



Scaling Equitable Housing Co-ops

Build it Green is collaborating with a growing network of local groups to advance equitable housing co-ops across California

This initiative is a growing collaborative, community-centered space working to catalyze new housing cooperatives, or co-ops, forming across California by supporting local pilots, identifying current roadblocks, and developing resources to successfully launch housing co-ops across California.

“The people who would benefit most from these alternative housing opportunities lead and drive this initiative work,” says Jenny Low, BIG’s Program Manager. “Centering and supporting community engagement, leadership, and democratic participation are vital to unlock pathways towards affordable, equitable housing solutions so communities thrive in place.”

Pilots

The Co-ops Initiative is supporting two pilot projects led by community-based organizations [EPA CAN DO](#) and [SOMOS Mayfair](#).

East Palo Alto Pilot

Together, EPA CAN DO and Preserving Affordable Housing Assets Longterm, Inc. (PAHALI) community land trust are establishing a [placekeepers co-op](#) in East Palo Alto.

This co-op will include more than 20 scattered-site units, mostly accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Eastern San Jose Pilot

SOMOS Mayfair is working to build multifamily housing on a one acre property in the Mayfair neighborhood in Eastern San Jose.

Activities

Monthly meetings: The full main group has a standing meeting on the first Monday of the month.

Committees: Smaller committees have kicked off to understand, plan, and work on concrete action on the financial and legislative elements of housing co-ops.

Housing Co-ops 101

Co-ops are a form of home ownership. Residents live in a building that the co-op entity owns, and have shares in this building equal to the size of their home. Co-ops can include single-family homes, multi-family homes, apartment buildings, townhouses, duplexes, and more.

Housing co-ops provide communities with democratic governance and stability. Because of its focus on community, this homeownership model can strengthen culture in neighborhoods, develop strong sustainability plans, and impact wealth building.

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Resources

As Build It Green develops resources, we will share them here.