



December 6, 2013

City of Calgary Council
City of Calgary
P.O. Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, AB, Canada T2P 2M5

Dear Ms. Colley-Urquhart,

Re: Fair Calgary Policy Update (CPS2013-0814)

I am representative of Vibrant Communities Calgary (VCC), which is dedicating significant resources towards implementing specific areas of the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative (CPRI). We are passionately committed to achieving the CPRI's goal of reducing Calgary's poverty rate in half by 2023.

As I see it, there are a number of paths towards poverty reduction. I'd like to address two of those paths: making access to services easier and more dignified, and ensuring our city is affordable - especially for those most impacted by our cost of living.

First, I would like to confirm VCC's support for the low-income program single entry system proposed in the Fair Calgary policy update. It is an important step towards easing access to much needed services, while ensuring the "my story once" process. The "one story" approach offers a dignified entry to programs that assist low-income earners to fully participate in the community. This approach also aligns with the work being initiated through the CPRI.

Second, I would like to thank Council for its leadership on ending the 1-kilometer rule, a rule imposed on individuals utilizing Access Calgary. For Calgary to be inclusive of all its community members, our community must be accessible through affordable transportation.

That leads me to my last point. While not outlined in the report, Vibrant Communities Calgary also encourages Council to expand the discounted single fare transit pass notice of motion (NM2013-25) to include people living on low-incomes.

Estimates suggest that fully half of those who are eligible to purchase low-income monthly transit passes fail to do so on a regular basis. This suggests that like seniors who struggle to pay upfront for their annual transit pass, the cost of a monthly transit pass is prohibitive for those low-income earners. As with seniors, low-income earners are forced to pay a regular single transit fare rate each time they take public transit. Council already recognizes the value of offering discounted monthly transit passes to low-

income earners; offering discounted single fare transit passes is a logical and equitable next step.

Once again, I would like to thank Council for its leadership towards ensuring accessible and affordable programs to Calgary's low-income earners. Our community is stronger when we can all participate in making our city great.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrell Howard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Darrell" and last name "Howard" clearly distinguishable.

Darrell Howard
Community Facilitation & Engagement Specialist