

Shared Roots: The Origin Story of Community Land Trusts + Habitat for Humanity

Land Trust Practicum
April 29, 2026

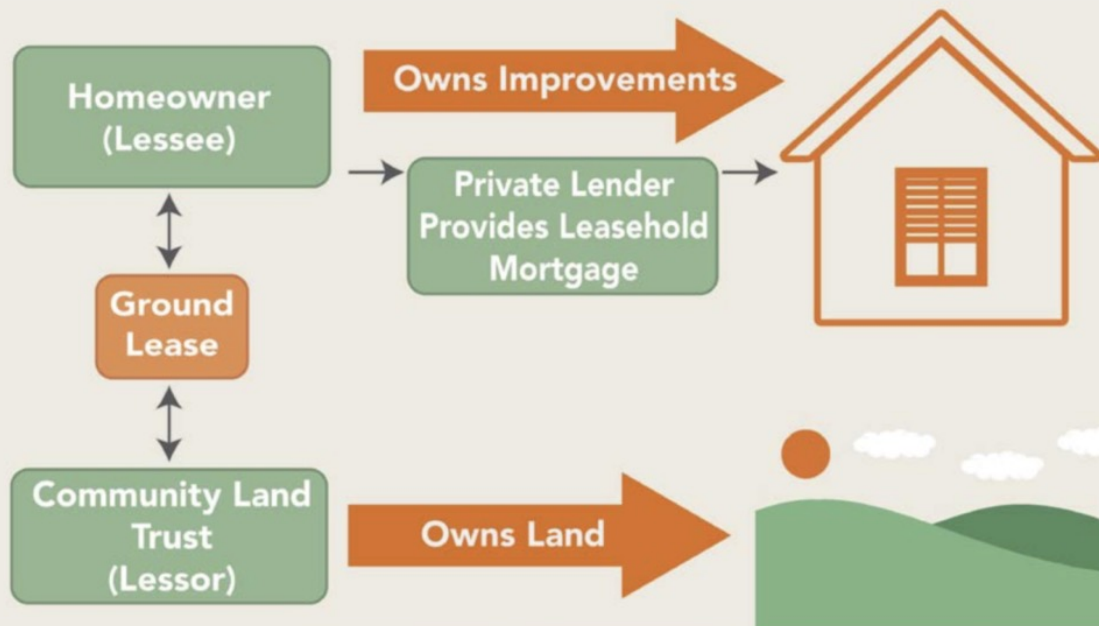


Adapted from:
Roots of the CLT Movement
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Adapted by:
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Presented by:
Katie Ullrich and David Heddy



How a Community Land Trust Works



**India: Vedic prohibition
on deeding of land**

Tanzania, Africa:
Ujamaa Vijijini
("familyhood in
villages")

