

Greater Vancouver Community Services Society

MEMORANDUM

to: All GVCSS HandyDART Staff at Simon Fraser and Richmond Offices
from: Ron McLeod, Executive Director
subject: GVCSS Creates Wholly-Owned Subsidiary to Operate Future HandyDART Services
date: January 28, 2008

I am pleased to provide staff with the following update regarding the future plans of GVCSS for delivering HandyDART services:

1. We are advised by TransLink that beginning in January 2009, the HandyDART services currently provided by three contractors in our region (North of the Fraser), will instead be provided by one contractor to improve overall service quality.
2. TransLink will be putting this contract up for bids in February. The successful contractor will be announced on July 3, 2008 and that contractor will be required to consolidate and operate the restructured custom transit system starting January 1, 2009.
3. In recognition of the significant benefits derived from delivering HandyDART service through an organization that is dedicated solely to transit, the GVCSS Board of Directors has created a wholly-owned company to bid on and operate HandyDART contracts in the future.
4. This subsidiary company (Crosstown Accessible Transit Limited) will be fully supported by the financial and administrative resources to be made available from the parent organization – GVCSS.
5. Crosstown Accessible Transit Limited will not be a member of the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) nor bound by the terms of any collective agreement ratified by HEABC. (GVCSS is required by provincial laws to do both). Crosstown therefore will have the opportunity to engage in free collective bargaining with the union that represents its employees.
6. This does not mean that existing contracts will be cancelled. All current contracts, pay and benefits will continue until renegotiated or amended by agreement. Crosstown will not seek a reduction of wage rates or benefit entitlements for any employees in any area. We expect that this very significant change in our labour relations environment will allow us and the union to address many of the serious and legitimate concerns that staff have expressed about the nature of the present collective agreement. We anticipate significant improvements in contract terms for GVCSS employees as a result.

In summary, GVCSS is putting together a new wholly-owned company (Crosstown Accessible Transit Limited) for the purpose of bidding on and operating future HandyDART contracts. With our enviable track record of delivering high quality custom transit service for over 35 years, Crosstown and GVCSS have a wealth of experienced and committed staff on hand to carry on this tradition of providing excellent transit services to individuals affected by age or disability. We look forward to the changes proposed for the HandyDART system and feel confident that these changes will improve conditions for both our clients and our dedicated employees.

Should you have any questions about this memo, please do not hesitate to call me at 604-737-4900.