



The Community Oriented Planned Economy

A Four-Dimensional Framework for Adaptive Community Economics and Non-Tax-Base Public Finance

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Document status and use

POLICY STATUS

This document is a policy framework for discussion and institutional design. It is not legislation, a fiscal forecast, an investment prospectus, or legal advice. All proposals require jurisdiction-specific constitutional, Indigenous-rights, fiscal, regulatory, environmental, labour, privacy, procurement, banking, and securities review.

This edition is a substantive rewrite of the source paper. It preserves the four-dimensional COPE model and the Triangle concept while correcting grammar, replacing informal language, clarifying legal and accounting boundaries, and strengthening the risk, governance, and pilot-design sections.

The editorial revision removes duplicated passages, corrects grammar and terminology, replaces informal financial language with professional policy terms, and distinguishes clearly among objectives, instruments, assumptions, safeguards, and decision criteria.

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1. Abstract

This paper develops the Community Oriented Planned Economy (COPE) as a theoretical framework for adaptive community economics. COPE replaces the conventional one-dimensional capitalism-socialism spectrum with four independently adjustable dimensions: public-purpose capital generation; the balance between market coordination and social provisioning; external-capital integration; and an integrated public-finance architecture known as the Triangle. The Triangle links a public-purpose investment fund, a community development bank or project-finance institution, and an external-capital stabilization channel. Its purpose is to test whether communities can finance a greater share of public infrastructure through project revenues, public investment income, transparent debt, reserves, and outside participation without relying primarily on a conventional local tax base. Artificial intelligence is limited to decision support, monitoring, simulation, and audit. The framework is theoretical and requires legal mapping, prudential design, democratic authorization, independent audit, stress testing, and staged pilots before any practical use.

2. Executive Summary

COPE is best understood as a research architecture for combining community autonomy, democratic planning, public-purpose capital, and disciplined public finance.

Traditional economic debates often compress complex institutional choices into a single spectrum between capitalism and socialism. COPE instead treats a community economy as a system with several adjustable variables. A community may retain competitive markets while expanding public services; welcome external investment while limiting ownership of strategic assets; or build cooperative enterprises without changing the governance of unrelated sectors.

The first dimension concerns how a community generates public-purpose capital. Sources may include public enterprises, reserve funds, cooperative dividends, land or infrastructure revenues, conservative investment portfolios, and carefully governed quantitative strategies. The purpose is resilience and recurring public value, not speculation for its own sake.

The second dimension concerns the balance between markets and social provisioning. Communities may choose different mixes of competitive services, public utilities, universal services, cooperatives, subsidies, income supports, and planned provision. No single instrument, including universal basic income, defines COPE.

The third dimension concerns external capital. Outside investment can provide finance, technology, market access, and risk diversification, but it can also create dependency, profit leakage, land pressure, currency exposure, and loss of strategic control. COPE therefore treats the terms of external participation as a democratic policy choice.

The fourth dimension is the Triangle. A community development bank may issue transparent project obligations; a public-purpose investment fund may hold a prudently limited share; project revenues and reserves support debt service; and external investors or development institutions may participate when internal capacity is insufficient. The model is not self-financing by definition and must not depend on guaranteed investment outperformance.

The phrase non-tax-base public finance is used deliberately. It means that a conventional local tax base is not the primary repayment source for a defined project portfolio. It does not mean tax-exempt, unregulated, off-budget, or outside democratic appropriations and reporting. Taxes, transfers, and ordinary public revenues may remain necessary, especially for services that do not generate reliable project cash flow.

A responsible development path begins with legal analysis, institutional design, simulation, paper operations, conservative reserve management, and a small number of conventional project-finance pilots. Complex derivatives, structured notes, or credit-default-swap-like instruments should be presumed unnecessary unless independent analysis demonstrates that simpler tools cannot meet the objective at lower risk.

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARY

Public money should be managed more conservatively, transparently, and accountably than private speculative capital - not less.

