

# Ethical policy passes without cost figures

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CALGARY HERALD

A civic committee approved in principle Wednesday the city's proposed ethical and environmental purchasing policy, despite concerns from some aldermen about how much implementing it could cost.

"You're asking us to approve a policy at this point in time where there's no empirical data on cost savings or cost implications," Ald. Gord Lowe said.

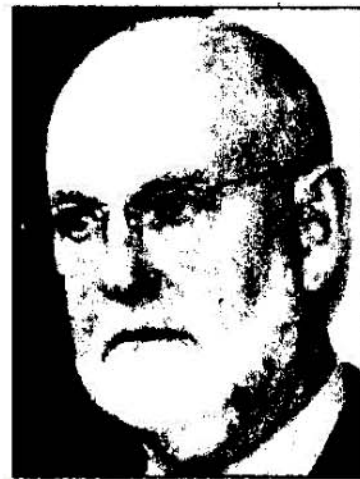
City staff couldn't tell the finance committee the financial impact of a sustainable purchasing policy in place in Vancouver — although Gordon Christie, with the Calgary and District Labour Council, was able to provide a news release that pegged the overall cost at less than \$2,000 over two years.

Two years in the making, the Calgary policy would encourage suppliers to meet environmental and ethical standards set out in local and international agreements. The city would begin with apparel, food and chemicals, as long as they're provided at a "reasonable price."

A report on the costs of that initial

phase will be ready for budget deliberations in November.

Eric Sawyer, the city treasurer, said he doesn't anticipate "any significant increase in costs, but we need an opportunity to test around a limited number of items to really test it."



**Gord Lowe**

Ald. Dale Hodges was the only one to vote against the policy, saying the city can only worry about its own jurisdiction.

"I don't think we're ready to take on the province or the rest of the world."

The committee also received as information a supplier code of conduct, which outlines the responsibility of businesses to respect human rights and treat their employees fairly. It also covers issues such as child labour and pollution.

City staff will also be asked to look at the implications of including a "living-wage" provision in the policy.