

MARION COUNTY
HOUSING TRUST FUND
A HOME WITHIN REACH

ABOUT THE MARION COUNTY HOUSING TRUST FUND

What is the Marion County Housing Trust Fund?

Housing trust funds provide the financial resources necessary to make available housing that is safe, decent and affordable for working families and individuals. These funds can also provide funding to help families and individuals who have lost their homes to get back into a home of their own and begin to pull their lives together.

After considerable study in the 1990s, the Marion County Housing Trust Fund was established by the state legislature in 2000 to make housing that is affordable available to persons of low and moderate incomes.

The Housing Trust Fund:

- (1) Provides financial assistance to low income families and individuals to either rent or purchase a home.
- (2) Pays expenses of administering the fund.
- (3) Makes grants, loans, and loan guarantees for the development, rehabilitation, or financing of housing for low income families and individuals.
- (4) Provides technical assistance to nonprofit developers who specialize in affordable housing. At least fifty percent (50%) of the dollars allocated for production, rehabilitation, or purchase of housing must be for units to be occupied by individuals and families whose incomes are at or below fifty percent (50%) of the county's median income for families and individuals.

The key to the success of housing trust funds across the nation is that they are supported by on-going sources of revenue. The funding often provides the “gap” financing that is needed to make a project financially viable. Typically, a city council or state legislature establishes a revenue source and establishes the housing trust fund as a distinct entity that can receive and disburse funds. The success of the Marion County Housing Trust Fund is dependant upon securing an on-going source of revenue.

Who administers the Marion County Housing Trust Fund?

The state legislation also authorized the establishment of a housing trust fund advisory committee. The committee consists of eleven members and includes appointments from the Mayor’s office, the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC), the Coalition for Homeless Intervention and Prevention of Greater Indianapolis, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Indianapolis Coalition for Neighborhood Development, and the Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership. The members of the

committee serve four-year terms. The committee makes recommendations to the MDC regarding uses of the housing trust fund and sources of capital for the fund.

Who makes the decisions on how families and individuals receive funding?

The Housing Trust Fund's advisory committee makes funding recommendations, with approval from the Metropolitan Development Commission and the City-County Council.

Has the Housing Trust Fund provided assistance to families and others of modest means?

Despite the lack of a dedicated funding source, the Housing Trust Fund has leveraged its resources to provide much needed assistance. In 2005, the Fund awarded \$300,000 in grants to three local organizations and support initiatives. Each organization received \$100,000 from the Housing Trust Fund and a matching \$250,000 grant from the Central Indiana Community Foundation. The \$1,050,000 in funding supported more than 100 families in housing crisis or experiencing homelessness.

Do other cities have housing trust funds?

There are 45 city housing trust funds in 23 states, including Washington, D.C. In addition, both New Jersey and Massachusetts have recently passed legislation encouraging local housing trust funds, adding nearly 200 more. As of 2002, city housing trust funds were receiving revenues from at least two dozen sources and generating more than \$182 million a year. In 2001, these funds created 7,000 housing units for working families and others. Hundreds of households received help in obtaining emergency housing, down payment assistance, and rental assistance. In addition to cities, housing trust funds support states, counties, and regional collaborations, bringing the total number of housing trust funds across the country to approximately 400.

Two Midwestern cities similar in size to Indianapolis – St. Louis, Missouri and Columbus, Ohio – have functioning and efficient housing trust funds. In St. Louis, the housing trust fund receives \$5 million each year from a single dedicated revenue source. During its first year (2002-2003), it awarded \$7.5 million to bolster housing in St. Louis. In Columbus, the fund receives between \$2 million and \$4 million each year from several sources. Since it began operation in 2001, it has committed more than \$14.5 million in assistance, providing 1,550 homes and apartments to 3,500 residents of modest means. For each housing trust dollar committed, \$11.50 is leveraged from other public and private sources.

For more information about the Marion County Housing Trust Fund and how you can help to support it, please visit www.AHomeWithinReach.org or call 317.630.0853.