3. Purpose, Scope, and Terminology

The purpose of this paper is to organize COPE as a testable policy hypothesis. It does not present a ready-to-implement bank, investment product, derivatives instrument, or municipal-finance statute. Its contribution is to define institutional relationships, decision variables, governance requirements, and failure conditions that can be examined before public funds are committed.

The term community may refer to a municipality, Indigenous government, regional authority, cooperative federation, development district, or another democratically accountable public-purpose entity. The legal powers available to each form differ substantially. No structure should be assumed lawful across jurisdictions.

The term Triangle refers to three capacities: an investment or reserve fund; a community development bank or project-finance institution; and an external-capital stabilization channel. The third capacity replaces the source manuscript's informal terminology with a formal description of its function. It may include conventional bond placement, co-investment, development-bank participation, guarantees, insurance, or other regulated arrangements.

Non-tax-base is used because it describes a financing objective rather than a legal exemption. The term does not reduce or remove any public, regulatory, tax, accounting, or disclosure obligation.

4. Conceptual Foundations

4.1 Community resilience

Economic performance should be measured through affordability, employment stability, service access, infrastructure condition, liquidity, emergency reserves, ecological sustainability, and democratic legitimacy - not aggregate output alone.

4.2 Polycentric governance

Decisions should remain local where local knowledge and accountability are decisive, while federated institutions coordinate standards, analytics, liquidity, risk, and infrastructure that cross community boundaries.

4.3 Human authority over AI

AI may forecast, simulate, monitor, and identify anomalies. It should not determine rights, authorize spending, set policy, or exercise sovereign discretion.

4.4 Capital as civic infrastructure

Some capital pools can be organized to support housing, transportation, health, education, climate adaptation, research, and emergency resilience. Public purpose, however, does not eliminate financial risk.

4.5 Institutional flexibility

A rural region, northern community, Indigenous government, manufacturing centre, coastal municipality, and research district may require different combinations of markets, services, ownership, debt, and outside investment.

4.6 Layered public finance

Taxation, transfers, user revenues, project revenues, debt, public investment income, guarantees, reserves, and outside capital should be evaluated as a portfolio of tools. No single source should be treated as universally superior.

5. The Four Dimensions of COPE

5.1 Dimension One - Public-Purpose Capital Generation

This dimension concerns the lawful creation and stewardship of recurring public-purpose capital. Eligible sources may include conservative reserve portfolios, public enterprises, infrastructure revenues, cooperative dividends, royalties, land-value participation, and carefully governed investment strategies.

An investment mandate should define eligible assets, liquidity requirements, leverage and concentration limits, drawdown triggers, custody, valuation, benchmarks, fees, model validation, cybersecurity, and the permitted use of returns. Expected returns must never be presented as guaranteed.

The objective is to diversify public funding and build resilience. Investment income should supplement sound fiscal policy, not replace taxation or transfers where services lack stable revenue.

5.2 Dimension Two - Adaptive Market and Social Provisioning

This dimension determines how a community balances competitive markets, public services, cooperatives, subsidies, wage supports, income guarantees, and planned provision. The mix may differ by sector and change over time.

A community may prefer to reduce the cost of housing, transit, energy, food, education, or childcare rather than distribute cash. Another may use a modest dividend while retaining market delivery in most sectors. COPE does not prescribe a single answer.

Changes should be evaluated through service quality, access, household cost, innovation, labour conditions, fiscal sustainability, and distributional effects.

5.3 Dimension Three - External-Capital Integration

This dimension concerns the terms on which outside capital enters the community. External finance can accelerate development, diversify risk, transfer knowledge, and open markets. It can also create land pressure, profit leakage, currency risk, political dependency, and loss of control over strategic assets.

Communities may use ownership limits, local-benefit agreements, environmental standards, Indigenous partnership, employment requirements, procurement conditions, profit sharing, transparency, or repayment structures to align external investment with public objectives.

The appropriate degree of integration is a democratic policy choice. The objective is not autarky but development sovereignty.

5.4 Dimension Four - The Triangle

The Triangle links public-purpose investment capacity, project finance, and external participation. A development bank may issue or administer project obligations. A public-purpose fund may purchase a prudently limited share. Project revenues, grants, reserves, and ordinary public contributions may support repayment. External investors may participate when internal capacity is insufficient.

