

A photograph of two women talking outdoors. The woman on the left is in a wheelchair and wearing a black shirt. The woman on the right is wearing a white shirt and a blue cap. They are standing in front of a wooden fence and trees. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent rectangle containing white text.

Accessible Housing Improvements in Whole Home Repair Programs



**COMMUNITY
PROVIDER NETWORK**
OF RHODE ISLAND

Who Needs Accessible Housing?

- Older adults
 - Over 25% of Rhode Islanders are now aged 60 years or older
 - 75% of older adults want to stay in their homes
- People with disabilities
 - More than 1 in 4 adults in the US has a disability
- People recovering from injury or illness
- Caregivers and home health workers



2026 Policy Focus: Accessibility in New Builds

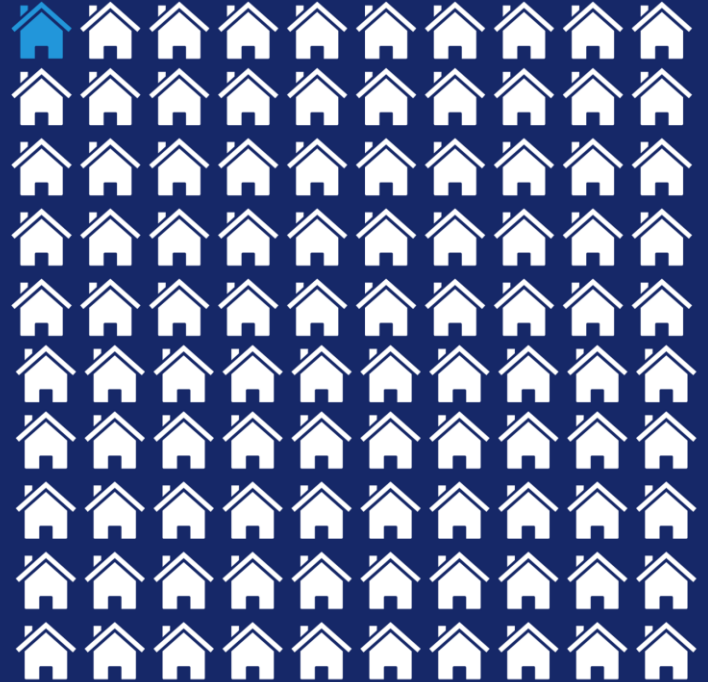
- **Olmstead Advisory Group:** Building statewide database of affordable housing units that tracks what accessibility features each unit has
- **RIHousing RFP:** Explore cost impacts that accessibility features have on affordable housing developments
- **Type A and Type B Units:** CPNRI is developing a bill to require higher percentages of Type A and Type B units in new construction

Housing 2030 Vision Statement

Produce and preserve housing to meet and respond to the needs of all Rhode Islanders; with a focus on creating strong communities with a diversity of housing options that are affordable and accessible.

RI's Accessible Housing Landscape

- 2023 Integrated Housing Report
 - Estimated that just 1.3% of units are accessible
- Current RI Building Code requires 2% of new builds with 20 + units to be Type A (fully accessible)
- New construction alone is insufficient
 - ***Home repair is the fastest solution to Rhode Island's accessibility challenge***