**Israel: From the Torah,
just distribution of land
and re-distribution in
the *Year of Jubilee***

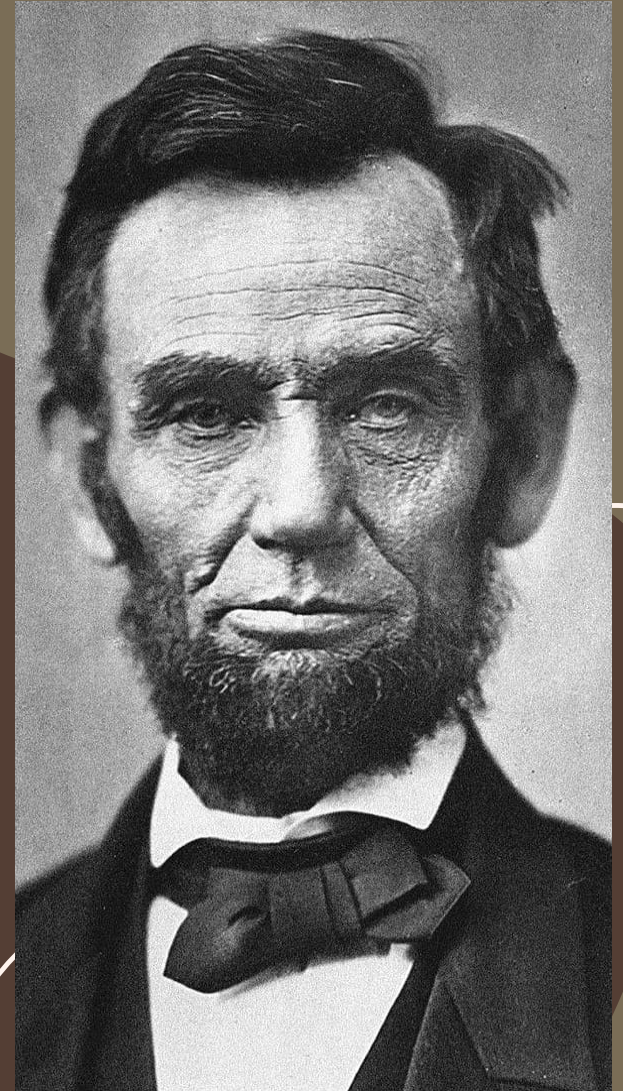
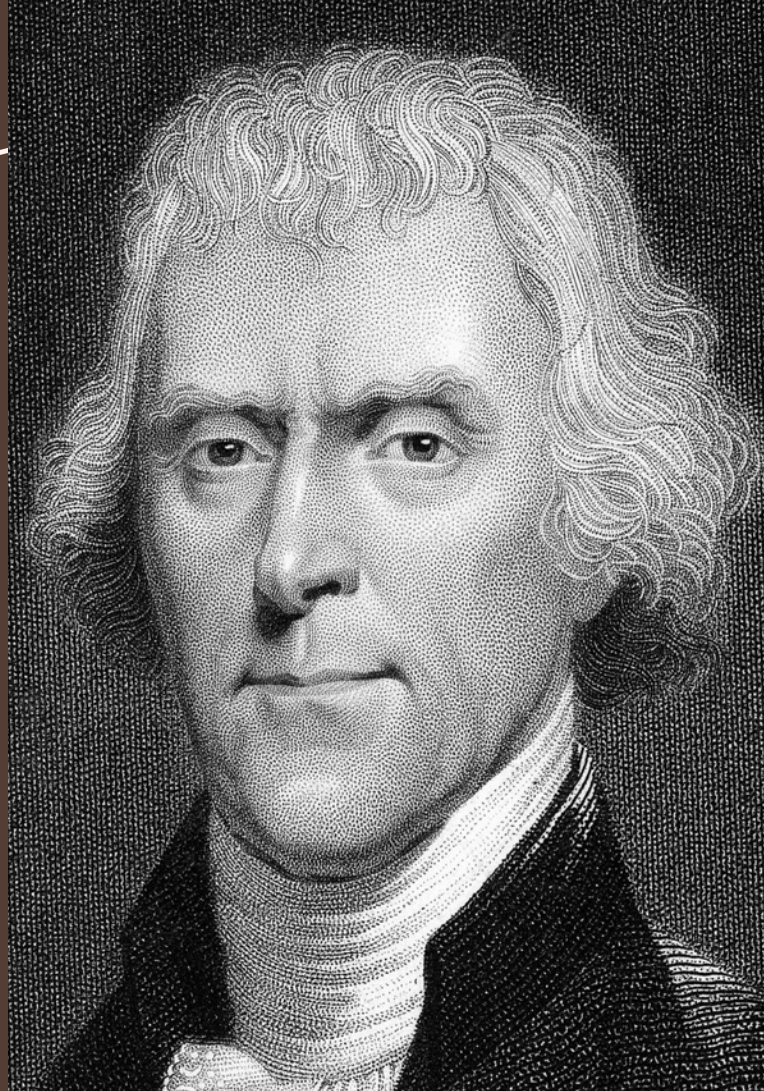
**England: Agricultural
commons and
Almshouse trusts**

Scotland: Croft lands

**Mexico: *Ejido* ("village
lands")**



**"The President in Washington
sends word that he wishes to buy our
land. But how can you buy or sell the
sky? The land? The idea is strange to
us. If we do not own the freshness of
the air and the sparkle of the water,
how can you buy them?"
Chief Seattle, 1854**