The Triangle is not financially self-validating. Internal purchase of related-party debt can obscure risk unless pricing, valuation, consolidation, impairment, and governance are independent. The architecture must prevent circular financing, hidden leverage, maturity mismatch, optimistic return assumptions, and the transfer of public losses to uninformed residents or investors.

The fulcrum is the published rule set that determines when the system expands, pauses, increases reserves, delays projects, reduces risk, or seeks external capital.

6. Institutional Architecture

6.1 Community economic layer

Households, firms, cooperatives, nonprofits, utilities, schools, health institutions, and public agencies constitute the real economy the framework is intended to serve.

6.2 Community Economic Administration

A democratically accountable body identifies priorities, publishes plans, coordinates services, and proposes projects within lawful authority.

6.3 Public-Purpose Investment Fund

A professionally governed fund manages reserves and eligible investments under a public mandate, independent custody, audited valuation, and strict risk limits.

6.4 Community Development Bank

A legally authorized and appropriately regulated institution originates project finance, administers project obligations, manages credit programs, and maintains professional independence in underwriting.

6.5 COPE Data and Risk Infrastructure

A secure analytical layer provides forecasting, stress testing, liquidity monitoring, project dashboards, model inventories, audit trails, and intercommunity coordination.

6.6 Independent oversight

Auditors, regulators, legislatures, courts, privacy bodies, and public reporting systems provide review. The investment fund and development bank should not audit themselves.

7. The Triangle: Integrated Public-Finance Architecture

The Triangle is a balance-sheet and governance architecture, not a promise that investment returns will eliminate the need for taxes.

7.1 Investment and reserve side

The investment side should be diversified and governed at the portfolio level. Capital allocation should reflect risk-adjusted return, liquidity, correlation, operational risk, fees, capacity, and public obligations. Short-term performance should not automatically determine future allocations.

7.2 Project-finance side

The development-bank side finances eligible assets such as housing, water, broadband, energy, transportation, clinics, schools, research facilities, and climate resilience. Debt should be matched to the useful life, revenue profile, and risk of the asset.

7.3 The fulcrum

The fulcrum applies limits to debt service, leverage, liquidity, interest-rate exposure, foreign-exchange exposure, construction risk, project concentration, and reserve adequacy. It also defines automatic pause and deleveraging conditions.

7.4 External-capital stabilization channel

When internal resources are insufficient, external investors or development institutions may finance defined projects. The preferred sequence begins with transparent bonds, co-investment, guarantees, insurance, or development-bank facilities. Complex structured instruments should be considered only after simpler alternatives are shown to be inadequate.

7.5 Consolidated reporting

Investment assets, project obligations, guarantees, derivatives, reserves, and contingent liabilities should be reported on a consolidated basis. Separate legal entities must not be used to conceal the public's total exposure.

8. Accounting and Cash-Flow Discipline

Project cash flow and investment cash flow should be accounted for separately. A housing project should be evaluated through its construction cost, operating cost, maintenance, rent or lease revenue, vacancy, subsidy, and residual value. The investment fund should be evaluated through market value, liquidity, risk, fees, and realized and unrealized gains. Combining the two prematurely can hide underperformance.

Related-party transactions require independent pricing and approval. If a public-purpose fund purchases debt issued by a related development bank, the price, yield, collateral, maturity, and credit quality should be comparable to a market or independently assessed benchmark.

Investment returns should not be booked as available public revenue until they are realized or prudently distributable under the fund's reserve policy. Unrealized gains can disappear during the same period in which project obligations remain fixed.

A minimum liquidity policy should protect payroll, debt service, essential services, and project contingencies. Long-term or illiquid investments should not be financed with short-term obligations.

All guarantees and contingent commitments should be valued and disclosed. A guarantee is a public risk even when no cash has yet been paid.

9. External Capital and Credit Support

External capital should be invited for defined purposes and under published terms. Investors should understand the project, repayment source, legal priority, public guarantees, currency exposure, and conditions under which losses may occur.

