



www.whidbeywill.com

Whidbey Island Living Legacy (WILL) is a 501c 3 nonprofit organization dedicated to creating pathways to affordable homeownership. Our mission was to acquire funds—through purchase or donation—to own land for affordable housing. We were donated a property in 2024. This land is held in trust so that qualified individuals can purchase their own cottage within a supportive community of cottages. While the land remains in the trust, each homeowner owns their home.

Since 2000, South Whidbey’s student population has declined by 50%, even as the overall resident population has grown by 17%. Currently, 97 children in the South Whidbey School District are inadequately housed. The lack of affordable housing also makes it difficult for local retail and service businesses to recruit and retain staff. Affordable housing is essential not only for families but also for maintaining a healthy local economy. Several organizations in South Whidbey are developing properties to meet specific community housing needs; WILL is proud to be part of this collaborative effort.

Grace Landing - A Community of Six Small Cottages

BOARD MEMBERS

Coyla Shephard, WILL Founder and President

Donna Slade, WILL Organizer

Erin Leary, WILL Communications

Beth Farrell, WILL Marketing

Richard Queen, WILL Building

Bobbie Stewart, WILL Treasurer

Orin Kolaitis, Chief Executive Officer/Habitat for Humanity of Island County

Liz Chaffin, Chief Development Officer/Habitat for Humanity of Island County

THE LAND, THE HOMES

Construction of the houses is the affordable part; land is the expensive part. The cost of home ownership has risen 1,608% since many of us bought our first homes, eclipsing inflation (644%).

WILL small cottages are 600 sq. ft. The main floor is 400 sq. ft. on the ground with a 200 sq. ft. loft. The house plan accommodates a living room, kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom on the main floor and a loft bedroom and half bath in the loft.

These are permanent homes, not mobile. WILL’s Building Committee will oversee the design, color choices, and construction of the houses following City of Langley requirements.

We’re fortunate to have a highly qualified builder/project manager, as well as an architect, actively developing the project with us. Their expertise ensures that our homes will be built to the highest standards of quality, sustainability, and design integrity.

LOCATION

City of Langley is currently the only area in So. Whidbey zoned for small houses. Richard Queen has donated to WILL the lot in Langley next to the THINC property at 702 Camano Ave.

MARKETING

Using THINC as a successful model, money will be raised through:

- Newspaper articles
- Social media
- Community grants
- Local clubs
- Partner organizations/businesses

GENERAL INFORMATION

Small House Statistics, Trends, and Affordability

The age of McMansions is ending. More small home and small home communities of varying scales, amenities, services, and operating models are popping up every day, proving to be a viable option for affordable housing and ending the struggle for housing instability.

Having a steady, affordable living plan helps workers remain in their jobs and allows employers to reduce employee turnover.

At a time when substantial personal debt and low consumer savings are the norm, living on a smaller footprint offers the possibility of a transformational lifestyle through living more intentionally, especially for those dealing with the immense pressures of unaffordability in the present housing market.

Analysts predict steady market expansion over the next few years. The small house market has an estimated compound annual growth rate of 4.88% between 2022 and 2027.

Small house market revenue is projected to increase by \$4.17 million through 2027. Rising demand points to double-digit growth.

North America may contribute 57% of small house growth by 2027. The U.S. and Canada present major expansion opportunities.

56% of the U.S. population finds small living arrangements appealing.

Avoiding home loans helps achieve financial freedom faster. 68% of small homeowners have no mortgage, compared to 29.3% of all U.S. homeowners.

Lower housing costs mean homeowners can allocate more money to savings. For example, 55% of small home owners have more savings than average Americans.

32% of small homeowners have over \$10,000 in retirement savings. Small living allows substantial future savings while enjoying home ownership.

SPECIFICATIONS

To be considered a small house, the main floor of the house and hallways must have a minimum ceiling height of 6 feet, 8 inches. This ensures residents can move comfortably throughout the space.

WILL homes will be 400 square feet on the grounds and a 200 square foot loft, six times smaller than an average house. Much like a boat, the limited space encourages built-in efficiency while still providing comfort.

Small houses produce fewer CO2 emissions each year than an average-sized house. Their small footprint makes them an eco-friendly housing choice.

There are more than 10,000 small houses in the United States. This number continues to rise as the tiny and small house lifestyle gains popularity.

COST

The average cost of a small house is 87% cheaper than the average price of a typical U.S. house. This significant price difference allows more Americans to achieve homeownership without taking on a burdensome mortgage.

Over 80% of small house owners carry less debt than the average U.S. citizen. Without a heavy mortgage, owners can better make their payments.

About 40% of small house owners are older than 50 years.

55% of tiny and small homeowners are women. A significant number are single parents.

Millennials prefer/benefit from small houses. Young adults and those in the workforce embrace small living to avoid burdensome housing costs.

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Come join us in creating something magical!