



Who Owns the Land?

Exploring Ownership Models and the Future of Affordable Housing

Alexa McNeil

Growth and Coordination Consultant,
Essex Community Land Trust

Housing as a Human Right: Access, Stability, & Production

September 23, 2026

2026



Essex Community Land Trust

Making Homeownership & Land
Preservation Possible.

A black and white photograph of a building facade. The building has a large mural on its side. The mural features a man in a turban and a woman in a headscarf, both holding up signs. The text on the building reads "New Communities Inc." in a large, stylized script, followed by "LITTLE FARMERS MARKET" in bold, block letters, and "MEATS AND GROCERIES" in smaller block letters below. A car is parked in front of the building, and a wooden structure is visible to the right.

New Communities Inc.

LITTLE FARMERS MARKET

MEATS AND GROCERIES

THE HISTORY



Mission & Those Doing The Work

To strengthen communities by permanently affordable housing and financial empowerment opportunities for working families and individuals throughout Essex County and beyond.

Co-Founders



**Britnee
Timberlake**

Co-Founded ECLT in 2011



**Harold
Simon**

Executive Director of Shelterforce Magazine (retired)
&
Board Member

Associates



**Alexa
McNeil**

Growth and Coordination Consultant

The Land Trust is meant to be a **WEALTH BUILDING TOOL NOT AN INVESTMENT ONE**

We are PARTNERS.

We believe in PAYING IT FORWARD.

We make it possible IN-PERPETUITY.



CLT separates ownership of land from home

Land Trust retains ownership of land

Homebuyer buys and owns the structure

Traditional Homeownership

VS.

Essex Community Land Trust

Same	Different
Obtain a mortgage with a bank	CLT purchase price is lower
Potential to accumulate equity	
Inherited and passed down to loved ones	The CLT owns the land under the land trust home and the homeowner leases the land from the CLT for a nominal fee
Payment of property taxes	
Ability to make improvements to the property	The Resale Formula is what determines the process at sale.

WHAT WE OFFER



Homebuyer's Club

Quarterly Financial Freedom
Homebuyer's Club



O.W.N

7-step qualification for
homeownership

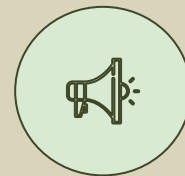
Stewardship

Guaranteeing successful
homeownership



P.O.W.E.R

Promoting Land Rights
Offering Affordable Housing
Working to Prevent Displacement
Educating the Population
Reinforcing Community Empowerment



2026



THANK YOU

Do you have any questions? Want to Follow Up.

