

**May 6, 2010****Vancouver has become Canada's first major city to achieve Fair Trade Town status**

At a council meeting this morning, Vancouver City Council passed a motion to endorse an application to become a Fair Trade Town, which has made Vancouver the first major city in Canada to achieve this status.

Jeff Geipel, Executive Director of Fair Trade Vancouver, says the Fair Trade Town requirements were mostly completed before the organization started the application process, largely due to the fact there is such widespread support for Fair Trade in the city. "This award results from the many citizens and community groups who have been asking for Fair Trade products when they shop." Fair Trade products such as coffee, sugar, tea and tropical fruits are widely available in Vancouver supermarkets and restaurants, and availability is increasing as demand rapidly grows.

The city's endorsement of the application was the last step required by TransFair Canada to bestow Fair Trade Town status on Vancouver. This award officially recognizes two decades of work by local and international Fair Trade supporters, as well as a civic ethical purchasing policy that was enacted in 2005.

"We want to be the greenest city in the world, and a big part of that is ensuring that our goods and services are produced and delivered in a responsible way," said Mayor Gregor Robertson. "It's great that Vancouver will become the first major city in Canada to achieve Fair Trade Town status, and I hope other cities will follow our lead."

Fair Trade standards focus on improving the lives of the developing country producers who make our products, but also include product-specific environmental requirements. They help to ensure that farmers and producers have the freedom to choose a life that is in harmony with their local environments.

The Fair Trade Towns award is presented by TransFair Canada, a national Fair Trade certifier based in Ottawa, Ontario. Vancouver's successful application makes it the first major Canadian city to achieve the Fair Trade Town status. Over the past ten years since Garstang, England became the first Fair Trade Town, more than 800 cities and towns in 19 countries have achieved the status, including other large cities like London, Paris and Rome.

"Fair Trade is a phenomenon that has grown at an incredible rate, both in Canada and abroad," said Michael Zelmer, Community Relations Manager for TransFair Canada. "The recognition of Vancouver as a Fair Trade Town further demonstrates Canadians' commitment to fairness and respect for the farmers and artisans who produce the products we enjoy. These principles are at the heart of Fair Trade".

To celebrate this achievement, Fair Trade Vancouver and other leaders of the community will meet this Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup> on World Fair Trade Day, from 1pm to 2pm outside the Ten Thousand Villages store on Granville Island. The celebration will include short speeches by Councillor Raymond Louie and several representatives of the Fair Trade movement. There will also be a ceremonial cutting of a Fair Trade cake, and a drum and dance circle.

**About Fair Trade Vancouver:** Fair Trade Vancouver is a non-profit organization that seeks to increase awareness and sales of Fair Trade products in Metro Vancouver, and is the body responsible for the Fair Trade Towns Application. For more information about Fair Trade and to learn where to purchase Fair Trade products in Vancouver, visit <http://fairtradevancouver.ca/>

**About Transfair Canada:** TransFair Canada is a national, non-profit Fair Trade certification organization, and the only Canadian member of the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations (FLO) International. The Fair Trade Towns campaign is an exciting initiative that allows communities to support Fair Trade at the local level. The initiative seeks to increase availability and awareness of Fair Trade Certified products. <http://transfair.ca/en/get-involved/fair-trade-towns>

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