven percent of the area’s affordable housing volume. However, many of these manufactured homes were built before HUD construction standards, which may contribute to significant costs to owners as the homes continue to age.

For many low- and moderate-income households, manufactured housing is more affordable than other types of housing.

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Note: This Data Snapshot is designed to assess the role of manufactured housing in state and local markets and the extent to which manufactured housing contributes to a set of solutions for affordable housing needs in the Portland Metro Area. We define the Portland Metro Area based on the Census Bureau’s definition for the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro Metropolitan Statistical Area, which is made up of Clark and Skamania counties in Washington and Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, Washington and Yamhill counties in Oregon. Additionally, the Oregon counties of Clatsop and Polk are also included in this analysis due to geographic limitations in publicly available data. The data source for this Snapshot is the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, except where otherwise noted.

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
WHO LIVES IN MANUFACTURED HOMES?

HOMEOWNERSHIP
Manufactured home residents in the Portland metro area are slightly more likely to own their homes compared to residents of all other types of housing.

80% of manufactured home residents own their homes
62% of residents in other types of housing own their homes

Note: The homeownership rates in this document are the percentage of occupied housing units that are owner-occupied, based on the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

HOME FINANCING
Owners of manufactured homes are less likely to have a mortgage and presumably more likely to have a personal property loan. Why does this matter? Personal property loans tend to have higher interest rates, shorter repayment periods and fewer protections for borrowers. Homes financed with personal property loans tend to be titled as personal property, like cars. In many cases, lenders use depreciation tables, similar to those in the auto industry, to value existing homes, leading to losses in value for the owner. This makes it much harder for homeowners to build wealth through homeownership.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
$42,200 Manufactured Homeowners
$83,392 All Homeowners
$41,523 All Renters

EDUCATION
Owners of manufactured homes are less likely to have received any kind of college education when compared to all homeowners and renters.

JOBS
Over 50% of manufactured home residents in the Portland metro area work in the industries of retail, health care/social assistance, manufacturing, construction or accommodation and food service.
SNAP BENEFITS
Owners of manufactured homes are three times as likely to receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program than all homeowners, but less likely than renters.

OWNERS OF MANUFACTURED HOMES

21%

ALL HOMEOWNERS

7%

ALL RENTERS

28%

AGE
Households of manufactured homeowners tend to be older than all homeowners and renters.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION
Owners of manufactured homes are more likely than renters and less likely than homeowners overall to be married couples. Almost forty percent of manufactured homeowner households are non-family households, meaning either a one-person household or household shared by two or more unrelated/unmarried persons.

RACE/ETHNICITY
Manufactured homeowners are more likely to be White than renters and all owners.

IN WHAT CONDITION ARE MOST MANUFACTURED HOMES?
Almost forty percent of Portland metro area’s manufactured homes were built before 1980. Why does this matter? Before the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development began regulating the construction of these homes in 1976, there were no consistent building standards for manufactured homes, so older units are more likely to be in need of repair or replacement.
Innovations in Manufactured Homes (I’M HOME) is a national initiative managed by Prosperity Now which seeks to ensure that owners of manufactured homes have the opportunity to build wealth through homeownership by improving the quality of new and replacement development, enhancing homeowners’ ability to enjoy long-term land security, expanding access to safe home financing and encouraging a supportive policy environment.