



vibrant  
COMMUNITIES  
CALGARY

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CALGARYS COST OF LIVING NUMBER HAS BEEN UPDATED

*New living wage number highlights increases to the cost of living in Canada's richest city*

**CALGARY, ALBERTA – September 25, 2015** – Vibrant Communities Calgary (VCC) has recalculated Calgary's living wage based on the [Canadian Living Wage Framework](#). As a result of an extensive research process, VCC has determined that Calgary's updated living wage is \$18.15 per hour.

"This number is a proxy of the cost of living in Calgary," said Franco Savoia, Executive Director, VCC. "We know that average rental prices and the cost of food for example, have increased based on the 2014 numbers from the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Statistics Canada."

Calgary's updated living wage announcement of \$18.15 per hour comes just before the provincial government's minimum wage increase to \$11.20 will come into effect October 1. The announcement reflects the continuation of the stark difference between Alberta's minimum wage and the hourly wage rate actually required for Calgarians to achieve a basic level of economic security in our city.

"When the cost of living and wages are out of balance, people struggle to afford housing and other basic needs. With a job, working Calgarians should be able to afford basic costs of living as well as be able to save for education, recreation and life's little bumps in the road," said Brian Pincott, City Councillor, Ward 11.

The calculation provides a consistent living wage definition and methodology, which can be applied to any municipality within Canada. It reflects what 2 working parents in a

family of four must bring home, based on the actual costs of living in a specific community.

“We could see a drop in the cost of living if changes were implemented to certain social policies,” says Mr. Savoia. “Like childcare, for example. We know that there are licensed childcare spaces for less than 20 per cent of children under the age of 12 in Calgary, and therefore, the majority of Calgary families with children are not eligible for the provincial child care subsidy. If our calculation included the assumption that most families are able to access licensed child care and therefore received the province’s subsidy, the living wage would go down by more than 3 dollars per hour.”

The updated living wage will be announced at the Soul of the Next Economy Forum today, Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at approximately 4:00pm at Ambrose University.

### **About Vibrant Communities Calgary**

Vibrant Communities Calgary is a non-profit organization that works collaboratively, with various stakeholders and partners, seeking to engage Calgarians and to advocate for long-term strategies that address the root causes of poverty in Calgary. As of January 1, 2015, VCC became the stewards of the Enough for All; Calgary’s poverty reduction strategy. For more information please visit [www.vibrantcalgary.com](http://www.vibrantcalgary.com).

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