Accessibility in the Statewide Home Repair Program

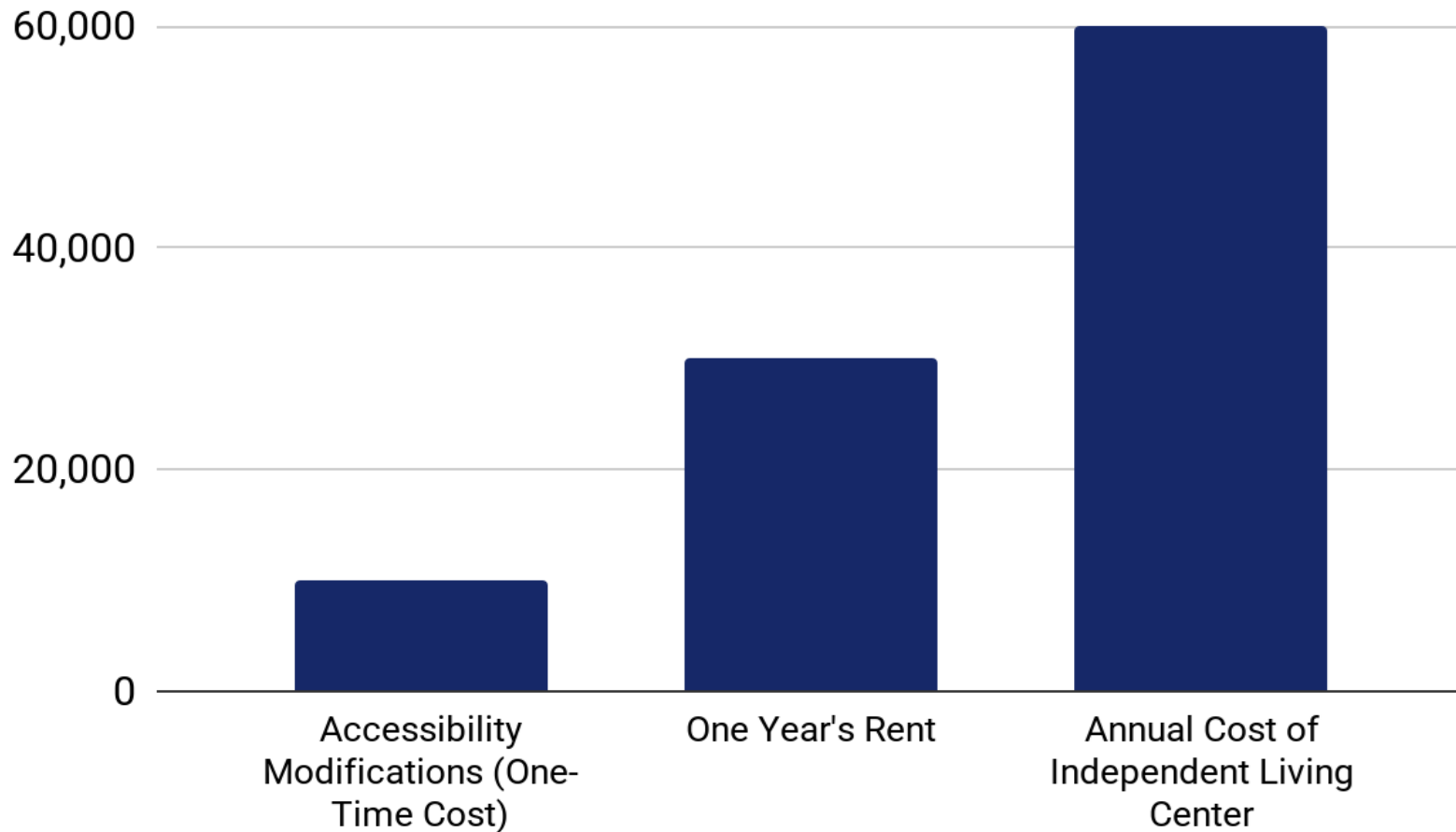


- 1,400 applications for 200 slots in less than two weeks
 - *Clear need for more funds*
- Recommendations:
 - Reserve percentage of future funds for accessibility-related improvements **OR** ensure a certain percentage of approved applications are for accessibility-related repairs
 - Layer Medicaid/1115 Waiver-funded modifications with Whole Home Repair Funds

