Project Vision

**Question 1 Problem :**

We want to solve the problem of misinformation in the renting housing market for UCSD students. A common problem students mention is misinformation in the process, such as unreliable pictures, different prices from the listed ones or unexpected charges. Some popularly used applications for finding housing are Facebook, Zillow and Apartments.com, nonetheless these platforms do not update their information often. As a result, the data on these websites are usually inaccurate and outdated. Most of them source their information from the websites of leasing companies. These websites usually give a large range of possible rent prices. e.g. Studio apartments starting from as low as $2400. But the only available studios at the complex cost $3000.

Our app will aim to provide the user with clear, concise and transparent information on pricing, utilities, amenities, landlords, etc.

**Question 2 : Main features we hope to deliver in our project:**

* **Filter** - Users are able to filter apartments by their preferences including range of housing price, neighborhood, commute time to certain location, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, and size of apartments in square feet.
* **Reviews and rankings** - Users should be able to input ratings and their experience with landlords, tenants, and apartment properties. All will have a numerical and visible rate.
* **Transparent Pricing** - Users can see the current and previous rent of the apartment they are interested in.
* **Map** - Google maps integration to provide quick access to location, up to date commute information, reflect any changes in the neighborhood.
* **User Profiles** - All users can create their own accounts and verify their personal information to make the environment and application trustworthy.

**Question 3 : Our customers and how we will reach them:**

* UCSD Students
  + Collaborate with UCSD to promote our website directly to students.
  + Promote on UCSD sub-reddit and Facebook groups.
* Landlords
  + We will directly call the leasing offices of apartment complexes and convince them to collaborate.
  + Targeted Ad Campaigns on socials

Other stakeholders :

* UCSD (collaborate to help students find housing)

Competitors :

* Zillow
* Apartments
* Facebook groups and marketplace.

**Question 4: Factors that may lead to the failure of the product**

* Team Risks
  + Lack of team collaboration - Given different schedules for each team member, it might be difficult to coordinate.
  + Self-learning skills - It might be difficult to pick up new knowledge on new technologies in such a short frame of time.
  + Work allocation - Given the skills of each team member, multiple might be good at the same thing and want to do the same work.
* Product Risk
  + Landlords not cooperation
  + No users
* Technology Risks
  + Security for database to protect user information
  + Security for login
* Time Risks
  + Over commitment to too many features.
  + Delays in the project completion
  + Improper time management
* Competitors :
  + Competitors copying or undermining

**Question 5: How to solve most serious risks + how we will differentiate from other products**

* Critical risks are the team risks, to address this:
  + We are going to have daily standup meetings
  + Plan to deliver the features with a 25% buffer, in other words, plan to finish with 1 or 2 days of anticipation
  + Deliver a minimum viable product as fast as possible.
* The most important risk is having no users, to address this:
  + Advertisement or promotion for the app.
  + Showcasing the unique features we have that our competitors don't. i.e. ranking and reviews.
  + Rigorous testing to get landlords and other users' opinion on the ranking system

**Question 6: General plan for the technology**

We are planning to build a website for Google Chrome browser only. This website will have a connection to a database (PostgreSQL) which will store the data. The reason we want to design a website is because it is feasible in time based on the team skills as opposed to making a mobile application and website is more accessible compared to mobile applications.

* The technologies we may use to design our website are HTML, CSS, JavaScript or React.
* The technology associated with the database will be PostgreSQL.