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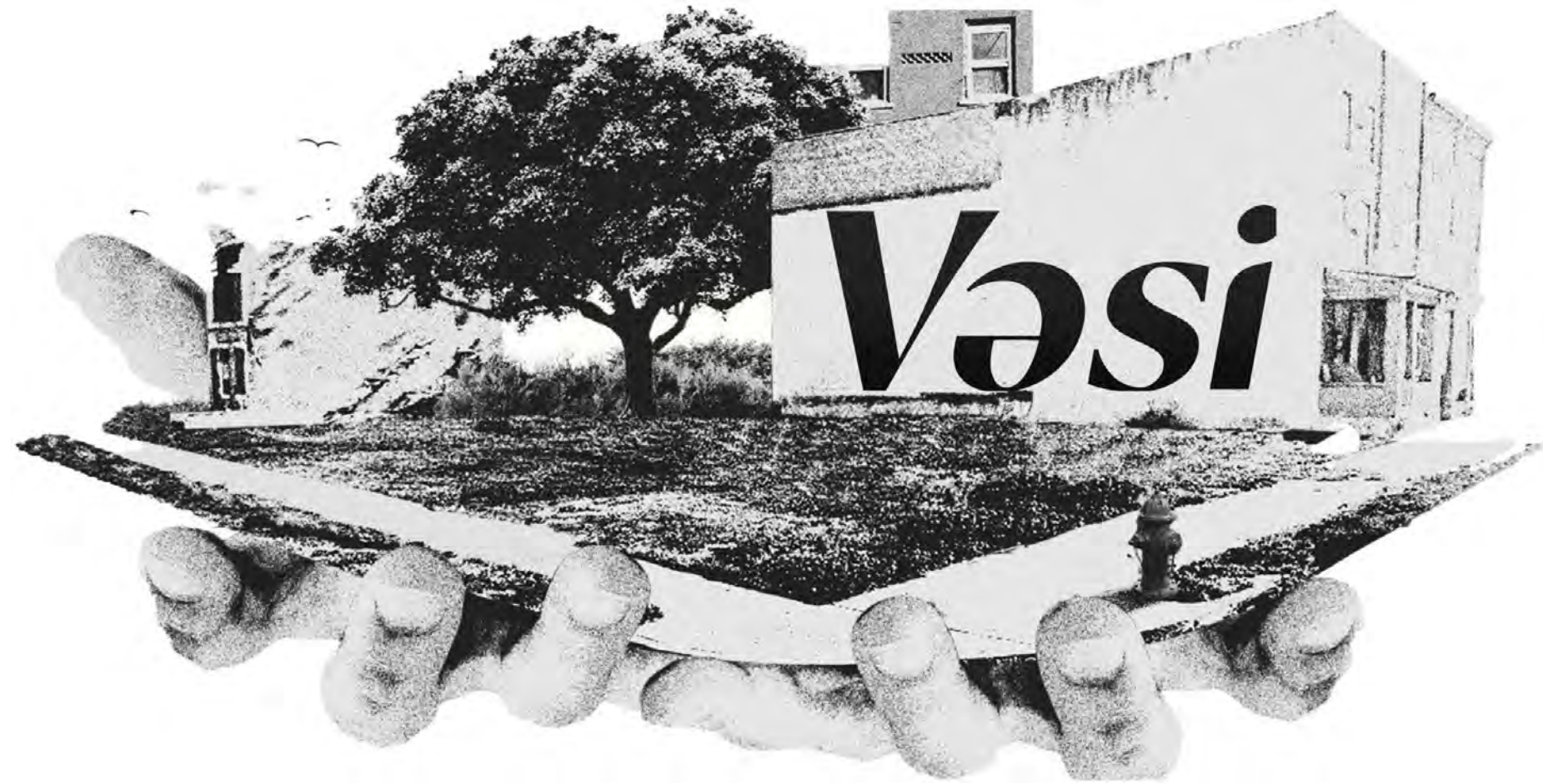
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April De Simone
Vesi

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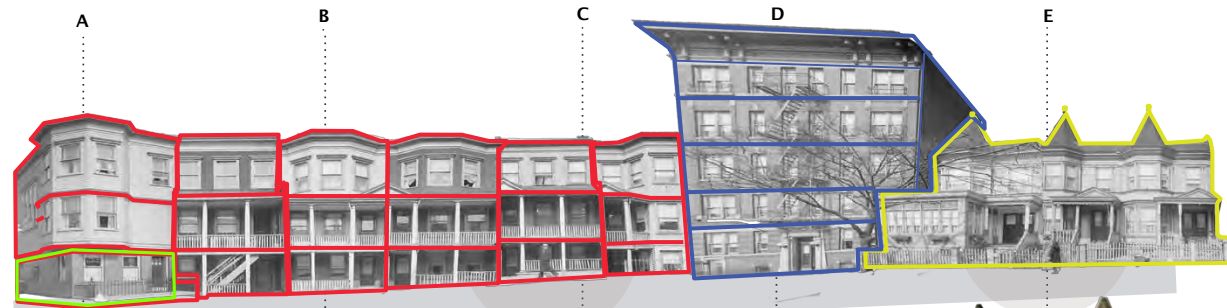
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Ownership Purpose Public Benefit

Ownership
Purpose
Public Benefit

WHY?



