



**Retail Action Network**  
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July 23, 2018

Dear Mayor Helps, City Council, and Members of Staff,

The Retail Action Network (RAN) is writing to support Councillors Loveday and Isitt's recommendation that the City of Victoria endorse the Living Wage for Families Campaign and agree to adopt a living wage employer policy.

RAN is a community-based workers rights organization that advocates for precariously employed non-unionized workers in the retail, restaurant, and hospitality sectors. We fight for liveable wages, better working conditions, and workplaces free from harassment and discrimination.

Living wage jobs have a positive impact on the entire community. People who earn a living wage enjoy increased mental and physical health, and improved overall economic well-being. Being a living wage employer also has positive effects for businesses. Paying a living wage is associated with lower job turnover, higher employee morale, and improved quality of work (*Guide to Becoming a Living Wage Employer by Living Wage for Families Campaign*).

Victoria prides itself for being an inclusive community but far too many community members are needlessly marginalized by poverty wages. The City of Victoria's adoption of a living wage policy will be a small, yet important step towards eliminating poverty wages.

By becoming a living wage employer the City will set a positive example that we hope will encourage other Victoria-area employers to pay their employees a living wage. The City's implementation of a living wage policy will have a positive ripple effect that will help create a healthier community for all Victoria residents.

Sincerely,

Retail Action Network



COMMUNITY SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
**research·insights·solutions**

**RE: City of Victoria adoption of a Living Wage policy**

July 25, 2018

Dear City of Victoria Council and Mayor,

I am writing to thank you for your leadership in committing to adopt a Living Wage policy – both in the Mayor's Task Force on Social Enterprise and Social Procurement Action Plan, and in the City's Strategic Plan 2015-2018 – and to express the crucial importance of taking action to ensure the City is compensating its employees and contracted staff a rate sufficient to meet the costs of living in the region by becoming a certified Living Wage employer.

The Living Wage reflects the real costs of living through the hourly wage required to enjoy an adequate quality of life in our region. The Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria calculates and releases this number each year, based on the best data available about costs in our region.

The Living Wage is the hourly rate of pay that allows a family with two full-time wage earners each earning the living wage, and two children, to enjoy an adequate quality of life. While it is more than a survival wage or minimum wage, it is not an affluent wage, and it is lower than what is needed to obtain much of what is considered normal in our community. For example, the Living Wage Family cannot save for children's education or to purchase a home (the Living Wage family are renters, and are subject to the increasing rental housing costs in our city), cannot service debts or credit card bills, and cannot afford to care for an elderly relative, among other things. The City of Victoria may already pay employees at a rate approaching or exceeding the minimum wage, but the statement of becoming a certified Living Wage employer is vital to ensuring that all current and future workers at the City may be able to meet the basic costs of living.

The City of Victoria has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership, to unequivocally express that everyone deserves to be paid fairly for the work that they do. The City of Victoria has an opportunity to help ensure our communities can remain diverse and inclusive, that people working in this city are paid a wage that reflects the costs of living here, that will allow them to remain here to do the important work they do and remain community members, rather than being driven away due to unaffordability.

Please take the necessary steps to ensure the City of Victoria is a Living Wage employer.

Thanks,  
Stefanie Hardman

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We recognize and acknowledge the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples and thank the Nations for the opportunity to live and work within their traditional territories.