



Next Steps for New Groups: Now What?

**The common thread is our ultimate desire to live in community.
Between now and move-in, how do you build community?**

Do your homework

- Find out as much as you can in advance
- When you're combining real estate development, construction, personal finances and group dynamics, there are many moving parts, so it's good to absorb information

Create the right atmosphere

- You need passionate people, who believe strongly, who can live with ambiguity, who are willing to adapt as the project comes into focus
- Detail-oriented people AND big-picture people
- Building connections and relationships will help to glue your group together

Be attached, but not too attached

- The core group / founding members need to be incredibly stable, with leadership qualities
- Realize that every single cohousing group loses members, and you'll be surprised at which households will leave the group for various reasons

Get good help

- It's unlikely that your group members have the skills required to complete a development project on time and on budget: you will need help (e.g. project manager, architect, etc)
- But remember that if your group doesn't have a solid foundation, no one consultant can provide the glue for the group

Move at the right pace

- Don't pressure potential members (or the group) to make quick decisions about membership, but also don't let the process drag on — the design and development process requires households to be comfortable making decisions quickly
- Patience and perseverance are key

Practice your group skills

- **Group decision-making** — practice on 'easy' stuff like socials, meeting logistics
- **Transparency and communication** — information needs to be presented well; members need to know when a decision is required; limit the number of major items per meeting
- **Group dynamics** — there will be many highs and lows; honour members' emotions and perspectives, but avoid going down rabbit holes with particular members