

Activity Update 2004

On March 1, the Board of Directors of [MCC Employment Development](#) unanimously passed a motion to act as the charitable agent for VC Calgary. VC Calgary's Management Team has now initiated the process of incorporating as a Part 9 Not-for-Profit Company.

After reading VC Calgary's Community Plan which was distributed by the Calgary Homeless Foundation, Aldermen Joe Ceci and Bob Hawksworth have expressed great interest in VC Calgary. There is now discussion of folding some of VC Calgary's work into the City's business planning, including Council's Priorities and the three-year budget process. VC Calgary has been asked to present to the Community and Protective Services Committee on May 4, 2005.

The Fair Fares initiative has taken a very positive turn. On October 6, 2004, Fair Fares met with Calgary Alderman Bob Hawkesworth to discuss supporting a motion to subsidize transit passes for people on low incomes. On November 24, 2004, Fair Fares met with Alderman Ray Jones to request a delay in the proposed \$5 increase to transit passes.

On December 6, 2004, members of Fair Fares spoke at a City Council meeting where Aldermen Jones and Hawkesworth made a motion requesting a report on discounted transit passes for low-income Calgarians to be submitted by City Transit to the Land Use Planning and Transportation Committee on March 16, 2005.

Fair Fares has been working with the City Transit staff responsible for the Report, including meetings on January 6, February 3 and March 3. It is expected that the Report submitted on March 16 will be an interim report, and a request will be made to further investigate the financing of a discounted transit pass program and submit a further report in the fall of 2005. Fair Fares has been meeting with a number of Aldermen, and has written letters to the Mayor, City Council and members of Calgary Caucus. Members of the VC Calgary Steering Committee and United Way funded agencies have also been given templates and asked to write letters of support on behalf of their organizations and agency clients. The issue of discounted transit passes has recently been raised by the opposition in the provincial legislature, and Fair Fares has been contacted for information by Calgary MLA Alana DeLong.

The Living Wage Action Team has made strategic decisions on two main issues. We have selected an initial focus on a municipal bylaw campaign, followed by an extension of this campaign to other public, quasi-governmental, private and non-profit sectors. We will limit our focus for the initial municipal portion of the campaign to an hourly wage, but include and encourage a broader range of progressive employment practice options in our communications materials. We are very close to a decision on the hourly wage amount. Alderman Joe Ceci has expressed interest in VC Calgary's Living Wage initiative.

