



# CALM CONCERNS

## 1. Normalize negative reactions.

Allow audiences to acknowledge their negative emotions, such as anxiety, fear, or frustration, that are prompted by affordable housing proposals or policies. Listening to others' perspectives makes them feel seen, heard, and respected.

## 2. Avoid judgment.

When messages tell us directly how to act or feel, we are more likely to disagree. Audiences that sense judgment may have a harder time nurturing compassion for the people and communities we seek to support. Listening without judgment helps keep the conversation open and prevents people from tuning out.

## 3. Tell a change-of-heart story.

Describe how someone with similar negative reactions shifted to a more positive view. Showing how someone changed their viewpoint—because of experiences, new information, or deeper reflection—makes a story authentic, believable, and accessible.

## 4. Help audiences imagine positive results.

Using stories that feature people with relatable values, experiences, or beliefs allows audiences to imagine more positive outcomes.

## 5. Tell stories in different ways.

Change-of-heart storytelling can be used in both short- and long-form communications, such as blog posts, opinion pieces, or social media posts. Using multiple approaches helps you connect with audiences where they already are while getting more mileage out of each story you produce.



### This Good Neighbor Toolkit Helps Build Support for Housing

This is part of a series of six one-page guides to build public support for inclusive housing policies in Colorado. It is grounded in research with Coloradans and the evidence-based Heartwired framework.

For the full Good Neighbor Toolkit, go to [bit.ly/goodneighbor toolkit](https://bit.ly/goodneighbor toolkit)