

Vision Framework for the future of the Canadian co-operative housing movement



Imagine if...

We could build enough co-operative housing to satisfy demand while protecting what we have now.

We could open our co-ops to everyone willing to accept the responsibilities and benefits of membership.

We could bolster our co-operative identity to build more sustainable and inclusive homes and communities.

Our Vision: Co-operative housing for all.

Background of the Vision Framework

In 2016 and 2017, AGM resolutions called on CHF Canada and regional federations to spark discussion about the future of the co-op housing movement in Canada. Co-op members and leaders engaged in online and face-to-face discussions to start building a vision for the movement. In 2018, co-op leaders from across Canada came together at a 2-day summit to share, listen and identify the major issues, themes and future aspirations to inform and shape a new vision.

The current state

Housing co-ops offer quality, affordable, community-oriented housing to over 250,000 people in Canada. Yet, there is significant unmet demand for affordable and co-operative housing. We want more people to experience the security, vibrancy and resiliency of co-operative living.

Our strength comes from the people who make up the co-op housing movement in Canada, from past to present, to future. Our passion and pride of our

co-operative communities fuels a willingness and desire to grow our movement. Now is the time to maximize opportunities for growth, through new partnerships, new models, and new ways of meeting the demand for co-operative housing.

The future state of co-operative housing in Canada

The co-op housing sector embraces growth to ensure that significantly more people can call co-op housing home. We grow by exploring new and creative models, making strategic investments, forming innovative partnerships across sectors, and building more housing co-operatives. To achieve our goal, we are willing to take bold action and learn from our experiences. We are committed to an active relationship with our member groups that promotes engaged, diverse leadership and innovative approaches to growth. By building more co-op homes, we will establish a foundation for empowerment, social equity, co-operative identity and community engagement that will help individuals and communities reach their full potential.

We are committed to:

- ✓ **Development:** focusing on significant and ongoing growth of co-operative housing in Canada.
- ✓ **Co-operative Identity:** consistently aspiring to and demonstrating our co-operative values and principles.
- ✓ **Sustainability:** ensuring the long-term social, economic and environmental resiliency of our co-op homes and communities.
- ✓ **Advocacy:** being the central voice in the solution for housing more members.
- ✓ **Openness:** being open and available to anyone willing to accept the responsibilities and benefits of co-op housing membership.
- ✓ **Inclusivity:** ensuring housing co-ops are affordable and accessible to individuals from all walks of life.
- ✓ **Partnerships:** leveraging new and existing partnerships in support of the vision for building more co-op homes in Canada.

Our role in achieving this Vision

We all have a role in achieving this vision. All persons living, leading, and working in co-operative housing have a stake and a voice in the future of the co-operative housing movement in Canada.

- ✓ **Co-op members and housing co-operatives** will provide leadership in driving our vision for today and for future generations.
- ✓ **Boards of directors** will provide good governance and principled leadership at every level in our sector, and will champion the vision by setting a strategic course, establishing clear growth priorities, supporting innovation, committing resources, taking measured risks, and being accountable to members.
- ✓ **Managers and employees** will work under the direction and in support of their respective governance bodies to develop, organize and mobilize resources to achieve the growth of sustainable housing co-ops in collaboration with an active network of partners.
- ✓ **Sector organizations** will share knowledge and develop skills through a networked approach to growth, and provide services to members and the sector with professionalism.
- ✓ **Current and future partners** will provide their support and services to contribute to the growth of co-op housing in communities across Canada.

We will work together on a basis of treating all persons in the co-operative housing movement with dignity, respect, and fairness.



Success in the Vision will achieve:

- ✓ **A co-operative housing movement that actively integrates the co-operative identity** into everything we do.
- ✓ **Ongoing and significant development** which will increase the availability and sustainability of co-operative housing in Canada.
- ✓ **A common culture of strategy, renewal and growth** among our movement's members, leaders, and supporting organizations.
- ✓ **A network of active partnerships and collaboration** among all stakeholders in the co-op housing movement.
- ✓ **A widespread and influential presence** of diverse, resilient co-op housing communities throughout Canada.

Co-operative housing for all!

The outlook for co-operative housing in Canada is bright! We are engaged, energized, and ready. Our movement is resourceful, passionate, and dedicated to a future with more co-operative housing in open, sustainable, and strong co-operatives. Our vision will take us there!

The vision framework was realized by the collaborative work of co-operative housing members from across Canada who took part in the Our Movement Our Future online consultation, engaged in discussion at regional meetings, and participated in the Vision Summit and post-Summit working group. People from across Canada contributed their ideas, energy, and resources to guide the visioning process and shape the framework.