Credit support may take the form of reserves, guarantees, insurance, subordinated public capital, or development-bank participation. Each mechanism changes the distribution of risk and must be evaluated on a consolidated basis.

Structured notes, swaps, or credit-default-swap-like arrangements introduce valuation, counterparty, collateral, liquidity, disclosure, and regulatory risk. They should not be used to make weak projects appear financeable or to hide debt. Where considered, they require specialist legal advice, independent pricing, suitability rules, collateral policy, and public explanation.

Foreign investment may be appropriate for infrastructure, climate resilience, research, or productive industry, but it should not determine community priorities. Local benefit, environmental standards, Indigenous rights, strategic ownership, dispute resolution, and profit repatriation should be addressed before commitments are made.

10. AI, Data, and Model Governance

AI-assisted systems may support forecasting, portfolio monitoring, fraud detection, maintenance planning, supply-chain visibility, scenario analysis, and audit. They should be treated as tools within a controlled decision process, not as autonomous authorities.

Every material model should have an owner, documented purpose, data lineage, validation record, performance limits, change log, approval status, and retirement plan. Models should be tested under conditions that differ from the data on which they were developed.

Human officials remain responsible for decisions. An algorithmic recommendation does not transfer accountability. High-impact decisions require explanation, review, recordkeeping, and a means of challenge.

Data governance should address authority, minimization, consent where applicable, privacy, security, retention, access, quality, interoperability, Indigenous data governance, and emergency continuity.

The system must be able to operate safely when automated tools are unavailable or unreliable. Manual procedures, recovery testing, segmented networks, and incident reporting are essential.

11. Law, Regulation, and Democratic Accountability

11.1 Elected authority

Public priorities, maximum borrowing, guarantees, eligible project classes, and risk appetite require authorization through ordinary democratic institutions.

11.2 Independent investment governance

Investment decisions require fiduciary standards, professional qualifications, conflict rules, independent directors, external custody, audited valuation, and protection from day-to-day political trading direction.

11.3 Independent credit governance

Project underwriting, pricing, collateral, and impairment recognition require professional credit standards and separation from investment management.

11.4 Public transparency

Residents should be able to see project status, costs, liabilities, reserves, investment performance, guarantees, losses, and adverse scenarios in understandable language.

11.5 Regulatory compliance

Each element must comply with applicable public-finance, banking, securities, derivatives, tax, accounting, procurement, privacy, cybersecurity, consumer-protection, and Indigenous-rights law.

11.6 Democratic suspension

The public authority should retain a clear legal mechanism to pause, reduce, or terminate the system when risk, performance, legality, or public consent is inadequate.

LEGAL BOUNDARY

The Triangle cannot be used to evade taxation, bypass appropriations, conceal debt, misstate risk, avoid disclosure, or transfer losses without lawful authority and informed consent.

12. Risk Framework and Stress Testing

RISK	FAILURE MODE	PRIMARY CONTROLS
Market drawdown	Investment assets fall while project obligations remain fixed.	High liquidity, conservative allocation, no guaranteed-return assumptions, and automatic risk reduction.
Interest-rate shock	Refinancing costs rise and bond values fall.	Long maturities, fixed rates where appropriate, duration limits, and a published refinancing calendar.
Construction overrun	Costs rise, schedules slip, or scope changes.	Independent cost review, contingencies, stage gates, reference-class forecasting, and change control.

RISK	FAILURE MODE	PRIMARY CONTROLS
Liquidity freeze	External investors withdraw and assets cannot be sold without loss.	Minimum liquid-asset ratios, committed facilities, maturity matching, and limits on illiquid assets.
Correlation failure	Multiple strategies lose money at the same time.	Factor analysis, portfolio-level stress tests, concentration limits, and strategy shutdown rules.
Currency shock	Foreign assets or debt create mismatched exposure.	Currency limits, hedging policy, natural hedges, and disclosure of residual risk.
Governance capture	Political, managerial, or vendor interests distort decisions.	Independent boards, procurement rules, public registers, recusal, audit, and whistleblower protection.
Cyber or model failure	Trading, banking, payment, or forecasting systems become unavailable or unreliable.	Offline procedures, segmented systems, recovery testing, human override, and incident response.