Ownership
Purpose
Public Benefit

Vəsi

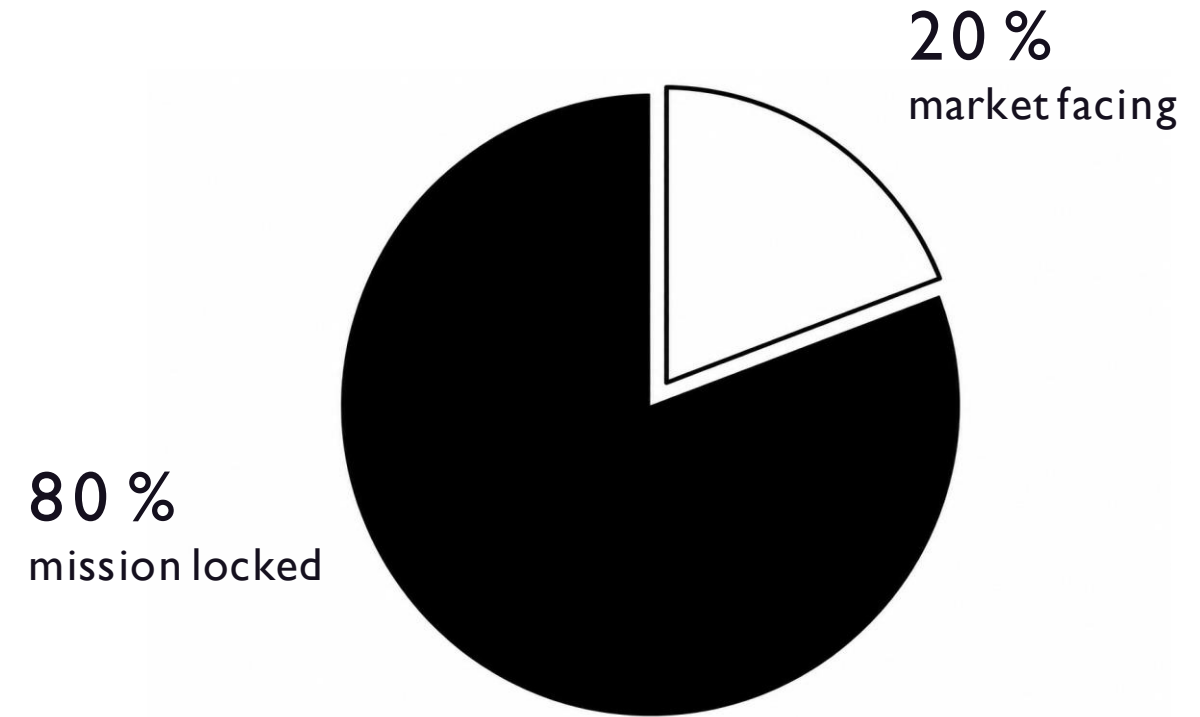
Vesi aligns the ownership of residential, commercial, and cultural assets with purpose.



Ownership
Purpose
Public Benefit

A Portfolio For Purpose & Public Benefit

Our model stewards a portfolio of these different assets that is 80 percent mission locked and 20 percent market facing.



This structure allows Vesi to work with local partners to preserve the purpose of assets, while ensuring the value they generate over time serves a lasting public benefit for people, neighborhoods, and future generations.

Ownership
Purpose
Public Benefit

Serving Public Benefit

For Vesi, public benefit is
locally defined.

Public Benefit can take the form of
housing stability, homeownership,
local enterprise, cultural preservation,
or other community priorities shaped
with local partners.



