In 2017-18, Meyer awarded grants totaling $730,000 to support nine programs across rural Oregon assisting low-income residents of manufactured homes with critical repairs and other improvements. Meyer chose to prioritize programs serving rural Oregon because of the important role manufactured housing plays in rural areas. These communities, unlike urban areas, tend not to have access to local resources to address housing issues. This report summarizes key findings from the first year of a program evaluation collecting data from all nine programs. It illustrates the impact of this work on residents’ housing stability and well-being, and the capacity of the nine organizations to assist vulnerable Oregonians. A final report on this work will follow in Fall 2019.
Program design among the nine programs varied considerably, with different approaches to intake, defining the scope-of-work, funding mix, how repairs were completed, etc. All nine programs were able to document significant positive impacts for those assisted.

“People are in fear of being displaced from their home. For us to come in, and make these homes stable and livable and alleviate concerns, they are able to relax and function in their home because of grant funds.”

- Project Coordinator

In general, the program implementation model across all organizations includes the following three steps:
1. A resident completes an intake/application process.
2. If selected and approved, the home is assessed for repair needs.
3. The organization oversees the completion of repairs.

How these three basic steps were completed varied across the nine organizations. The program design for each organization is different, in terms of who did the work, repair costs, time to complete, and other program design aspects as depicted in the illustration below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW HOMES WERE SELECTED</th>
<th>Residents applied or were selected from waitlist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHO DID THE WORK</td>
<td>Contractors, volunteers, or a combination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW WERE RESIDENTS INVOLVED</td>
<td>From minimally to selecting contractors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPES OF REPAIRS</td>
<td>Small projects to complex renovations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST OF REPAIRS (PER HOME)</td>
<td>From $98 to $24,060 (avg. ~$7,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMEFRAME FOR REPAIRS</td>
<td>From a single day to 35 weeks (average ~ 7 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNDING</td>
<td>Meyer funds, often combined with other leveraged funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESULTS:
107 rural households received repair services, promoting housing stability to varying degrees for these vulnerable populations.
IMPACT: RESIDENTS

90% report the comfort of their home is better because of the repairs completed.

“It was a safety fire hazard with the water heater dangling at a dangerous angle.” – Resident

“I was able to wash dishes, do my laundry, take a shower or bath. I can say that I never realize[d] how much having hot water means in everyday living and how important it is to have. Today I’m clean and have clean dishes, clothes and my home is clean. Thank you so much. You see I live on a fixed income and I could not have afforded to get a new hot water heater without this program or [to] have it installed. The men did a very good job installing as well. Again thank you.” – Resident

72% of residents report their ability to continue living in their home is better because of the repairs completed.

ENERGY

74% OF RESIDENTS report better energy efficiency

“It impacted me in a great way. I can be warm this winter and that my electric bill will be much less. Maybe I won’t have to call for help with my bill!”

- Resident

SAFETY

70% OF RESIDENTS report better safety

“For me, this process was lifesaving. Without your help, I can’t imagine how things would be. I feel much safer and am so thankful you have programs like this for me.”

- Resident

HEALTH

64% OF RESIDENTS report better health for people living in their home

“One woman couldn’t sleep in her bedroom because of mold and damage. We cleaned that up and health improved for her.”

- Project Coordinator

TYPES OF HOME REPAIRS

The repair types fell into the following categories.

Percentages are greater than 100%, as home repairs may have been completed across multiple categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOME SYSTEMS</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Improvements</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Improvements</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Efficiency</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior Improvements</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Plumbing, heating and electrical repairs/replacements
- Windows, doors, flooring, roofs, and foundations
- Installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and exhaust fans, along with accessibility modifications
- Insulation installation, duct and air infiltration repairs, and caulking
- Stairs, siding, skirting, and yard work
Some funds were used to increase organizational capacity and/or expertise. Since all organizations vary widely in terms of their operations, and therefore, needs, the ways in which funds were used to build organizational capacity and/or expertise also varied.

**EXAMPLES OF INCREASED ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND/OR EXPERTISE:**

- **STAFF TRAINED** on software system to streamline the bidding process for increased efficiency.

- **PROJECT COORDINATOR HIRED** to oversee the repair program. Prior to the grant, staff capacity was limited to one person functioning in several roles.

- **PROJECT COORDINATOR OBTAINED A GENERAL CONTRACTOR LICENSE.** Prior to the grant, funds were spent on hiring someone else to oversee the work.

Meyer’s grants helped the nine programs boost their capacity and expertise around manufactured housing repairs.
“In this area, housing is at a low. The building of affordable housing is at a low. There aren’t a lot of alternatives here. Manufactured home repair allows people that need a place to stay, [to] have a place to stay. And sometimes, that’s their only option.”
- Project Coordinator

The annual household income for 90% of these residents is less than $30,000.

“In this area, housing is at a low. The building of affordable housing is at a low. There aren’t a lot of alternatives here. Manufactured home repair allows people that need a place to stay, [to] have a place to stay. And sometimes, that’s their only option.”
- Project Coordinator

Percentages are greater than 100%, as residents can be included in more than one category.

Ownership:
- 54% Own the home and own the property
- 44% Own the home and lease the property
- 2% Rent the home and lease the property
A total of $730,000 was awarded across the nine organizations over the two-year period, with grants to each organization ranging from $30,000 to $100,000. A brief summary of each organization’s focus and activities follows.

**ACCESS**

provides multiple programs that promote self-sufficiency, with a focus on preservation of affordable housing for low-income residents. For their MHRP focus, they partnered with Age-Friendly Innovators (AFI) to provide health and safety repairs in conjunction with their weatherization work.

