

Community:

- The skills required to make community enjoyable in close quarters can be cultivated and taught.
- Living in community isn't always easy, and it isn't for everyone, but it can be extremely rewarding.
- The BHC co-ops routinely have 2 or 3 times as many qualified applicants as we can accept.
- Experiencing community is its own end, but the skills that enable community in close quarters also support affordability and sustainability.

Affordability:

- Co-ops are intrinsically affordable even without subsidies because members share space, household durable goods, and many other resources.
- The BHC co-ops have a total of about 300 square feet per person, less than half the regional average.
- Purchasing food and other goods in bulk as a large household -- and now as a system with 50 members -- reduces costs.
- All basic household expenses together: rent, all food, all utilities, household consumables, etc. can be covered for around \$700/month in an unshared room, or \$500/month in a shared room.
- All this means that in a co-op, you can live within walking distance of Pearl Street on an income of \$12,000/year.

Building Energy Use:

- Co-ops are also intrinsically energy efficient, for the same reason they are affordable. Less building per person means less energy per person.
- Before efficiency investments were made, Masala and Chrysalis members were using about 1/2 as much energy as the regional average, including both electricity and natural gas.
- After upgrading the century old buildings, energy consumption went down to about 1/3 of the regional per capita average.
- North Haven will be energy efficient from the beginning -- we invested more than \$100,000 in building upgrades: windows, insulation, air sealing, LED lighting.
- These investments are possible because as non-profit member-managers, we do not have the traditional landlord-tenant split incentives.
- Removing these split incentives and investing in efficiency further increases our affordability by reducing operating expenses.

Transportation:

- All of our communities are within walking distance of downtown, with easy access to transit and the bikeway system.
- Masala and North Haven are both within Neighborhood Eco Pass districts, and Chrysalis is attempting to organize their own district now.
- Between all three co-ops, there are a total of 7 off-street parking spaces (6 of which are at North Haven).
- Informal car sharing is also easy within the co-op context, if a member does occasionally need a vehicle.
- In this environment, many of our members choose not to own a car even if they can afford one. Historically, we have had 1 car for every 3-4 adults.
- Given that AAA estimates the average car in the US costs \$9,000/year to own and operate, this also contributes to our overall affordability.

Occupancy Limits:

- The limits on how many unrelated persons can live together in Boulder make creating new co-ops very challenging.
- Both Masala and Chrysalis are only legal because of grandfathered in non-conforming uses.
- Over the past four years we have had to abandon many potential projects that would have worked without the occupancy limits
- One such property was the SPAN house at 972 Pleasant St., which sat on the market for 2 years. The 10 bedroom Anam Charra house at 1795 Quince is another.
- For profit developers and landlords can buy those properties and turn a blind eye to occupancy issues, but we can't, putting us at a disadvantage.

Off Street Parking Requirements:

- Often the changes we need to make to a building to turn it into a co-op would trigger some kind of use review, or reversion of the property to the surrounding zoning.
- In many cases even if there is enough legal occupancy to create a co-op, the zoning requires vastly more parking than can be physically or financially accommodated.
- This is especially frustrating given our history of extremely modest car usage.
- The apartments located at 917 Baseline Rd. are an example of a property we could not use because of likely parking requirements.
- Together the occupancy limits and off street parking requirements nearly outlaw the type of affordable, sustainable, community-oriented housing we provide.