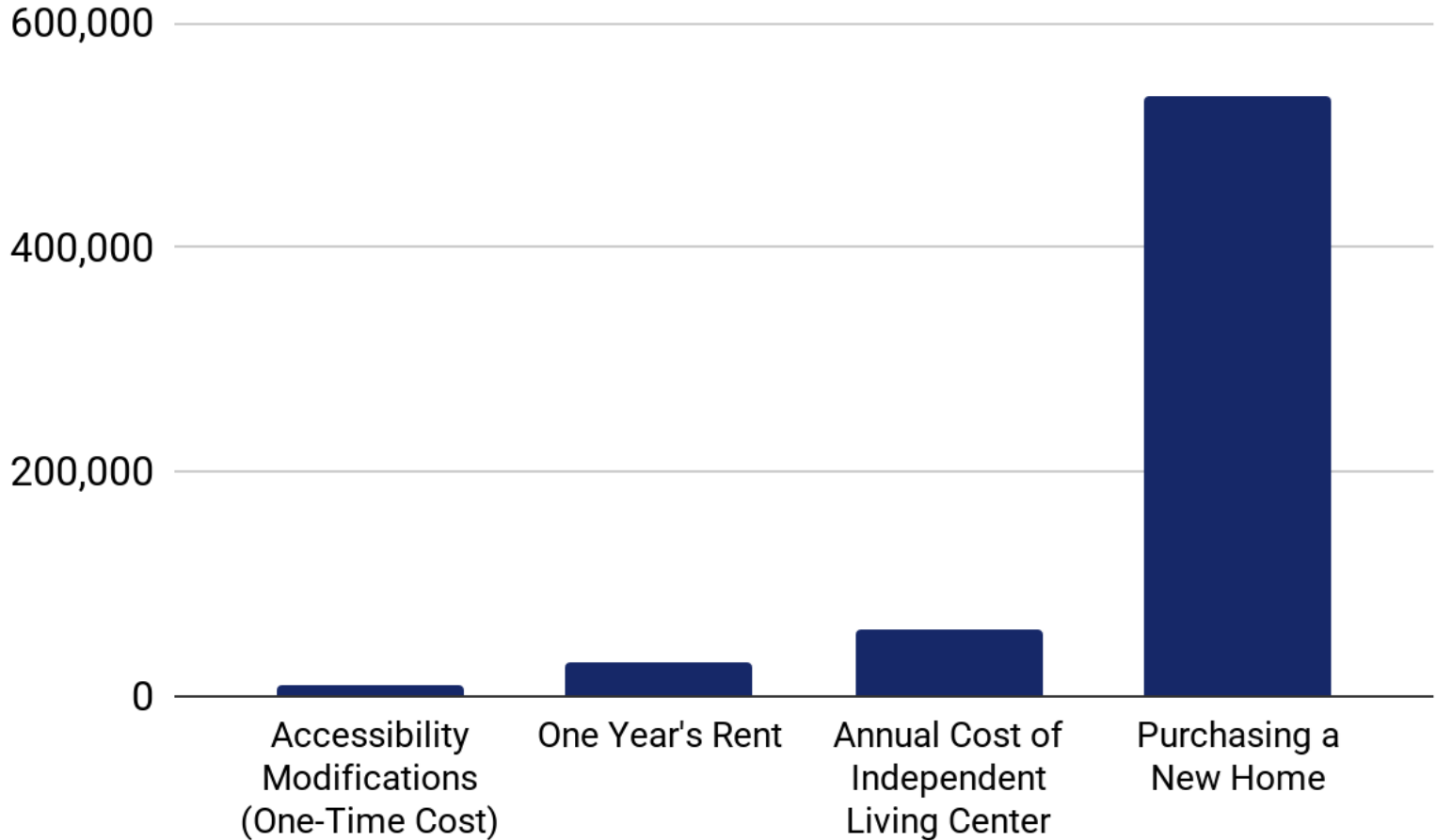
Accessibility is an Affordable Choice

- Preventative healthcare
 - Average cost of a basic accessibility modification: \$1,500
 - Average direct medical cost of a fall: \$36,776
 - ***A single prevented fall can fund multiple home modifications***
- Accessible homes enable adults to live independently and work in the community
 - Reduces reliance on public benefits and caregiver burden
- Make use of and revitalize existing housing stock

Cost Comparison



Cost Comparison



Your Role in Leading Statewide Accessibility

- Consider prioritizing accessibility in Statewide Home Repair Programs
 - Support reserving a portion of future funds, or portion of funded applications, for accessibility-related home improvements.
- Further embed accessibility upgrades into ***existing*** repair scopes
- Support funding alignment across systems
- Recommend tracking accessibility-related applications and outcomes to strengthen the case for additional state investment
- ***Affirm accessibility as a core housing stability strategy***

Thank You

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