

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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**COMMON  
ROOTS**

[WWW.COMMONROOTSHOUSING.ORG](http://WWW.COMMONROOTSHOUSING.ORG)

# MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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When I was offered the Common Roots Executive Director position in April of 2023, I was immediately honored. I was aware of the challenges unique to building up a fledgling Community Land Trust (CLT) with limited staff (just me!) and a small budget, while simultaneously launching its first home development project. Knowing that Common Roots was fruited from the place-based research work of the Community Council's affordable housing study, and was launched by a talented and active board, reassured me that I would not be alone on this journey. As I began doing broad outreach during onboarding and for the CLT Affordable Housing Forum, I was overjoyed to discover an already informed and supportive Common Roots stakeholder coalition. I continue to be reassured by the tremendous support I have received from the board and our committee members. I now look forward to engaging a new arm of our team - the membership! Thanks to all of you who have joined thus far. Welcome to the team new members!

We have had many great accomplishments this year, some reflected in this report, and we have work set out for us in 2024. We have homes to build and dollars to raise for a housing director. We have a new membership to engage in CLT learning and Common Roots governance participation. We have leaps to take in acquiring financing for land, construction, and renovations through partnering lenders and grantors. All of this addresses the fact that nearly ½ of people in Walla Walla, can't afford 96% of the homes on the market. We unite behind the mission to create a supply of affordable homes for those excluded from homeownership. We know that affordable homeownership builds stability and safety, generational wealth, pride, racial equity, strong neighborhoods, pathways to education, increased health indicators, and stabilizes our region and sustains its distinctive, vibrant character. I am honored to be part of this excellent team. We got this!

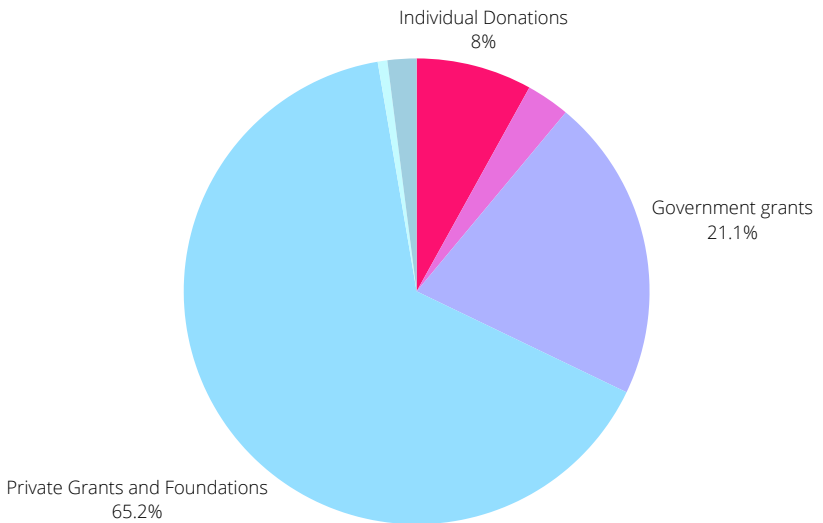
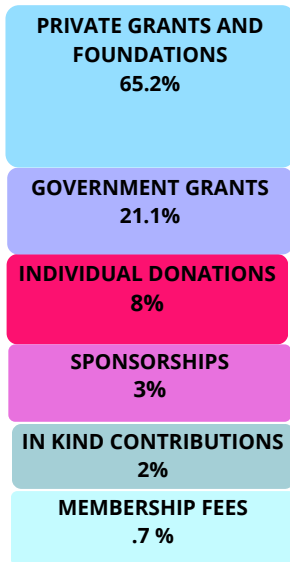
**Miles Nowlin**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# FIANCIALS

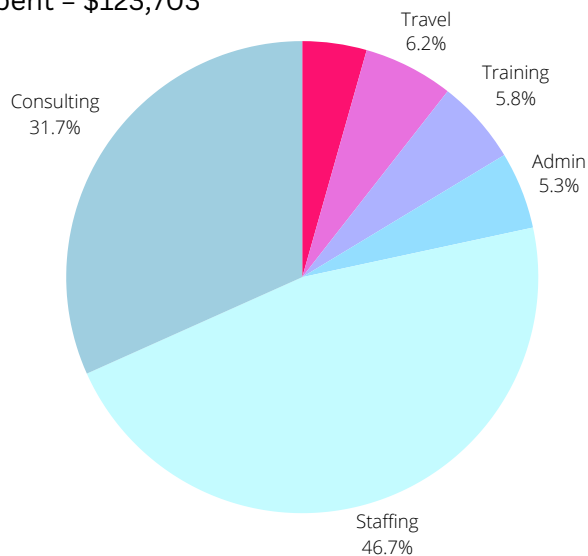
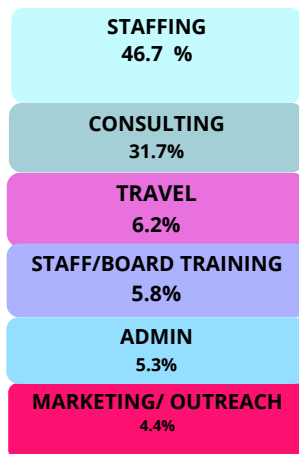
## INCOME SOURCES

Dollars Raised = \$130,211



## Expenses

Dollars Spent = \$123,703



## Thank you to our grantors and sponsors:

Department of Commerce Rural TA  
Port of Walla Walla  
Hayden Homes  
Banner Bank  
Umpqua Bank  
Blue Mountain Resource Conservation & Development  
Grounded Solutions Network  
NW Community Land Trust Coalition

Catholic Campaign for Human Development  
City of College Place  
Providence St. Mary's  
Whitman College Community Fellowship Program  
Stubblefield Trust  
United Way of Blue Mountains  
George T. Welch Foundation

# IMPACT



In March of this year, Common Roots acquired its 501c3 and became independently operating.

