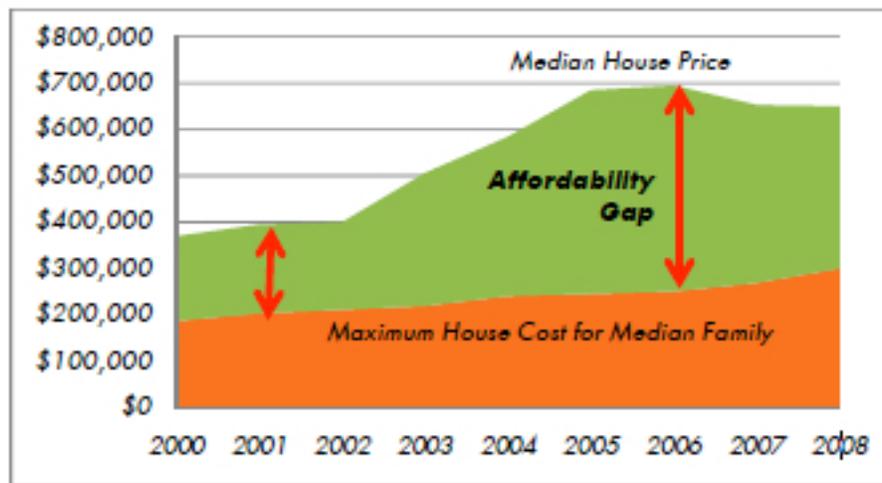


## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What's the workforce housing need on the Vineyard?

There are currently over 226 low and moderate-income working Island families looking for safe, secure, affordable rental housing and another 271 families looking for affordable homeownership opportunities. Many of these year-round residents struggle with the imbalance between the Island's housing costs and wages. The Island's high home prices are 85% above the statewide median; high rents are at least 30% over the statewide median; and low wages are 27% below the statewide average. This creates significant social and economic problems for our island community.



**Affordability Gap:** Over the past decade, the gap between what the median Islander can afford and the median house price has increased threefold.

### What's the benefit of solving the Island's workforce housing crisis?

Solving the island's workforce housing crisis directly benefits many important facets of our island life. Homes that are affordable are crucial to maintaining our vibrant service oriented economy. Children in stable homes learn and achieve more in school. Healthy habitats take root more easily in stable affordable homes. Stable homes make our community a safer place. Island families with stable homes give back to our community in so many important ways.

### What does the Island Housing Trust do?

The Island Housing Trust (IHT) has successfully partnered to build over 70 homes and rental apartments over the past nine years. The IHT's goal is to double its annual housing production to create a total of 180 affordable and workforce housing units by 2020. In 2014 nine apartments in West Tisbury and Tisbury were completed and are now being rented to lower income working families and individuals. Another six apartments have been permitted in downtown Vineyard Haven with construction scheduled to start in the fall of 2015 once funding has been secured.

As both non-profit builder and land steward, the IHT ensures the permanent affordability from one homeowner to the next through ground lease restrictions and on-going support for as long as they own their home. Through local grant funding and donations, the IHT is able to lower the cost of homeownership by eliminating land costs and a portion of the construction costs. In exchange, homeowners agree that, if they should sell their home, they'll sell it to another income-qualified family at an affordable price.

In partnership with the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority, the IHT has built and manages eleven rental apartments in West Tisbury and Tisbury for low-income working Island families. Through local and state grant funding and donations, the IHT has been able to create rental-housing solutions for those in our workforce with the greatest need.

### **Who gets the housing?**

Our homeowners and renters represent the very people who are the backbone of our local economy – schoolteachers, bookkeepers, mental health counselors, store clerks, landscapers, town employees, and small business owners, among others – and our future, the children who need a safe, stable home to thrive.

The IHT adheres to fair housing laws when qualifying and selecting income-eligible applicants. Homeownership opportunities are advertised in local newspapers and notices are mailed to over 250 working Island families from the Island's Affordable Homebuyer's Clearinghouse. If there are more income-qualified applicants than homeownership opportunities, a lottery is conducted by the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority. Local town preference is offered in 70% of the homeownership opportunities. Homeowner spouses, domestic partners, and children have the right to inherit these homes, otherwise homes must be sold to another income-qualified family or individual. The Dukes County Regional Housing Authority maintains a rental housing wait list for all the IHT properties that it manages.

