

A3) Strengthening Manitoba's Co-op Sector

Mover: Manitoba Cooperative Association

The Province of Manitoba should commit to strengthening the co-op community by mobilizing resources and developing new resources in full partnership with the co-op sector through the co-creation and co-implementation of policy to best serve the co-op development needs of Manitoba, including:

- A. A multi-year co-op development strategy with:
 - a. dedicated resourcing and funding for the community-led strategy, a government and sector decision-making body, ability to adjust work plans annually with sector engagement, and alignment with other provincial Economic Development strategies
 - b. A set of sector development activities planned using sector-engagement and cooperative development pillars
 - c. Opportunities to undertake research to further document the sector's needs, current state, and impact
- B. Restoring and filling the vacant co-op developer positions within the Department of Economic Development.

Because: There are over 275 cooperatives, credit unions and caisses populaires in Manitoba, comprising of over 1,000,000 memberships. Cooperatives account for 3% of all jobs in Manitoba, and contribute 3.2% to Manitoba's GDP. Additionally, in 2010 Manitoba cooperatives paid over \$500 million in taxes. Cooperatives are a more sustainable business model given their collective ownership and community commitment; 62 per cent of new co-ops are still operating after five years, compared with 35 per cent for other new businesses. After 10 years, the figures are 44 per cent and 20 per cent respectively.

Because: Cooperatives create economic democracy, root ownership locally, distribute profits equitably and often create jobs and services in communities where they are otherwise lacking.

Because: Supporting and strengthening the cooperative sector is required to achieve positive results for our economy and our communities.

Because: The Province of Manitoba has supported co-op development and has successfully partnered with the cooperative sector. Evidence of co-construction and co-implementation of good policy, public education, and co-op development, including under the Co-op Visioning Strategy, has been present in Manitoba.

Because: This strategic action plan for co-op development is most effectively rolled out through the sufficiently resourced co-implementation of its vision, policy and action plans.

How this Resolution will be Advanced: The Manitoba Cooperative Association remains the lead on co-op education and advocacy work in Manitoba, with the Canadian Worker Co-op Federation (CWCF) the lead regarding employee-owned co-operatives. CCEDNet Manitoba members are encouraged to support the work of the MCA, CWCF, and other co-op development networks, and support the cooperative sector as a crucial part of Community Economic Development. CCEDNet Manitoba will advocate for this recommendation in provincial budget submission and meetings with Economic Development departments and officials.