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Interfaith Housing Coalition of NW Florida

## Escambia County Commits \$2.78million to Journey

**F**unding affordable housing is a lot like making a patchwork quilt -- it requires a lot of pieces to make the design emerge. So it was with elation that IHC celebrates a very significant centerpiece to the design, \$2,780,000 for the construction of infrastructure essential to *Journey's* construction.

This funding comes from a variety of sources, local, State, and federal, and I channeled through the County to IHC.

- From Local Option Sales Tax III (LOST) funding \$500,000;
- From Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): \$250,000/year for five years for a total of \$1,250,000;

- From the Englewood Community Redevelopment Area Community Reinvestment Act (CRA): \$30,000;
- From an interest-free loan from the State Housing Initiative Program (SHIP): \$1,000,000)

“A patchwork quilt, maybe, but more like alphabet soup,” noted Community Development Director Chérie Isakson. “Acronyms like LOST and CDBG, CRA and SHIP blend well -- and taste might be good! We’re very grateful to the Board of Escambia County Commissioners for their unanimous vote on behalf of *Journey*.”

Additional funding is being sought from additional

**E**scambia County can appropriately look on this funding for the *Journey* infrastructure as an investment. Tax revenue are projected to repay these initial outlays in tax revenue by year six. Over the first fifteen years of the development’s life, tax revenue from the 250 homes can be estimated at as much as \$8 million. The land prior to development has been exempt from taxation.

sources to complete the funding package for the approximately \$4.2million infrastructure for streets, sidewalks, alleyways and parks.

### “It looks like a Barbie birthday party blew up!”

**S**o said Bill Compton, Director of Housing, upon viewing the pink ribbons festooning oak trees on the *Journey* site. “Clearly the tree surveyors have been working.”

The previously undeveloped property on which 250 affordable homes will rise has an abundance of heritage oaks well established there. “What a gift to a new community to have formidable trees all around, trees that have stood the test of time,” Compton noted. “Once their locations have

been plotted by GPS locator, the architectural design team will reconfigure the master plan to preserve as many of them as possible.

We know we’ll have to lose some in order to build houses, but it’s central to IHC’s commitment to environmental stewardship to keep as many as possible while still fulfilling our mission.”





**INTERFAITH  
HOUSING COALITION**  
*of Northwest Florida*

1000 W. Garden Street  
Pensacola FL 32501



*Building communities  
by creating  
quality affordable homes*

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## New Board Members Add to the Interfaith Mix

**A**s the new academic year begins, IHC continues to expand the reach of our Board into more faith communities. Efforts to further diversify participation while committing to bringing in folks with skills and gifts have brought to us:

♦ **The Rev. Jackie Slaughter**, the United Methodist pastor at Richards Memorial and St. Paul churches;

♦ **The Rev. Julie Kain**, pastor at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola;

♦ **The Rev. Lester Durst**, pastor of St. Christopher Episcopal Church.

These leaders each bring previous involvement with IHC in service or funding. St. Christopher's on 12th Avenue supported IHC through its Fall Caravan. The Unitarian Universalist

Congregation on north Pensacola Blvd. has identified and committed to working on affordable housing as a key social issue for this year, identifying IHC as its entry point.

The Rev. Slaughter, formerly Associate Pastor at Myrtle Grove United Methodist, participated in the land dedication of the *Jour-*

*ney* site but bringing the gift of drumming to enliven the day's worship.

The IHC Board continues to seek out and invite participation from varied faith communities and is, even now, engaged in education and conversation with other traditions.

*If your faith community is not involved and you'd like it to be, contact Chérie at 850-435-3564 or visit the IHC website.*

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## IHC Conversations Begin with Potential Development Partners

**J**ourney began as a coalition of faith communities, has grown as a participatory collaboration of local housing partners, and now moves into the vital phase of forming key partnerships with developers and builders. Working efficiently and effectively without duplicating efforts or competing with local home builders is one of IHC's goals. The first memorandum of understanding has been signed between IHC and Community Enterprise Investments, Inc. (CEII), a non-profit organization that has been building affordable housing in Pensacola for decades. They will build as many as 25 homes a year as part of this *Journey* community partnership.

On August 17, IHC staff addressed the Expo day luncheon of the **Home Builders Association of West Florida**, inviting interested members to a luncheon to be held in September at St. Paul Lutheran Church (ELCA) where presentations by Bill Compton (IHC Housing Director) and Carter Quina of **Quina Grundhoefer Architects** (part of the design team for *Journey*) offered opportunities for partnership to local developers to be participants in the master-planned community. Additionally, conversations are currently underway as IHC selects its development partner for the multifamily phase rental units as the opportunity to apply for tax-credit financing approaches.