

FINDING YOUR CO-OP VOICE



IDEAS FOR DEVELOPING YOUR CO-OP'S RESPONSE TO NEW PROGRAM PROPOSALS

As a member of the CEHL Co-op Housing Program, your co-op has an important role to help to shape the future of our Program.

New ideas can be challenging and not everyone will have the same point of view. Below are some tips to help your members to work through new ideas together and make sure your co-op's view is heard.

Setting the Scene

Help everyone to know the facts:

- Send a couple of co-op members to attend consultation forums and report back to your meetings
- Ask 2-3 members to read through background papers and reports and be available to answer questions from other members.
- Make sure everyone gets a copy of summary reports and offer time to discuss them together.

Create constructive conversations:

- Acknowledge that everyone will have different views and ideas and that all deserve to be heard.
- CEHL usually seeks a *collective* view rather than a *consensus* view. Your response can collate the range of views in your co-op, highlighting where you broadly agree and where there are diverse viewpoints.
- Focus on generating ideas for improvements or alternatives if a proposal does not meet your needs.
- If a proposal is particularly challenging to discuss, offer other ways for people to put forward their ideas eg: by letter / note.
- Ask a member to write up all of the viewpoints expressed and invite feedback before formulating a final co-op response.
- Ask your Co-op Development Co-ordinator for more information or ideas if needed.

MEETING IDEAS

Set an agenda item to discuss the Program topic within a general meeting. Make sure members are well prepared and that everyone has a chance to share their ideas before the board submits a response.

Hold a one-off "brainstorm" to discuss and formulate your co-ops' response, appointing a scribe to draft a summary of the discussion to put back to co-op members.

Try non-verbal activities to generate ideas quickly such as asking members to write anonymous ideas to circulate, then add stickers to "like" the ideas that they support the most.

NO TIME TO MEET. . .

Open an email conversation or a closed Facebook messenger group to 'chat' about the feedback questions.

Offer 2 or 3 small group catch-ups at a local café to talk through the issue and report back to the board.

Create your own short Survey Monkey survey that members could respond to, the combined results can then form your collective view. (CEHL can offer advice about how to set this up).

Form a time limited sub-committee to consult with members and formulate a response.