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MCC Employment Development and the United Way of Calgary and Area have been collaborating for the past year to engage a broader range of local non-profits, business and government agencies in local efforts to ensure that all of Calgary's residents share in that city's enviable quality of life. The group's active Steering Committee is currently exploring the idea of a living wage in Calgary, engaging a multisectoral leadership team, and participating in networking and learning opportunities in the Vibrant Communities initiative.

MCC Employment Development has received an exploration grant from Vibrant Communities to support the group's efforts to further engage leaders from the private sector and low income residents, as well as to determine whether Calgary's growing partnership is interested in accessing financial and technical resources available through Vibrant Communities to support a formal, multi-year poverty reduction effort.

On April 29, 2003 the United Way and MCC Employment Development brought together twenty community members representing a broad range of sectors to discuss the issue of a 'living wage' for residents in Calgary.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the participants formed four subcommittees committed to taking further action towards a Living Wage initiative. These subcommittees are: Research, Public Awareness, Involvement of the Business Community, and Collaboration with Government and Non-Profit Employers.

As the Living Wage effort unfolds, the United Way continues to convene dinner meetings with influential local leaders to explore and discuss other long term community-based strategies for sustained poverty reduction in the city. Stay tuned for more information as this Living Wage initiative continues to gather momentum!