

VanMatch - Mission Statement

Vancouver is a city full of life and energy. It consistently ranks as one of the most expensive Canadian cities to live in, but also features a thriving skilled job market and is an appealing destination for young professionals^{1,2}. The city features Canada's third most expensive rental market—behind only two other cities in Metro Vancouver—but also places well in global sustainable city indexes^{3,4}. These contradictions led us to ask a spatial question; where in the city best combines affordability and the qualities that young people moving to Vancouver may care about?

With this question in mind, we set out on a mission to empower individuals and families to make informed decisions about where to live in Vancouver by providing a dynamic, data-driven app that prioritizes what matters most to them. We believe that finding the perfect neighborhood shouldn't be a compromise but rather an opportunity to align your lifestyle, values, and budget with the ideal community.

VanMATCH simplifies the decision-making process by offering an intuitive and customizable experience that allows users to rank and weigh the importance of key metrics such as housing affordability/quality, access to public/green transit, green spaces, sustainable food sources, and safe biking routes. By tailoring neighborhood recommendations to individual preferences, we help users find communities that not only meet their financial needs but also enhance their quality of life in a sustainable way. The app's metrics are largely guided by a few of the Sustainable Development Goals set out in the Federal sustainable development strategy. We specifically focused on *Goal 2: Support a healthier and more sustainable food system*, *Goal 11: Improve access to affordable housing, clean air, transportation, parks, and green spaces, as well as cultural heritage in Canada*, and *Goal 12: Reduce waste and transition to zero-emission vehicles*^{5,6,7}. VanMATCH supports users in their choice about where they want to live within Vancouver based on these goals.

Our app is designed to bridge the gap between affordability and lifestyle aspirations, supporting newcomers and long-term residents alike in their search for vibrant, sustainable communities. Whether you're a young professional seeking proximity to transit and cultural hubs, a growing family looking for parks and affordable housing, or simply someone who values access to local markets and green living, VanMATCH is here to guide you. At its core, VanMATCH is about choice, flexibility, and empowerment. The app allows users to effectively compare and analyze 22 neighbourhoods across the city by choosing what they prioritize. Users can rank the importance of eight metrics measuring affordability and sustainability to create a custom weighted score out of 100, revealing how much of a match a given community is for them. For

those who prefer a simpler approach, the app also offers the option to skip the priority ranking and explore an unweighted score that takes all 8 metrics into account equally.

Through VanMATCH, we're not just helping people find homes, we're helping them find communities that resonate with their lifestyles, values, and aspirations for the future.

References

- 1: <https://www.mercer.com/en-ca/about/newsroom/cost-of-living-in-canada-2024/>
- 2: <https://youthdatalab.youthfulcities.com/en/insights/uwi2024>
- 3: https://liv.rent/blog/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025_Canada_Rental_Market_Trend_Report_liv.rent_.pdf
- 4: <https://www.iese.edu/media/research/pdfs/ST-0649-E>
- 5: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/federal-sustainable-development-strategy/goals/zero-hunger.html>
- 6: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/federal-sustainable-development-strategy/goals/sustainable-cities-communities.html>
- 7: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/federal-sustainable-development-strategy/goals/responsible-consumption-production.html>