

# Astoria Co-op *grocery*

# Strategic Plan

In 2014, the Astoria Co-op Grocery Board of Directors created a five year Strategic Plan. After more than a year of gathering input, evaluating opportunities, and recognizing areas for improvement, the Board identified four long-range goals for our store. The Board then developed a set of strategies for how the Co-op can fulfill these goals over the next five years. This document will serve as our compass as our store works to optimize our service to owners and to the Lower Columbia community.



## Our Five Year Goals

1. **Welcoming Community Store** Develop a dynamic full service grocery store that cultivates a strong sense of community.
2. **Thriving Local Economy** Be a strong contributor to the success and sustainability of the Lower Columbia Region's local economy.
3. **Individual and Community Health** Create a food movement that promotes vitality, starting at the level of the individual and creating a ripple effect throughout the community.
4. **Flourishing Cooperative Culture** Be a business deeply rooted in the principles and values of cooperation.



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# Welcoming Community Store

**GOAL:** Develop a dynamic full service grocery store that cultivates a strong sense of community.

**Opportunity:** Our Co-op is one of the smaller sized food co-ops in the country based on square footage and sales volume. Our survey showed that the majority of our owners want a more full-service grocery store. Our market study tells us that growing our space will grow our sales. An expanded store would allow us to offer better value to our owners and foster more connections with one another.



## Over the next five years we will:

- Expand our facility in order to offer the best selection of fresh, organic, and natural foods in the Lower Columbia Region.
- Maintain our unique character and commitment to our values.
- Strengthen the financial resilience of our Co-op by leveraging volume and increasing our owner investment in the business.
- Enhance our capacity to be a hub for gathering, enjoying healthy food, and strengthening connections with our fellow community members.



# Thriving Local Economy

Strategic Plan 2015-2020



**GOAL:** Be a strong contributor to the economic success and sustainability of the Lower Columbia Region's local economy.



**Opportunity:** Much of our research during the input gathering stage shows that Co-op owners strongly favor more local foods. Our region is experiencing a growing number of local farmers and producers that the Co-op can support, primarily by bringing their products to market. We have the opportunity to keep more money flowing into our local economy.

## Over the next five years we will:

- Create more jobs and local wealth by committing to growing our Co-op. More healthy people eating more healthy food from our locally owned Co-op will contribute to building the Lower Columbia economy.
- Expand our capacity to buy and sell local produce, meat, and value added products.
- Clearly define the Co-op's role in the local food system as a crucial first-step marketplace for local foods.
- Build partnerships with organizations that share our interest in expanding access to local food and building the economy of locally owned businesses.

# Individual & Community Health



**GOAL:** Create a food movement that promotes vitality, starting at the level of the individual and creating a ripple effect throughout the community.

**Opportunity:** Most of us share the belief that how we feel is connected to what we eat. How we feel affects how we interact with others and how we live out our life's purpose. It takes a critical mass of healthy people to transform society. We have the opportunity to make the world a better place, one food at a time.



## Over the next five years we will:

- Communicate the connection between health, food, and community as a centerpiece of Co-op purpose.
- Develop a reputation as a trusted source for information and education about a diversity of diets, foods, and food sourcing.
- Position the Co-op as a leader and active participant in perpetuating local health.
- Strategically support local events and activities that share our vision of healthy food, wellness and vitality for our community.
- Be a source of inspiration to make healthy living easy and fun.



# Flourishing Cooperative Culture

Strategic Plan 2015-2020



**GOAL:** Be a business deeply rooted in the principles and values of cooperation.



**Opportunity:** The Co-op exists as a consumer owned business. Our relatively unique way of sharing ownership is a strength we can tout. During an era of mistrust of large publicly traded companies, the Co-op has an opportunity to spread the word about how we do business, how we treat our employees, and how we share the benefits and risks of operating a grocery store with a diverse, local group of owners. Through our success, we help perpetuate the principles of cooperation as a rewarding business model.

## Over the next five years we will:

- Enhance our communication systems to continually engage staff and owners with our goals and progress.
- Work to maintain thorough training and career development, living wages, competitive benefits, and employment that balances work and personal life.
- Build co-op ownership and increase community investment in the business by communicating the unique aspects of the cooperative business model.
- Continue to generate a strong sense of cooperation and community between staff and shoppers through distinctive customer service.