HENRY GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

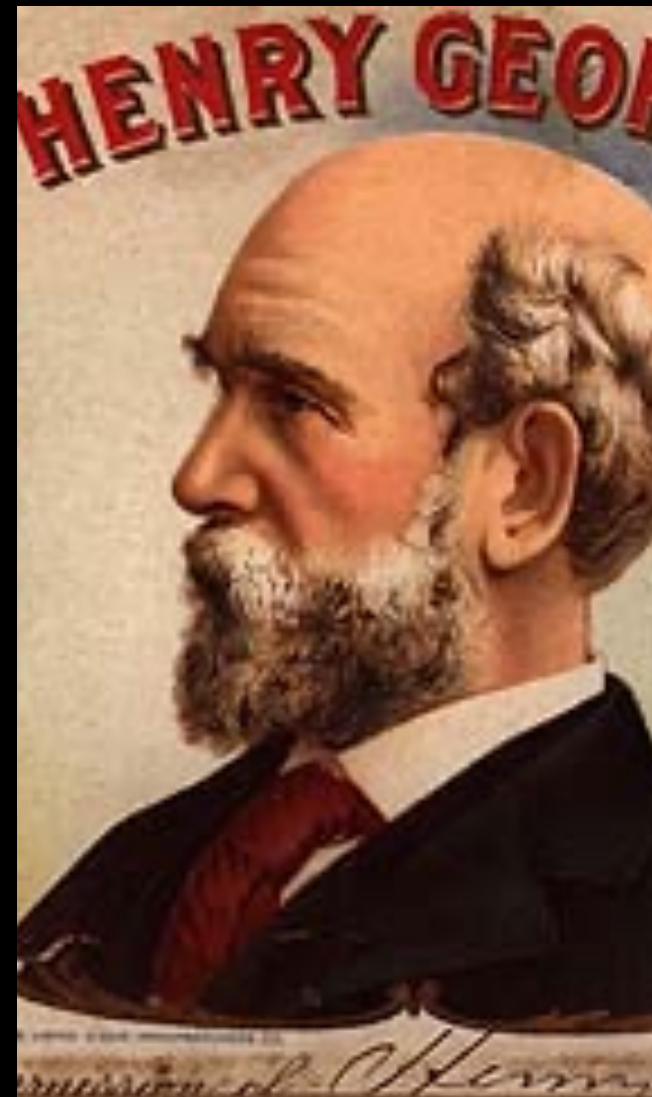
FOR MAYOR,