### **Why should donors trust the IHT with their money?**

The IHT has a successful and proven track record of developing ownership and rental housing cost effectively and efficiently. Over the past nine years over 70 homes and rental apartments have been built across the Island involving total project costs of \$12 million dollars. By ensuring that the affordability is maintained in perpetuity from one homeowner to the next, the IHT is able to recapture all investments (public grants and private donations) for our island community into the future. The past two years has seen the successful implementation of a business plan to achieve operational self-sufficiency by building and diversifying its revenue sources. The IHT annual report, that can be downloaded from its website ([www.ithmv.org](http://www.ithmv.org)), shows these results. Working with minimal overhead, over 95% of the IHT's investments are made directly into the development and stewardship of its homes.

### **Exactly what will the IHT do with my donation and state tax credits?**

Individual donations and state tax credit investments will be used to sustain the IHT and will be directly invested in over a dozen permanently affordable ownership and rental housing projects that are currently underway or in the pipeline. The IHT has secured \$150,000 in state Community Investment Tax Credits that allows anyone to make a donation for \$1,000 or more and receive half of their donation back in the form of a state tax credit or a refund. Our goal is to raise \$1 million annually from individuals and foundations, matched by public grants from island towns, to create and sustain over 180 permanently affordable ownership and rental opportunities by 2020. Each of these permanent housing solutions require between \$100,000 and \$150,000 in grant funding.

### Projects:

- \$960,000 – to construct five rental apartments for low and moderate income families on Water Street in Vineyard Haven.
- \$50,000 – to winterize a house in Oak Bluffs gifted to the IHT in 2014 that will be sold to an income qualified family in 2015.
- \$1,000,000 – to construct year-round and seasonal housing that will be rented to Island farmers and apprentices at Thimble Farm in Tisbury.
- \$40,000 – purchase of three parcels of land at Marion’s Way in Tisbury to be ground leased to three low- and moderate-income Habitat for Humanity families.

### Programs:

- \$60,000 – six soft second loans to the IHT first time homebuyers to be used towards their down payment costs.
- \$600,000 – Buy-Down Program to purchase and renovate (if necessary) existing homes and to be sold with a ground leased affordably to low- and moderate-income families.
- \$800,000 – Life Estate Program to purchase life estate interest in existing homes, and over time sell them affordably and ground lease the land to low- and moderate-income families.

### Stewardship:

- \$75,000 – to be spent annually to provide on-going services and assistance to homeowners, as well as pay for certain pre-development costs.
- \$500,000 – endowment of \$10,000 for each of the 50 ground leased properties to help cover the cost of on-going monitoring of affordability restrictions and support services to homeowners.

### **Who are the other housing organizations on the Vineyard, and how does the IHT collaborate with them?**

Active partnerships with other housing organizations located at the Vineyard Housing Office have been critical in the IHT’s ability to create and sustain permanently affordable workforce housing solutions for low- and moderate-income Island families.

Many of the IHT projects over the past nine years have included partnerships with the Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank for the purchase of land for housing and conservation; Habitat for Humanity who builds homes with partnering families on IHT land; the Island Grown Initiative to build farmworker housing, and the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority for rental property management and administration of waitlists, income qualification, and selection process for the IHT. Partnering with knowledgeable and experienced local designers and builders, the IHT has also been able to build higher performance, energy efficient homes.

During its formative years, the IHT’s operating and project funding was supported in large part by the Island Affordable Housing Fund who raised nearly \$2.9 million dollars in grant funding from 2005-2009. However, the IHT is a separate non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization and has been

raising its own private donations and securing public funding for new projects and on-going programs for the past two years.

### **Why does the IHT build energy efficient green homes?**

The IHT homes are designed and built to be simple, durable, healthy, and energy efficient so that they are truly affordable - not only to purchase but also to own and maintain for generations. With competitive state grants and knowledgeable designers and builders, the IHT has developed neighborhoods of zero net energy homes that have received the highest green building certifications (LEED Platinum and Energy Star Plus) in the country. These high performance homes have the potential to produce as much energy as the homeowners use.

Any further questions please give the IHT's Executive Director, Philippe Jordi a call @ 508-693-1117 or email him at: [pjordi@ihtmv.org](mailto:pjordi@ihtmv.org)