13. Pilot and Evaluation Path

Stage 1 - Legal and institutional mapping

Identify lawful authorities, prohibited structures, accounting treatment, regulatory requirements, Indigenous and community governance, and the separation of political, investment, credit, and oversight functions.

Stage 2 - Simulation

Use historical and synthetic data to test project cash flows, market drawdowns, rates, inflation, cost overruns, liquidity shocks, and external-capital withdrawal. No public funds are deployed.

Stage 3 - Paper operations

Run mock portfolios, mock bond issuance, governance meetings, public dashboards, audits, and incident exercises.

Stage 4 - Conservative reserve pilot

Establish a small portfolio limited to highly liquid, low-complexity assets under audited rules.

Stage 5 - Limited project-finance pilot

Finance a small number of transparent projects with conventional instruments, clear revenue or public support, and strict caps.

Stage 6 - Independent evaluation

Publish performance, costs, risks, public understanding, governance failures, and counterfactual comparisons. Expansion requires renewed authorization.

Stage 7 - Optional external participation

Permit outside investment only after legal approval, audited performance, public consent, and evidence that external participation improves outcomes without unacceptable complexity.

PILOT PRINCIPLE

The system should be able to fail safely. Essential services must not depend on the success of an unproven investment or financing model.

14. Research Agenda

1. What legal entities and authorities are available in each jurisdiction, and which proposed structures are prohibited?
2. What debt-service, leverage, liquidity, concentration, and related-party limits are prudent?
3. How should related-party project debt be priced, valued, impaired, and consolidated?
4. Which public projects can support revenue-based financing, and which require taxes, transfers, or grants?
5. Can any investment strategy produce acceptable risk-adjusted returns after fees, reserves, liquidity costs, and public-sector constraints?
6. What is the simplest external-capital structure capable of meeting the objective?
7. How should losses be allocated without threatening essential services or democratic legitimacy?
8. How can residents oversee complex finance without depending solely on technical experts?
9. What model-validation, privacy, cybersecurity, and data-governance standards are necessary?
10. Under what conditions should a pilot pause, shrink, or terminate?

15. Conclusion

COPE is a multidimensional research framework for communities that wish to combine democratic planning, public-purpose capital, cooperative institutions, external investment, and modern analytical tools. Its strength is flexibility: communities need not choose a single point on a capitalism-socialism spectrum or rely on a single source of public finance.

The Triangle adds a potentially useful but high-risk architecture for organizing reserves, investment income, project finance, and outside capital. It can also become circular, opaque, overleveraged, or dependent on returns that cannot be guaranteed. Conservative assumptions, simple instruments, consolidated reporting, high liquidity, independent governance, and explicit democratic limits are therefore essential.

The next step is not immediate implementation. It is disciplined research: legal mapping, simulation, institutional design, stress testing, public explanation, and small pilots that can fail safely. The framework should advance only when evidence shows that it improves community resilience without weakening accountability or transferring unacceptable risk to the public.

APPENDIX

Appendix A - Formal Definitions

Community Oriented Planned Economy (COPE). A theoretical, polycentric framework in which communities democratically adjust public-purpose capital generation, market and social provisioning, external-capital integration, and public-finance design.

Non-tax-base public finance. Financing in which a conventional local tax base is not the primary repayment source for a defined project portfolio. The term does not imply exemption from law, taxation, disclosure, appropriation, or audit.

Public-purpose investment fund. A professionally governed pool of assets and reserves managed under a public mandate and prudential risk limits.

Community development bank. A legally authorized institution that finances eligible community projects and administers public-purpose credit programs.

The Triangle. The integrated relationship among the public-purpose investment fund, community development bank, and external-capital stabilization channel.

Fulcrum. The published rules governing balance-sheet limits, project pacing, reserves, borrowing, risk reduction, external participation, and shutdown.

External-capital stabilization channel. Lawful outside finance or risk sharing used when internal capacity is insufficient, preferably through simple and transparent instruments.