HENRY GEORGE

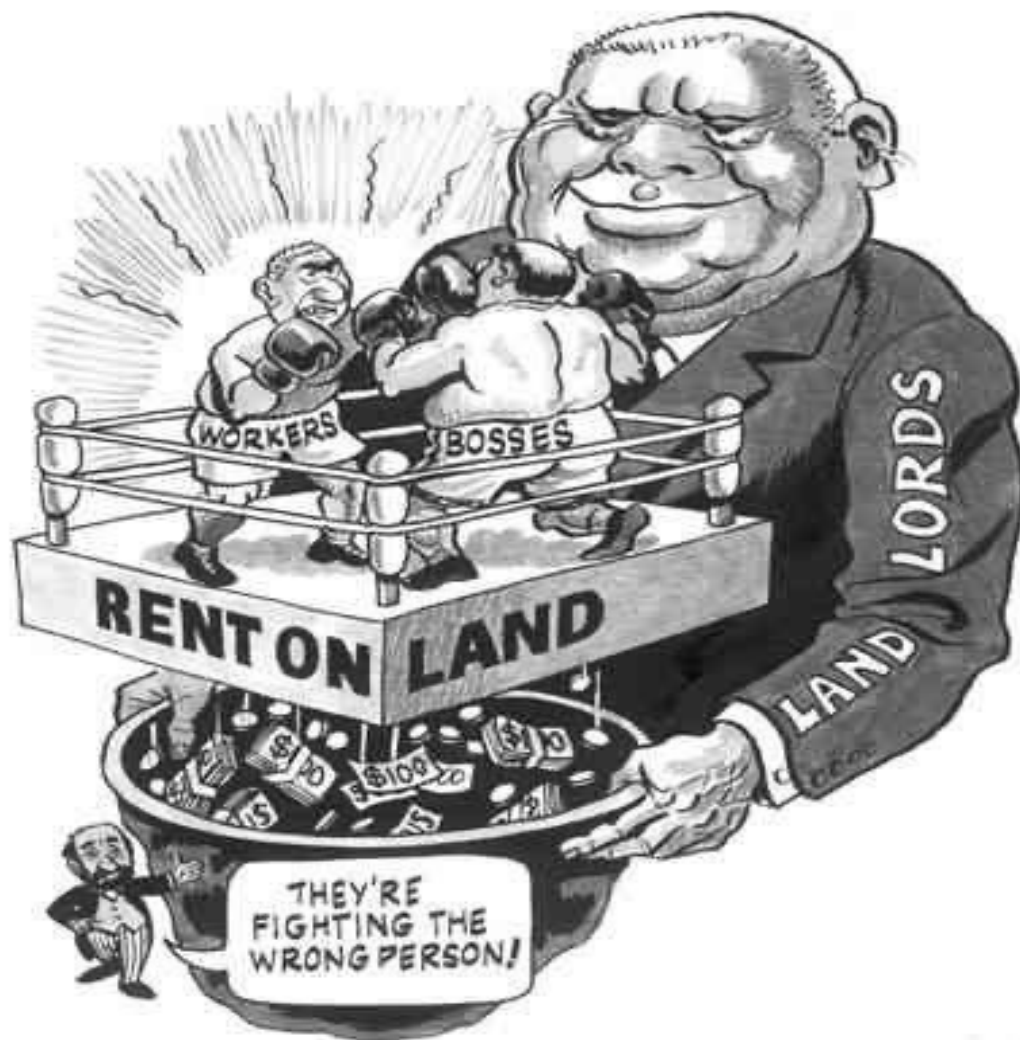
THE DEMOCRACY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

