

ISLAND HOUSING TRUST VISION 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN



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STRATEGIC CONTEXT & VISION FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Island Housing Trust (IHT) enters this strategic period at a pivotal moment for Martha's Vineyard. As housing costs continue to rise and year-round residents, working families, and essential workers face increasing barriers to remaining on the Island, the need for permanently affordable housing has never been more urgent. Guided by an expanded mission—to create, promote, and steward permanently affordable homes that support a diverse and sustainable Island community—this five-year strategic plan affirms IHT's role not only as a nonprofit housing developer and long-term steward, but also as a trusted Island-wide leader, community convener, and

advocate for affordable housing. While IHT will continue its longstanding focus on creating affordable homes for low- and moderate-income households, the organization will also continue to expand its development efforts to include permanently affordable homeownership opportunities for middle-income households. Through increased community engagement and mobilization, IHT will build broad public support for affordable housing, reduce opposition to new development, and strengthen the policy and resource environment necessary for long-term housing stability on Martha's Vineyard.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The Island Housing Trust (IHT) is a state-certified nonprofit Community Development Corporation (CDC) whose mission is to create, promote, and steward permanently affordable housing on Martha's Vineyard. As a developer and steward of ownership and rental housing, IHT helps bridge the gap between the Island's high property values and what low and moderate-income Island families can afford. IHT believes that by creating sustainable, long-term, affordable homes and stewarding them for future generations, it will help build a more vital, diverse, and resilient Island economy and community.

The organization actively engages residents, businesses, and municipal leaders through its Board of Directors, strategic partnerships, and an open, inclusive approach to working with the Island's diverse communities. IHT's 13-member Board of Directors and 12-member staff include residents from all six Island towns, IHT homeowners, members of town boards and committees, local business leaders, and other community stakeholders. This broad-based, representative structure—combined with strong cross-sector partnerships—ensures that community voices help shape priorities, inform decision-making, and guide oversight of IHT's work.

Photo: Carl Widdiss Way Ribbon Cutting, by Randi Baird



SUMMARY OF PLANNING PROCESS

The strategic planning process was designed to actively engage residents, community leaders, and businesses in shaping Island Housing Trust's five-year strategic plan. IHT engaged Judy Freiwirth, Principal of Nonprofit Solutions Associates, to design and lead the process, working closely with the Board of Directors and staff through a phased, highly participatory approach. A Strategic Planning Team, comprised of a cross-section of board members and staff, guided the planning process.

In collaboration with the Strategic Planning Team, the consultant designed and conducted a comprehensive strategic assessment informed by 13 individual external interviews with community leaders, residents, funders,

public agencies, nonprofit and housing partners, and businesses, as well as five internal focus groups and seven internal interviews. The process also included research, a comprehensive review of internal and external documents, and an online survey of all board and staff members, ensuring broad participation among internal stakeholders. Four board–staff working groups were then formed to develop strategic direction proposals, which were advanced through a board and staff retreat. Following the retreat, the working groups developed specific strategies aligned with the five-year desired outcomes. A second board and staff retreat subsequently set priorities for the strategic directions, finalizing the plan.

IHT residents, by Arletta Charter



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement has been revised and expanded to reflect IHT's work beyond housing development. The new mission statement is as follows:

“The Island Housing Trust creates, promotes, and stewards permanently affordable homes to support a diverse and sustainable community on the island of Martha’s Vineyard.”



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 & OVERALL VISION 2030: **HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Over the next five years, IHT will develop 200 homes across the six Island towns to meet housing production goals. Of these, 150 homes will primarily serve low- and moderate-income households (below and at 80% AMI)

through rental housing, and 50 homes will primarily serve middle-income households (100-180% AMI) through homeownership opportunities.

IHT homes, by Randi Baird



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: NEW AND EXPANDED PROGRAMMATIC DIRECTIONS

IHT will strengthen and expand its programmatic capacity by professionalizing stewardship and asset management, launching an innovative nitrogen mitigation banking program, and improving public access to clear, culturally responsive housing

information. Through rigorous property oversight, environmentally sustainable solutions, and a modernized digital presence, IHT will equip residents with the tools and pathways needed to secure and sustain affordable housing.

IHT residents, by Arletta Charter



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, MOBILIZATION, AND ADVOCACY**

IHT will expand its community engagement and advocacy efforts to build a broad, inclusive Island community that actively supports affordable housing and embraces new development of affordable, year-round housing as a shared community asset. By mobilizing diverse networks, elevating culturally grounded storytelling, and strengthening relationships with

underrepresented communities, IHT will build a powerful base of informed residents ready to participate in and champion housing-organizing initiatives. Through coordinated local and statewide advocacy, IHT will advance policies that strengthen the Community Land Trust model, secure needed housing resources, and unify Island-wide action behind long-term affordability.

Carl Widdiss Way Ribbon Cutting, by Randi Baird



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4: **A STRONG, DIVERSIFIED FIVE-YEAR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY**

Over the next five years, IHT will build a robust, diversified fundraising strategy to secure long-term financial sustainability. The organization will broaden its donor base, launch an endowment, expand sponsorships and social impact investments, and elevate campaigns and events in support of major

gift fundraising. Through strong collaboration among the CEO, Board, and staff, IHT will deepen donor relationships and strengthen its visibility, ensuring the resources needed to meet the Island's evolving affordable housing needs.

IHT residents, by Randi Baird





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THE PATH FORWARD

This five-year strategic plan continues to position housing development at the core of Island Housing Trust's work, with a continued focus on creating permanently affordable, year-round homes for low- and moderate-income households, and a more intentional expansion of development to include affordable homeownership opportunities for middle-income residents. By addressing a broader range of housing needs, the plan responds to the realities faced by essential workers, families, and others who are increasingly priced out of the Island.

At the same time, the plan recognizes that building housing alone is not enough. Expanded programs, strengthened stewardship, and increased community mobilization and advocacy are critical to reducing barriers to development and building public support for affordable housing. Together, these strategies support a shared vision of Martha's Vineyard as a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable year-round community where people of all income levels can live and thrive.