Ownership
Purpose
Public Benefit

An Ecosystem of Stewardship Models

1

Model
Tenements
1800s



2

Limited Equity
Cooperatives
1910s



3

Community
Land Trust
1967



4

Purpose Trusts
/ Public Benefit
Corporations



5

Social Purpose
Real Estate
Investment Trust



Ownership
Purpose
Public Benefit

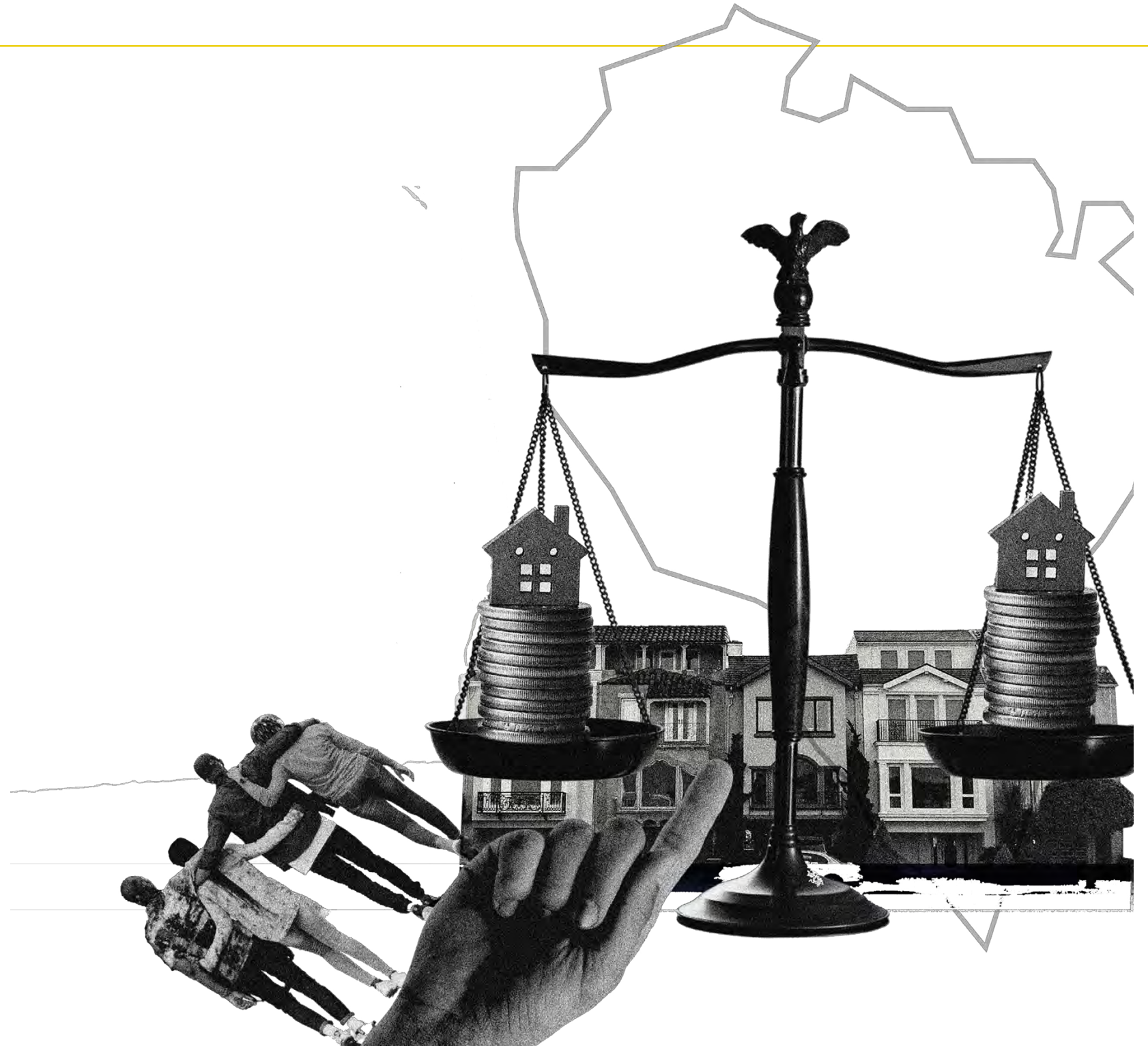
Tools To Preserve Purpose

Acquisition Fund

- Supports Timely Acquisition
- Protects Mission
- Builds Asset Base For Long Term Purpose

Special Purpose Loans

- Low Cost Capital
- Low Cost Lending | Share Loans
- Permanent Subsidy



Ownership
Purpose
Public Benefit

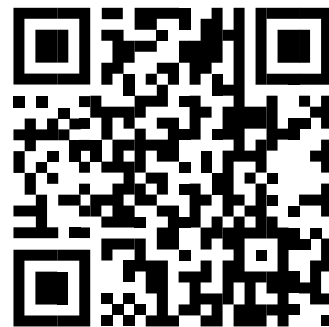
Building From Here

Our inaugural cities reflect places with deep history, strong community leadership, and real opportunity to advance ownership, purpose, and public benefit.



“Where after ALL do human rights begin? In small places, close to home-so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person: The neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

Eleanor Roosevelt, “Where do universal human rights begin?”, statement on 27 March 1958 at the presentation of the book “In your hands: a guide for community action” to the UN Commission on Human Rights; sometimes called “The Great Question” speech





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