Service Area: Jackson County

Most Frequent Repair Types: Plumbing and electrical systems, weatherization, and accessibility

**COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM**

offers services including child development programs, housing services, energy and weatherization programs for low-income residents in their tri-county area. Their MHRP focus was to address essential health and safety issues alongside weatherization initiatives for manufactured homes.

Service Area: Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook Counties

Most Frequent Repair Types: Weatherization, installation of exhaust fans and carbon monoxide detectors

**COMMUNITY IN ACTION**

operates with the Healthy Homes approach to identify health and safety issues, as well as energy use and weatherization strategies to reduce utility bills for residents. Their MHRP focus was on the many residents in dire need of roof replacements due to extreme winter weather conditions.

Service Area: Harney and Malheur Counties

Most Frequent Repair Types: Roof replacement, carbon monoxide detector and smoke detector installation, reduction of air infiltration

**NEIGHBOR Impact**

provides services including family services, financial assistance, food, housing, and heat and energy assistance. Their MHRP focus was to provide safety, health, and/or energy-related home repairs to owners of manufactured homes.

Service Area: Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson Counties

Most Frequent Repair Types: Heating and plumbing systems, installation of carbon monoxide detectors

**NEIGHBORWORKS UMPQUA**

is a rural housing and community development corporation. In 2015, they purchased Newton Creek Mobile Home Park in Roseburg. A large number of homes are in poor condition in this 50-unit park. Their MHRP focus was to continue repairing these homes to control moisture, the most prevalent problem for this community.

Service Area: Douglas County

Most Frequent Repair Types: Doors and ceilings/walls, plumbing systems, foundation repairs

**UNITED COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK (UCAN)**

has offered weatherization services for low-income residents over the past few decades. Their MHRP focus was on completing health- and safety-related repairs for which weatherization funds could not be used.

Service Area: Josephine County

Most Frequent Repair Types: Weatherization, installation of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors

**YAMHILL COUNTY AFFORDABLE HOUSING CORPORATION**

promotes and supports home ownership for low-income residents. Their MHRP focus was to provide health and safety repairs alongside weatherization services.

Service Area: Yamhill County

Most Frequent Repair Types: Windows, plumbing systems

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY (TWO AFFILIATES)**

Two MHRP organizations are affiliates of Habitat for Humanity International, operating in partnership with the parent organization to provide decent and affordable housing for those in need. Homeowners work alongside staff and volunteers to perform the work and are provided no-interest loans to cover materials cost.

**BENTON HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

used MHRP funding to increase capacity by hiring a program coordinator, and to repair more homes and take on more extensive home repair projects.

Service Area: Benton County

Most Frequent Repair Types: Exteriors, doors, stairs, window caulking

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF LINCOLN COUNTY**

targeted staff training and certification, as well as capital purchases, to reduce overall operating costs for the home repair component of their program. These investments allowed them to extend their reach for manufactured home repairs.

Service Area: Lincoln County

Most Frequent Repair Types: Plumbing, window caulking, flooring, stairs
MANUFACTURED HOMES ARE A Viable Affordable Housing Option.

“With the housing crisis, manufactured homes are affordable housing. These folks we’re dealing with cannot afford to go out and find another place to live. Keeping these homes livable and sustainable since there’s no programs in place to replace them, is extremely important for people to live in these homes and live and function within these means.” - Project Coordinator

TIMING OF THE REPAIRS IS IMPORTANT.

“If the funding comes too late, you lose the preservation of that home.” - Project Coordinator

THE NEED IS GREATER THAN THIS 2-YEAR PROJECT.

Several organizations maintain waitlists, which can be up to two years. An additional 670 homes may be eligible for repairs beyond the scope of this two-year funding. This need presents an opportunity for the community as a whole to expand their impact by providing support to increase the number of homes receiving critical repairs.

FLEXIBLE FUNDING A KEY INGREDIENT TO SUCCESS.

Other funding sources restrict how funds can be used, which limits the types of repairs that could be performed. However, the Meyer funds were unrestricted, allowing organizations to complete a range of projects from small to complex.

SUCCESSES

FLEXIBLE FUNDING A KEY INGREDIENT TO SUCCESS.

“No other funding mechanisms other than Meyer to do these repairs, because it’s flexible.” - Project Coordinator

PEER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONS.

Organization staff convened for a one-day meeting to share their practices and learn.

CHALLENGES

SHORTAGE OF LABOR.

Contractors may not be available for work due to demands of new housing construction and/or potential difficulty of the work to complete. Parts for these older manufactured homes can be more difficult to locate.

STAFF TURNOVER.

When a key staff member leaves unexpectedly, it creates a barrier to complete the work as originally planned. Organizations overcame this barrier through utilizing other staff members to fulfill the role and/or hiring new staff members.

FURTHERING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION.

For some partners in this work, DEI was a relatively new topic, and some felt that basic demographics of the population in manufactured housing in their area (and of their longstanding waitlists) tended toward not-very-diverse outcomes. At the same time, many programs served mostly people with disabilities, and those with very low incomes. Meyer is committed to continue exploring how to support grantees’ efforts to better serve people of color, people with disabilities, and other populations experiencing serious housing disparities.

Questions about this program? Contact Michael Parkhurst, Program Officer - Housing Opportunities, Meyer Memorial Trust, PHONE: 971-230-0532 | WEB: www.mmt.org | EMAIL: michael@mmt.org