

## **Mission Statement:**

In the spring of 2024, 45% of Canadian households, with children, reported that rising prices have significantly impacted their ability to afford daily expenses, which is 12% higher than what was reported two years prior [1]. In fact, this issue dissolves from the federal level, to the metropolitan level. According to the Metro Vancouver Regional District, 45% of renters in Metro Vancouver pay more than 30% of their income towards housing, classifying it as unaffordable for nearly half of the renting population [2].

To put the issue of affordability into perspective, our team drew inspiration from Metro Vancouver's "living wage", a metric defined as the "the hourly amount that an adult needs to cover basic expenses" for a two-adult, two-child family household [3]. In 2015, the living wage of Metro Vancouver was \$20.68 per hour for a family household [4]. However, in 2024, the living wage of Metro Vancouver is now \$27.05, increasing by over 30% since 2015 [5]. Living costs of Metro Vancouver increase year by year, with many left worried about being able to afford rising costs. In fact, 1 in 3 workers do not make the hourly living wage of B.C [6]. Thus, we have decided to build an app to help people gain a specified understanding of the costs of living associated with each city in the metropolitan area, and how they compare.

However, the living wage metric of Metro Vancouver overlooks the diversity of household types, nor does it represent the diversity of living expenses across the metropolitan area. Thus, our tool modifies the approach of calculating "living wage", by expanding beyond the traditional 'two-adult, two-children' household model to include six distinct household types, by accounting for the different modalities of transportation that users may prefer to take, and by disaggregating the single metropolitan living wage into tailored representations for each municipality across Metro Vancouver.

## **Statement of Characteristics:**

- **Family-based:** app focuses towards the growth and habitation of families in Metro Vancouver. Where geographic information is visualized for their most affordable and suitable options with additional features to count for such expenses.
- **Interact-ability:** app allows for users to interact with widgets for an enhanced understanding of the provided living wage information.
- **Visually enhanced:** rather than viewing the living wage information as a plain list, you can view the information through a geographic lens, paired with compelling, toggleable visualizations.
- **Insightful:** app provides information towards the ideal region for each family or individual person's living expenses and needs.
- **Personalized:** the app's "calculator" tailors the user experience to reflect the user's financial situation for an enhanced context of the living wage information. Selections represent living situations of household living situations
- **Sustainable:** The app offers insights into sustainable living by factoring transportation mode (i.e. public transit or personal vehicle) into the cost of living. This may also help

users understand the potential savings of using public transit compared to driving, providing an incentive towards a more sustainable lifestyle.

**References:**

- [1]<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240815/dq240815b-eng.htm>
- [2]<https://metrovanancouver.org/services/regional-planning/Documents/housing-and-transportation-cost-burden.pdf>
- [3][https://www.livingwagebc.ca/living\\_wage\\_rates](https://www.livingwagebc.ca/living_wage_rates)
- [4][https://www.livingwagebc.ca/living\\_wage\\_news\\_2015\\_calculation](https://www.livingwagebc.ca/living_wage_news_2015_calculation)
- [5]<https://www.livingwagebc.ca/calculations2024>
- [6] [1 in 3 B.C. workers don't make living wage, report finds | CBC News](#)
- [7][https://turbotax.intuit.ca/tax-resources/british-columbia-income-tax-calculator?srsId=AfmBOo\\_o\\_JxhSQcPxWta9\\_63x\\_tUJ4TTcXnMMVG\\_PyP2XR0LL0TA7z\\_XI](https://turbotax.intuit.ca/tax-resources/british-columbia-income-tax-calculator?srsId=AfmBOo_o_JxhSQcPxWta9_63x_tUJ4TTcXnMMVG_PyP2XR0LL0TA7z_XI)