COPE data and risk infrastructure. The secure systems used for forecasting, stress testing, project monitoring, model governance, audit trails, and public reporting.

APPENDIX

Appendix B - Illustrative Operating Cycle

1. Community priorities are established through lawful democratic planning and a published capital plan.
2. Projects are screened for public value, readiness, lifecycle cost, rights impacts, environmental performance, and delivery capacity.
3. The development bank structures financing and identifies grants, project revenues, public contributions, guarantees, and external participation.
4. The investment fund may purchase a prudently capped share of eligible obligations under independent pricing and related-party rules.
5. Project cash flows and investment cash flows are accounted for separately and then consolidated for public risk reporting.
6. The fulcrum tests debt service, liquidity, reserves, interest rates, project performance, market conditions, and essential-service obligations.
7. Expansion, pause, external placement, reserve accumulation, or risk reduction follows published rules and requires accountable human approval.
8. Audited results are reported to elected bodies and the public, and future capital plans are adjusted accordingly.

APPENDIX

Appendix C - Stress-Test Scenarios

Combined market and construction shock

A thirty-percent portfolio drawdown occurs while construction costs rise twenty percent and completion is delayed. The test determines whether reserves, project contingencies, debt service, and essential services remain protected.

Interest-rate and refinancing shock

Borrowing costs rise sharply before a major maturity. The test evaluates duration, refinancing concentration, fixed-rate protection, and the ability to slow new commitments.

External-capital withdrawal

Institutional or foreign investors stop purchasing project debt. The test measures internal liquidity, project prioritization, committed facilities, and the ability to pause safely.

Cyber disruption

Trading, banking, payment, or project-data systems become unavailable. The test evaluates manual operations, recovery time, data integrity, and governance under degraded conditions.

Governance failure

A conflict of interest or political intervention affects investment or credit decisions. The test evaluates detection, disclosure, recusal, investigation, remediation, and public accountability.

Public-consent failure

Residents no longer understand or support the structure. The test evaluates disclosure quality, public deliberation, independent explanation, and lawful suspension.

APPENDIX

Appendix D - Briefing Points

NO.	BRIEFING POINT
1	COPE replaces a one-dimensional capitalism-socialism debate with four adjustable economic dimensions.
2	Different communities may choose different combinations of markets, public services, cooperatives, debt, and external capital.
3	Non-tax-base does not mean tax-exempt, unregulated, off-budget, or free of democratic authority.
4	The Triangle links a public-purpose investment fund, a community development bank, and an external-capital stabilization channel.
5	Investment income may supplement public finance, but project obligations cannot depend on guaranteed market outperformance.
6	Internal purchases of community debt require independent pricing, consolidation, related-party controls, and transparent impairment.
7	Simple financing instruments should be preferred over structured notes, swaps, or complex derivatives.
8	AI supports forecasting, monitoring, and audit; it does not make sovereign decisions.
9	Investment, credit, political, and oversight functions must remain institutionally separate.
10	Every liability, guarantee, contingent exposure, and material model risk must be visible in consolidated public reporting.
11	Projects should be tested against market drawdowns, rate shocks, construction overruns, liquidity freezes, cyber failures, and governance capture.
12	External investment should serve a democratically approved community strategy rather than determine it.
13	Communities need explicit rules for reserves, borrowing, project pacing, risk reduction, and shutdown.
14	Pilots should begin with legal analysis, simulation, and paper operations - not speculative deployment of public funds.
15	Expansion requires legal approval, independent audit, public understanding, and renewed democratic consent.
16	The model should be rejected when simpler public-finance tools achieve the same objective with less risk.
17	COPE's principal objective is community resilience: affordability, reliable services, sound infrastructure, liquidity, and legitimacy.
18	Investment returns are uncertain and cannot substitute for fiscal discipline.
19	Failure conditions must be defined in advance so the system can pause without harming essential services.
20	COPE is a research agenda whose credibility depends on conservative design, transparent evidence, and the ability to fail safely.

APPENDIX

Appendix E - References

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