In January we held a town hall meeting in Milton Freewater for prospective homebuyers. The event was part of a series of three town halls designed to engage low-income residents in Common Roots shared development.

This year we were awarded our first major state grant, the Rural Technical Assistance grant, which provided us with two expert CLT consultants and an architect. This team assisted us in our land hunt, analyzing project feasibility, and building out development plans.

In May, four board members and our new executive director traveled to Blain WA, for 4 days of CLT professional development. Grounded Solutions Network supports our team in engaging in the NWCLTC Gathering and the 3rd in-person Home Futures Institute.

In June we were awarded a multi-year operations grant from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development CCHD, Real Estate Initiatives Grant. This renewable operations grant helps secure the executive director position.

In October, with support from the City of Walla Walla, we submitted a WA State CHIP infrastructure grant to extend utilities to a potential build site.



In May we hired our first full-time Executive Director. Miles has been engaged in affordable housing work for over a decade, focusing on place-based participatory development and collective land tenure practices. His drive for this work stems from his housing advocacy and community development work in Shelton, Washington, where he coordinated social services for homeless families and children and helped develop increased services for immigrant families and homeless teens. He went on to work as a Housing Cooperative Developer with the Northwest Cooperative Development Center (NWCDC) in Olympia, Washington, where he led resident homeowners through the purchase and conversion of five resident-owned manufactured housing co-operatives.

# THE CLT AFFORDABLE HOUSING FORUM



In October we hosted the first regional CLT Affordable Housing Forum. Over 100 community members participated throughout the day, engaging in workshops on CLT lending, appraising, partnership building, and planning.

Potential homebuyers were invited to engage in a dual-language participatory design workshop.

## **Here are some of the key takeaways from the 20 design workshop participants:**

Participants highly preferred the cottage home over the townhome. The cottage home seemed to be more private because it was a stand-alone house, which was important to participants as they wished to move out of apartments.

Participants liked the landscaping around the home and felt like it received more natural light.

The cottage home offered a one-floor design which is most accessible for individuals with mobility issues.

Most people would need 2 to 3-bedroom homes. Most respondents would need a 2-bathroom home, but in the discussion, several respondents said they would be able to work well with 1.5 bathrooms.

The group discussed the idea of a flex space, not quite a bedroom but could be used as an office or space for guests. There was some discussion of a loft, or workaround to add additional sleeping space for larger families.

The group discussed the build-your-own model used by other groups like Habitat for Humanity, which was very appealing to them.



# MEMBERSHIP AND THE BOARD

**Common Roots is governed by a broad and diverse group of members** in our service area to promote a place-based democratic governance structure that honors the input of participating residents and stakeholders from the broader community. Members hold a voting stake in Common Roots, promoting an equitable and inclusive community development practice that honors local knowledge. Membership dues help fund aspects of the organization.

**Common Roots has a tripartite board of directors**, made of of 1/3 low-income representatives, 1/3 general community representatives, and 1/3 public representatives. Our board has worked tirelessly over the last 3 years to get us to where we are today.

## THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NANCY RIGGLE  
RILEY CLUBB  
ROSENDO GUIZAR  
MIKE RIZITIELLO  
SUZANNE MORRISSEY  
PATRICIA DIVINE WILDER  
JOY MARIE SMITH  
SUNDOWN HAZEN  
WYATT ROLFE

## THANK YOU TO OUR NEWLY FORMED MEMBERSHIP!

MARÍA CECILIA TREJO OLVERA  
EUGENIA BRITO  
RILEY CLUBB  
TRISH DIVINE WILDER  
MILES NOWLIN  
SARAH STOCKHOLM  
JOY MARIE SMITH  
SUZANNE MORRISSEY  
SUNDOWN HAZEN  
JANIS GAIL CORN  
MELISSA BUCKLEY  
AMBER LYNN DANIEL  
REA CULWELL  
SHELLY NORSWORTHY  
BREANN SMITH  
WYATT ROLFE  
KELSI DOS SANTOS  
MICKI BREITENSTEIN  
LYNDA OOSTERHUIS  
EUNICE BLAVASCUNAS  
STEVEN LEFLER  
MICHAEL RIZZITIELLO  
KATHY MCCONNELL  
AMY SCHWAB  
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MARGARET SCHAFFTER  
LINDA HERBERT  
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VALLEY RESIDENTIAL SERVICES  
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MARY A. CAMPBELL  
ROSENDO GUIZAR  
HORIZON PROJECT  
WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY  
KIP KELLY  
ROGER ESPARZA