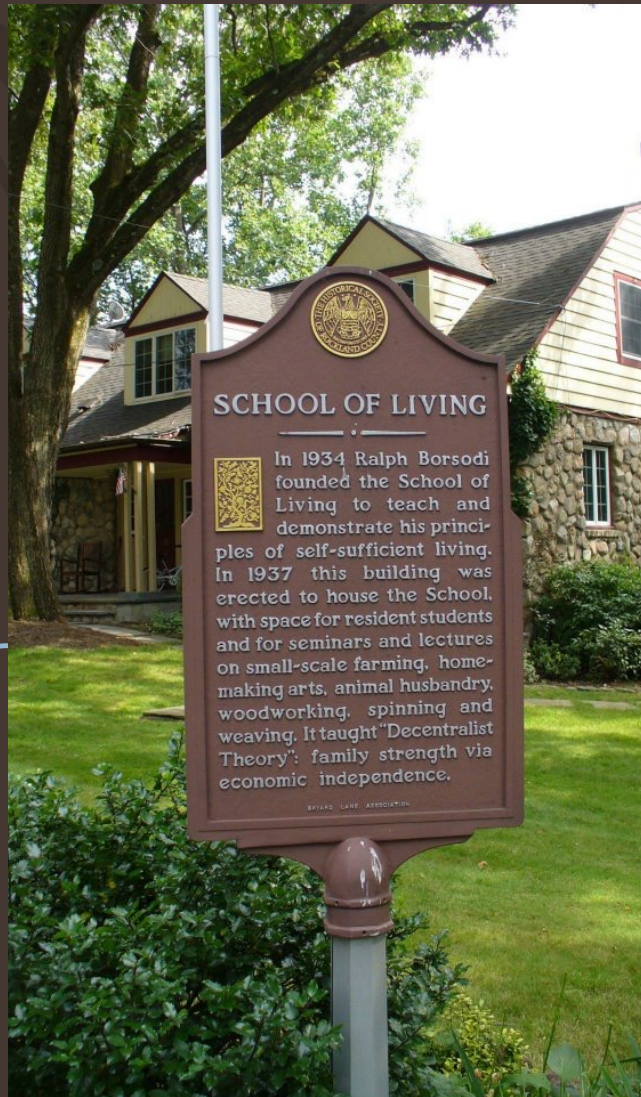


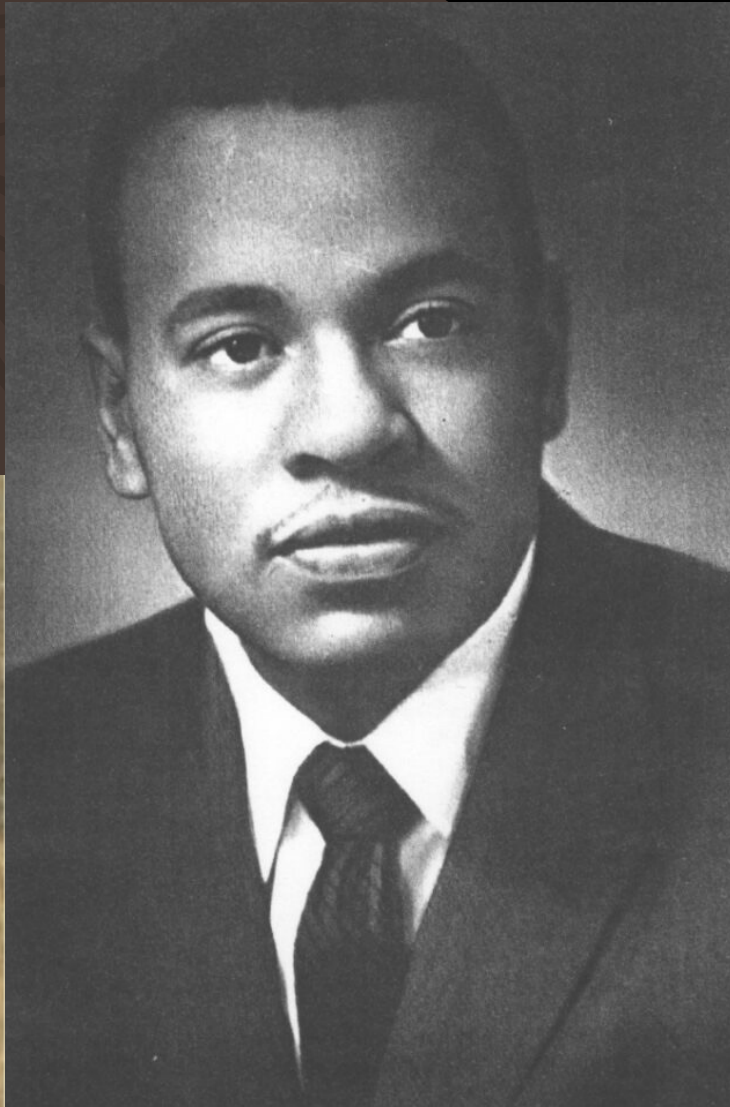
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Make your Mark x
 in the Circle ○ under
 the Rooster.













Common Origins



New
Communities, Inc.
(the org that inspired CLTs)



Koinonia
Farm

Habitat for
Humanity

Key Messages - It's in our roots

- HFH and CLT both grew out of New Communities cooperative ownership model
- Right of repurchase kept homes under affiliate control
- Fund for Humanity vision was to hold land in a trust + low income families could build their houses.
- Clarence described it: "Land and capital are provided but not given, on faith, at no charge."

