



Talking Points

The top questions will be when and where will the co-op be. But the challenge is developing interest in WHY people should help us start the co-op. Most importantly, talk about why YOU joined the co-op. People make a connection and develop more interest when you talk about your personal stake in the co-op.

- **Where will the Co-op be located?**
 - The Co-op will be located in the Montavilla neighborhood. There are a lot of factors we need to consider – building size, parking, cost, delivery truck access and visibility are just a few. We are searching for the best possible site taking into account these factors, and as soon as we sign a lease we'll let you know where we'll be!
- **When will the co-op open?**
 - The sooner you join, and the more people that help us through our process, the sooner we'll open the store! We are an all-volunteer organization that is working diligently and carefully, following a plan that has worked with other successful co-op startups around the country. We are taking the time to do this right, and we want it open as soon as possible too.
- **What do I gain by becoming a member?**
 - As a member-owner of the Montavilla Food Co-op, you will get the right to vote on the board of directors, you can serve on owner committees, and may vote on issues put forth before the membership. After the store opens and becomes profitable, member-owners become eligible for dividends.
 - People become member-owners for a lot of different reasons. For me, it was <insert personal reason>.
 - You can learn more about the benefits of becoming a member and also sign up at our website, www.montavilla.coop.
- **Do I need to be a member to shop there?**
 - No! Our co-op will be open to everyone! But members will get some additional benefits, like member appreciation discount days, patronage



rebates, the ability to serve on the board and the opportunity to invest in our Member Investment campaign.

- **I don't live in Montavilla. Why should I become a member-owner?**
 - We welcome member-owners from all neighborhoods, not just residents of the Montavilla neighborhood. The co-op does not discriminate on any basis. Part of our goal is to support local farmers and producers, and improve access to good quality food for all of our community, regardless of the neighborhood you live in.

- **What's so special about a co-op anyways?**
 - Co-ops are special for a lot of reasons but the main reason is **we own it!** So we get to make decisions about the direction of our store and it exists to serve our community only, not to enrich distant stockholders. Co-ops worldwide ascribe to a set of 7 Cooperative Principles [list them below] and on average co-ops feature more local products, support more local growers and producers and keep more of their money working in their communities. Co-operatives support fair treatment of their own employees and the workers and growers throughout their supply chain.

- **How much does it cost to become a member-owner?**
 - The cost to become a member owner is \$150. This is a one-time investment, and will make you a part owner in the co-op. You can sign up here with me today, or you can sign up on our website, montavilla.coop.

 - *If pressed ("I don't know if I can afford to be a member-owner - \$150 is a lot of money")*
 - We can definitely appreciate that this is a lot of money. We put a lot of research into determining the correct price point for membership. We want to make sure that everyone who wants to can join, so you can break your payments up into \$25 every other month for 12 months, or you can pay \$75 now and \$75 in 6 months. We accept all major credit cards, checks, or cash.
 - We know this is a big decision, so you can absolutely think about it and sign up online, if you'd like. Our website is montavilla.coop.

- **Is my membership money at risk?**
 - We are using the membership money as part of the funding needed to open our store, so yes, it is at risk. We are following a proven model and



we are doing everything we can to learn and use the best expertise possible, to improve our chance for success and minimize risk but risk is a part of any new business. The good news is that co-ops have a better success rate than most new businesses!

- **Wow! What can I do to help?**
 - The biggest and most important thing you can do is JOIN US! And then start telling your friends and neighbors about the co-op and get them to join too! You can also work on a committee, run for the board or help out at events. Check our Facebook page and website for more ideas!

- **Are co-ops a new thing?**
 - No! Ben Franklin opened the first cooperative business in the US, and the 'modern' grocery cooperative movement began in 1844! And right now in the US there are more new co-ops in development than in the last 25 years combined. Hop on this train!

Cooperative Principles:

- **Open and Voluntary Membership**
- **Democratic Member Control**
- **Member Economic Participation**
- **Independence and Autonomy**
- **Education, Training and Information**
- **Cooperation among Cooperatives**
- **Concern for Community**