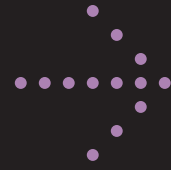




CANADIAN
CO-OPERATIVE
ASSOCIATION



HOUSING CO-OPS

MORE THAN A ROOF OVER OUR HEADS

For many Canadians, housing co-operatives are more than a roof over their heads. Housing co-ops provide homes that are secure, affordable and filled with a sense of community in a world that is becoming more impersonal.

Housing co-ops are an alternative to other types of accommodation because they are controlled by their residents not by an outside landlord. The co-ops operate on a non-profit basis. Residents are members who have a voice and a vote in decisions about their housing. Co-ops offer affordable housing because they are homes that can never be resold.



About a quarter of a million Canadians live in some 2,176 housing co-ops found in every one of Canada's provinces and territories. These co-ops represent approximately 128,238 households and have book value assets of over \$5.7 billion. They are found in downtown, suburban, and village settings in every form imaginable: new apartment buildings, townhouses, in-fills, single-family dwellings, and converted lofts.

In a housing co-op, members have the right to make decisions that affect their homes. Co-ops members control the governance of their co-operative, electing a board of directors from among their peers or serving on the board themselves. They vote on the co-op's annual budget, which sets the monthly housing charges and determines how much the co-op will spend on property upkeep and other maintenance issues. They create a community in the co-op by welcoming new members, organizing social events, and publishing a newsletter.

Some co-op households in Canada pay a monthly charge geared to their income. Government funds cover the difference between this payment and the co-op's full charge, based on certain eligibility requirements. Yet housing co-ops still cost less to operate than other types of housing. Co-ops cost 19 per cent less to operate than municipal or private non-profit housing and 71 per cent less than public housing (owned by the federal or provincial governments), according to a 1992 Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation study of federal co-operative housing programs. Most housing co-operatives are members of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, a national apex organization which works with government on behalf of housing co-operatives and their members, co-ordinates group buying among co-operatives, and offers training and organizational development assistance to housing co-ops across the country.

Housing co-ops offer more security at a lower cost than renting. It doesn't matter who you are: if you want to live in a co-op and you are ready to accept the terms of membership, you are welcome. In fact, many housing co-operatives have built accessible units specifically to serve people with disabilities. And you can live there for as long as you like if you keep to the by-laws that you and your co-op neighbours have put in place.



DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT CO-OPS?

For more information, please contact the

CANADIAN CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Suite 400, 275 Bank Street, Ottawa, ON K2P 2L6

Phone: (613) 238-6711 or 1-866-266-7677 (toll free in North America)

Fax: (613) 567-0658

Email: info@CoopsCanada.coop

Web site: www.CoopsCanada.coop