Habitat for Humanity and the CLT Movement: A Common Seedbed





RURAL ADVANCEMENT FUND

NATIONAL SHARECROPPERS FUND

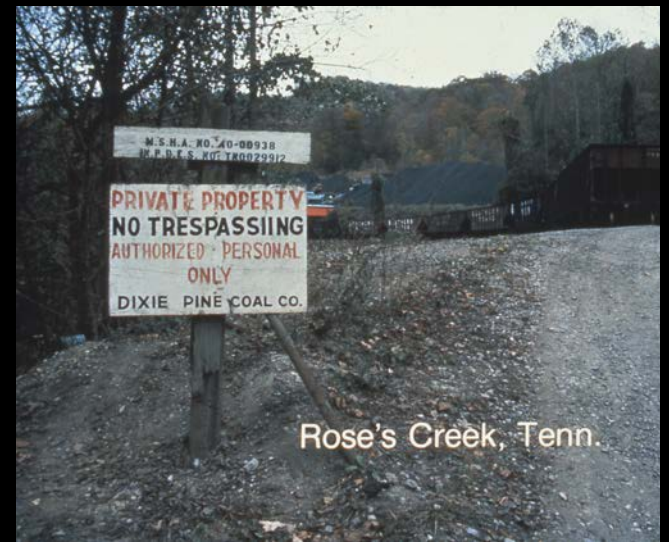


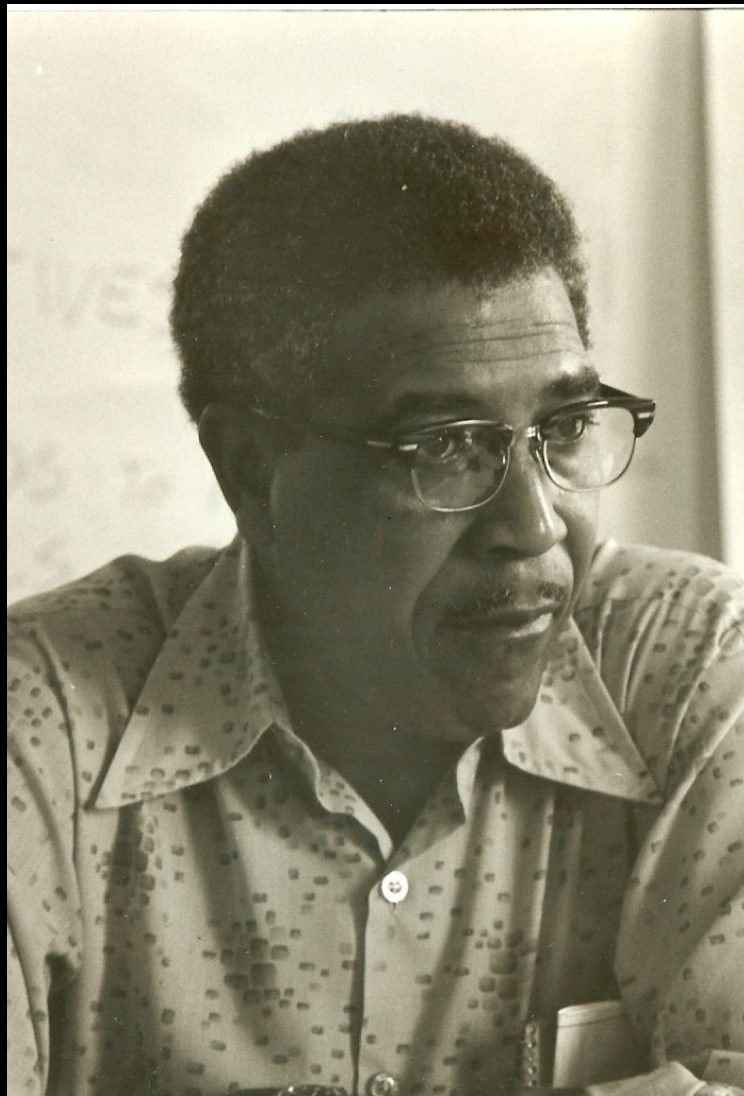
112 EAST 19th STREET NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003











Barbara Wheeler
Board Member
Community Land Co-op of Cincinnati





**Preferential option for
low income**

- Priority for people
- Activities recognized
as charitable



Perpetual Affordability

- Preserving access to
land
- Housing for persons of
modest means



Perpetual Responsibility

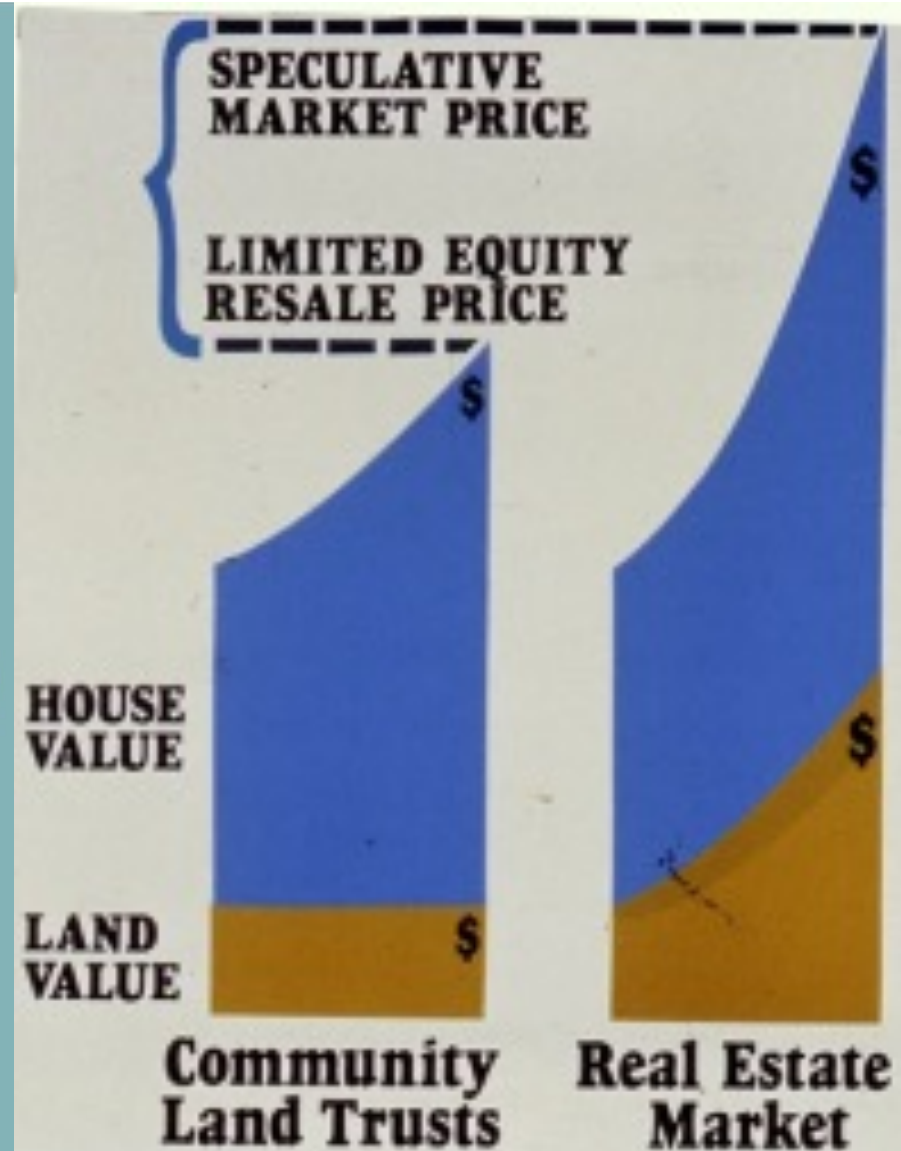
- Promoting repairs
- Preventing
foreclosures

What is a land trust?

A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a form of community-controlled housing that includes rental, cooperative, and homeownership housing on **community owned land**.



CLTs aim to keep housing permanently affordable through a **ground lease**. Because the **land** is collectively owned, and cannot be sold, the resale value of homes on it is limited. Housing remains affordable for low to moderate income households forever.





New Communities
+ Fund for Humanity



First CLTs in WA +
First Habitat in OR



NW CLT Coalition



LIFT Funding

1960s

1990s

2020s

International Independence
Institute (later Institute
for Community Economics (ICE))



International Independence
Institute (later Institute for

First CLTs
Established in Oregon



Grounded Solutions
Formed (Merger of National
Community Land Trust
Network and Cornerstone
Partnership)



Habitat and Permanent Affordability...

Habitat Affiliates can expand the number of households served and can preserve affordable housing stock via LA models that:

- utilize economic opportunity to preserve communities without displacing people
- perpetuate the affordability of privately-owned housing
- retain the public's investment/subsidy in affordable housing
- enhance wealth-building for people with low incomes via homeownership
- support the ongoing stability of first-time homeowners

LAND BELONGS TO A VAST FAMILY OF PEOPLE

SOME OF WHOM ARE DEAD, MANY OF WHOM ARE LIVING, MOST OF WHOM ARE YET UNBORN



COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS