



Community Talks - Edmonton, Alberta

Full Report on Session Three: May 3rd, 2025

Summary

This report summarizes the third and final community conversation hosted in Ward Dene/Sherwood Park, Alberta by Iron & Earth, in partnership with the David Suzuki Foundation. This event was made possible through the generous support from Alberta EcoTrust Foundation.

This discussion builds upon themes identified in the first two events, including a need for support amidst the rising cost of living, a desire for job security, and a need for an accountable and transparent energy industry.

In the third and final Dene community conversation, participants focused on three key areas. They shared overwhelmingly negative experiences accessing support services in the past, whether it be those focused on employment, sustainability, or health. When asked to describe their ideal job training initiative, they discussed many ideas including: a clear track record of placing trainees in paid positions, a human-focused approach that values each individual's history and experience, mentorship opportunities, and wage transparency about pay grades. Indigenous participants emphasized that employers must educate themselves on colonialism and avoid tokenizing and exploiting their Indigenous employees. When discussing potential local energy projects, participants were interested in solutions that could unite the community and benefit it in the long term. Particularly in light of the separatist protests, people wanted the community to feel united in accessing affordable, reliable energy that financially benefits the community.

1. Introduction

About Iron & Earth

Iron & Earth (I&E) is a non-profit organization with roots in the fossil fuel industry that is working toward a future where the workforce is dynamically engaged in a thriving green economy. We envision broad participation in a Just Transition, leading to strengthened economic and climate resilience, expanded accessibility to sustainable energy solutions and meaningful careers. This vision extends beyond workforce mobilization to foster a community-driven transformation, where people actively contribute to a sustainable and equitable future, for their communities and the planet. Its mission is to enable sustainable, community-driven climate solutions and reduce barriers for those seeking a future in the green economy with programs that support greater job security, social protection, and more training opportunities as we move toward a low-carbon economy.

Iron & Earth believes community engagement is an effective way to influence sustainable participation in a Just Transition, and that community-driven solutions have a greater chance of becoming successful and sustainable in the long-term. Iron & Earth takes the time to build relationships and adapt to individual community needs whenever possible.

Community Talks is Iron and Earth's engagement initiative designed to spark conversations about how environmental, social, and economic changes impact people across Canada. It is committed to meeting communities where they are at, by supporting self-determined, community-driven solutions, and offering non-prescriptive support with programs that are designed by the community and for the community.

About David Suzuki Foundation

Through evidence-based research, policy analysis, education and citizen empowerment, the David Suzuki Foundation conserves and protects the natural environment to create a sustainable Canada. For a sustainable Canada, we need inclusive and equitable communities. The David Suzuki Foundation is proud to support Iron and Earth's Community Talks so that community members can identify the issues that impact them and the solutions to make their communities more resilient.

Why this community was selected to have a conversation

Edmonton and Sherwood Park are located within Treaty 6 Territory and within the Métis homelands and Métis districts 9, 10, and 11. These lands are the territories of many First

Nations such as the Nehiyaw (Cree), Denesuliné (Dene), Nakota Sioux (Stoney), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux) and Niitsitapi (Blackfoot).

Ward Dene, formerly known as Ward 4, occupies the northeasternmost border of Edmonton, covering Edmonton north of the Yellowhead Highway and east of 66 Street. The word *dene* (pronounced DEH-NEH) refers to communities that live along the North Saskatchewan River.¹ The ward comprises a mix of rural land and neighbourhoods like Clareview, Kirkness, and McConachie. Demographic information on Ward Dene is limited to 2019, as municipal census collection is currently under pause due to budgetary constraints.² However, in 2019 the ward was home to approximately 85,000 residents.³

Sherwood Park, originally named “Campbelltown” — borders the eastern edge of Edmonton and was initially developed in the early 1950s as a small housing community of one hundred homes.⁴⁵ As the urban centre of Strathcona County, Sherwood Park now comprises more than 70,000 residents, two-thirds of the total residents of Strathcona County.

Both Ward Dene and Sherwood Park were selected for community engagement due to their close proximity to energy production; these communities hold “Canada’s largest hydrocarbon processing centre.”⁶ Refinery Row — the unofficial name granted to a group of oil refineries and businesses servicing the energy sector — is located east of Ward Dene in West Sherwood Park.⁷ Explore Strathcona County describes the refineries as “their own little cities” due to their size and the number of people who are employed in the refineries.⁸

¹ Joannou, Ashley. October 4, 2021. “Ward Dene: New name, same boundaries for northeast Edmonton district.” *Edmonton Journal*. <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/edmonton-election-dene-ward-4>

² Cummings, Madeleine. November 2, 2022. “Some data users disappointed after Edmonton pauses municipal census again.” *CBC News*.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/data-users-disappointed-edmonton-municipal-census-pause-1.6637130>

³ City of Edmonton. November 24, 2022. “2019 Edmonton Municipal Census.” Tableau.
<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/city.of.edmonton/viz/2019EdmontonMunicipalCensus/2019EdmontonMunicipalCensus>

⁴ Strathcona County. January 29, 2020. “Sherwood Park history - housing.”
<https://www.strathcona.ca/council-county/history-and-heritage/places/sherwood-park/history-of-sherwood-park/sherwood-park-history-housing/>

⁵ Strathcona County, 2022.

⁶ Simpson, Isobel J., Marrero, Josette E., Batterman, Stuart, Meinardi, Simone, Berletta, Barbara, and Donald R. Blake. December 2013. “Air quality in the Industrial Heartland of Alberta, Canada and potential impacts on human health. *Atmospheric Environment* 81, 702-709.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S135223101300705X>

⁷ Explore Strathcona County. n.d. “The Industrial Heartland.”
<https://explorestathconacounty.com/ourplaces/the-industrial-heartland/>

⁸ *ibid.*

On February 1st, 2025, United States President Donald Trump signed an Executive Order to impose a 25% tariff on Canadian steel and aluminum products and Canadian automobiles, as well as a 10% tariff on Canadian energy resources.⁹ In response, the Government of Canada imposed reciprocal tariffs.¹⁰ At the time of this event, the potential impacts of these policies loomed large over participants.

In addition to the rapidly changing tariff situation, five days before this session, the Government of Canada held a federal election.¹¹ On the day of the event, there was a rally at the Alberta Legislature promoting the separation of Alberta from Canada with ensuing counter-protests due to the infringement of the separatist movement on Treaty Rights.¹² The political climate during this time influenced the discussions, especially considering that many participants indicated they attended both the counter-protests and the community talks event consecutively.

⁹ The White House. February 1, 2025. "Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Imposes Tariffs on Imports from Canada, Mexico and China."
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/02/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-imposes-tariffs-on-imports-from-canada-mexico-and-china/>

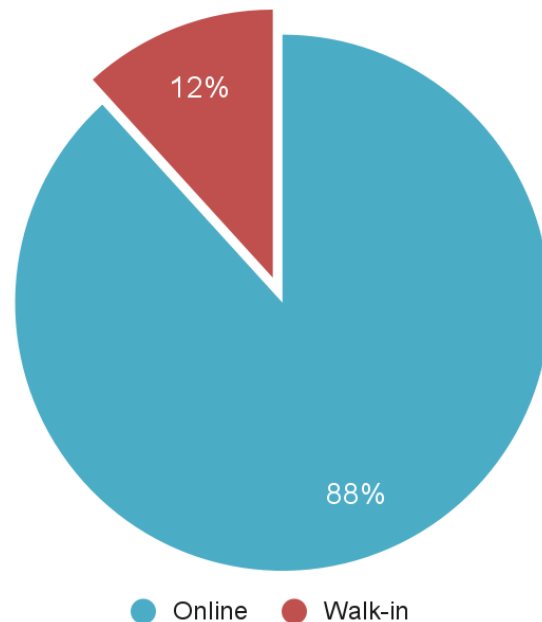
¹⁰ Government of Canada, March 28, 2025 "Canada's Response to U.S. Tariffs on Canadian Goods"
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/programs/international-trade-finance-policy/canadas-response-us-tariffs.html>

¹¹ Farrell, Jack. May 2 2025. "Alberta premier says meeting with prime minister a 'positive first step'"
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/smith-carney-first-step-1.7525714> CBC News

¹² Millions, Bianca. May 3 2025. "Edmonton rally for Alberta independence met with opposition from Indigenous community"
<https://edmonton.citynews.ca/2025/05/03/edmonton-rally-for-alberta-independence/>
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/smith-carney-first-step-1.7525714> CBC News

About the conversation participants

Figure 1.1 - Prior Registration Rate



For the third event in Ward Dene/Sherwood Park, 33 people registered online in advance and 15 (45%) attended the session. 2 people attended without prior registration, making the total attendees number 17. *Figure 1.1 - Registration Time* outlines the breakdown between attendees who had registered in advance, and those who filled out the registration form on the day of the session. The following analysis is based on the registration forms of those in attendance. Some demographics charts include 2021 Census Profile data¹³ of the Edmonton population from Statistics Canada wherever relevant, to provide a comparison of the attendees' representation to the community demographics.

¹³ Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023.
<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?LANG=E&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTIClist=1,4&DGUIDlist=2021A00054811061&HEADERlist=2,31,30,22,23,,10,9,8,7,11,,21,19,44,40,43,16,14,1&SearchText=edmonton> (accessed March 13, 2025).

Figure 1.2 - First Time Attendance

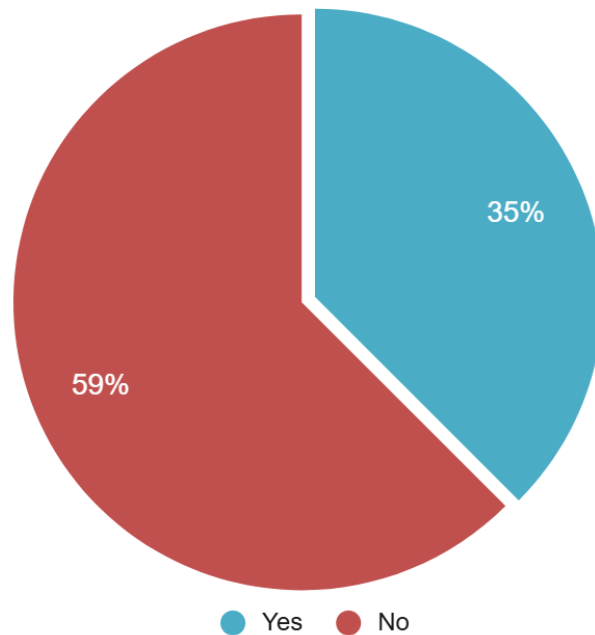


Figure 1.2 - First Time Attendance shows that most participants (59%) had been to a previous Community Talk session by I&E.

Figure 1.3 - Outreach Method

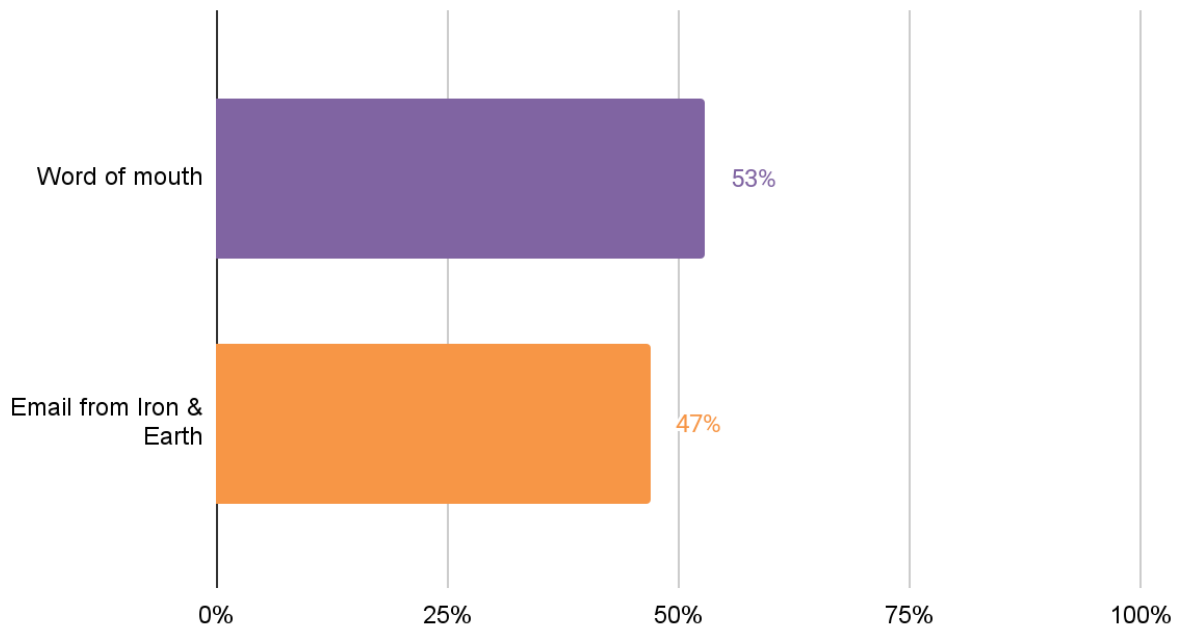


Figure 1.3 - *Outreach Method* demonstrates the main two methods of how participants were informed about the community conversation. Participants found out about the event through word of mouth (53%), followed by email from Iron & Earth (47%). Note that this question allowed for multiple answers.

Figure 1.4 - Accommodations

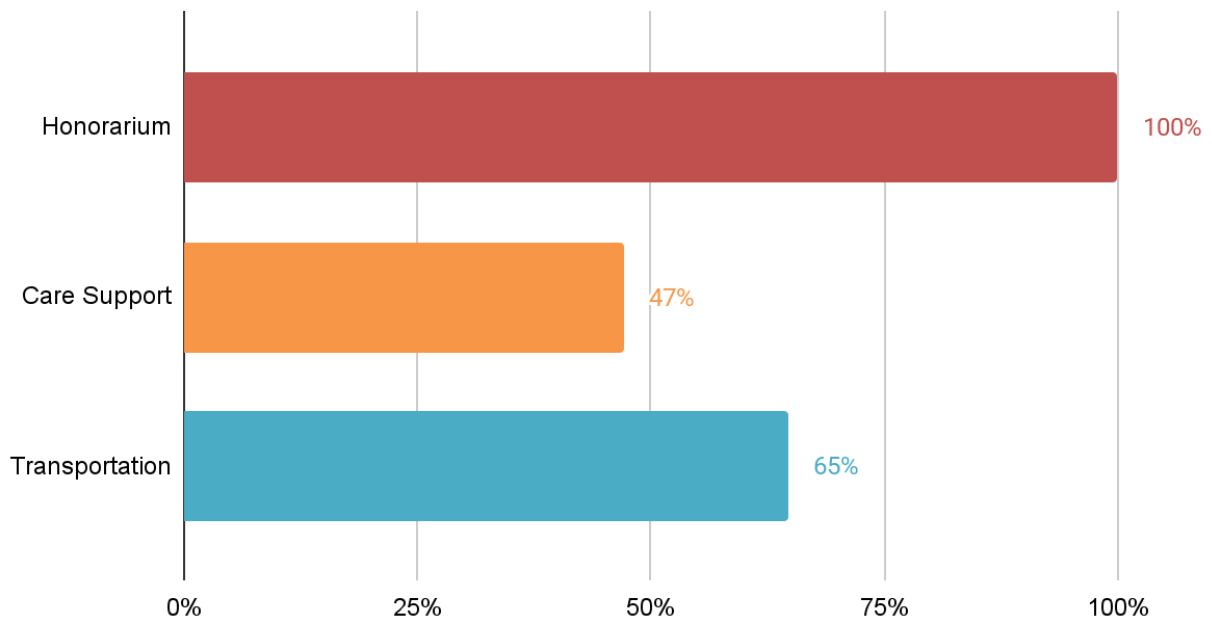


Figure 1.4 - *Accommodations* shows that all attendees chose to receive an honorarium for their participation. Almost half of the attendees opted for care support, and 65% opted for reimbursements for transportation costs. The accommodation options, provided as monetary deposits, were offered to all participants.

Figure 1.5 - Age Groups

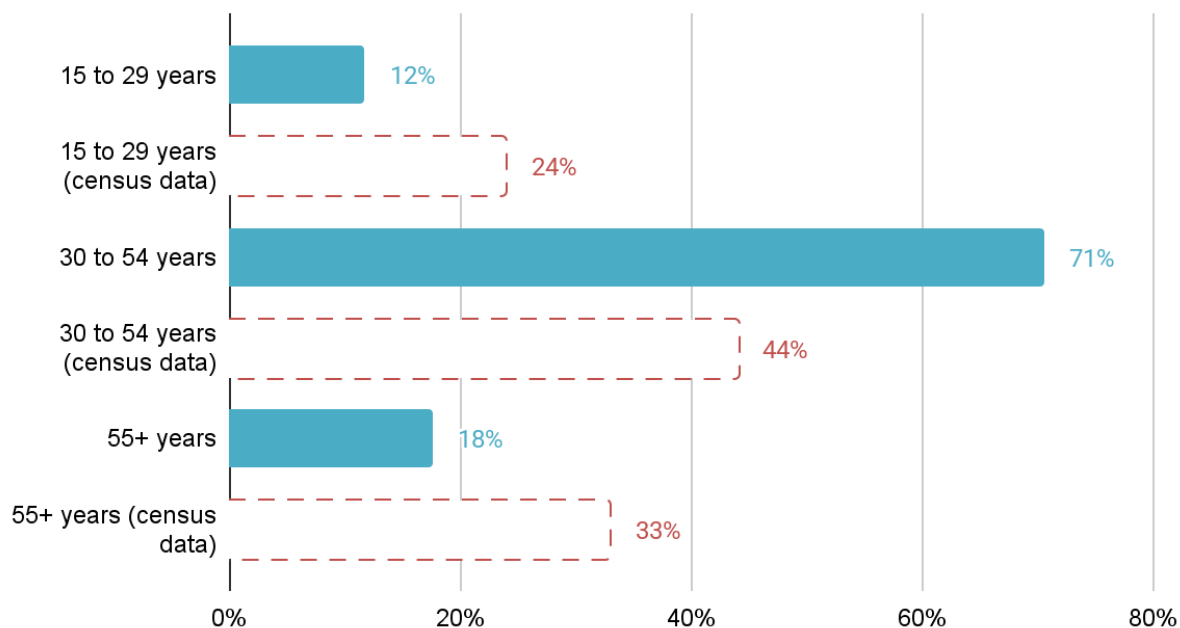


Figure 1.5 - Age Groups provides details on participants' age groups, demonstrating that 71% of the attendees were 30-54 years, and 55+ is the next highest age group representation. The Canadian census data categories are slightly different than those operationalized in this report. Statistics Canada includes the category of 0-14 years old; however, participation in our events is restricted to those 15 years old and up. The percentages from census data have been calculated to exclude the 0-14 years old population.

Figure 1.6 - Gender Categories

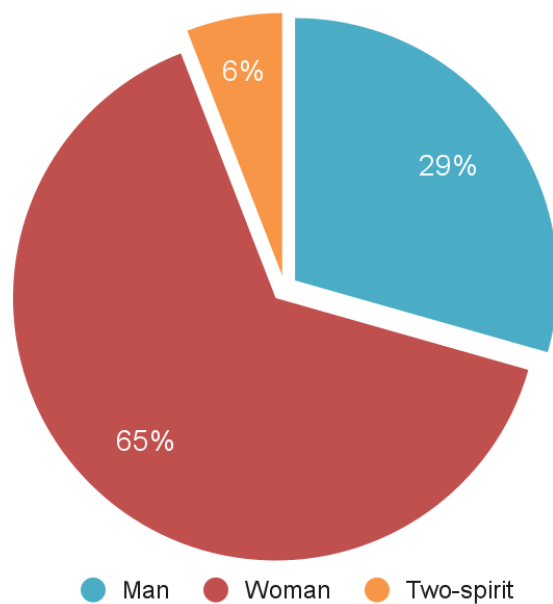


Figure 1.6 shows that women were highly represented, making up 65% of attendees.

Figure 1.7 - Language Spoken At Home (Attendees and Census D...

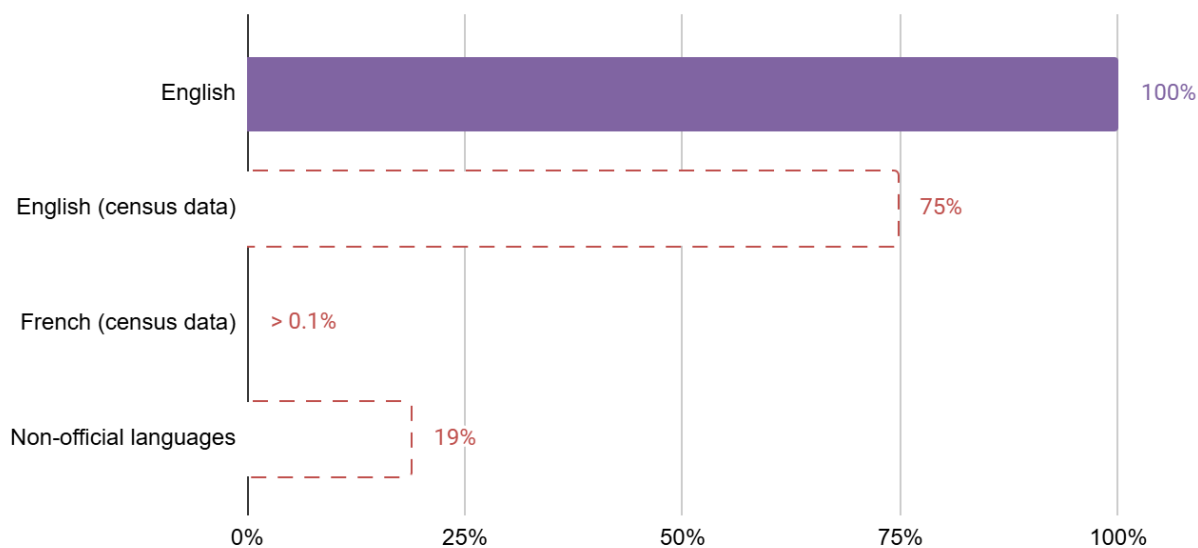
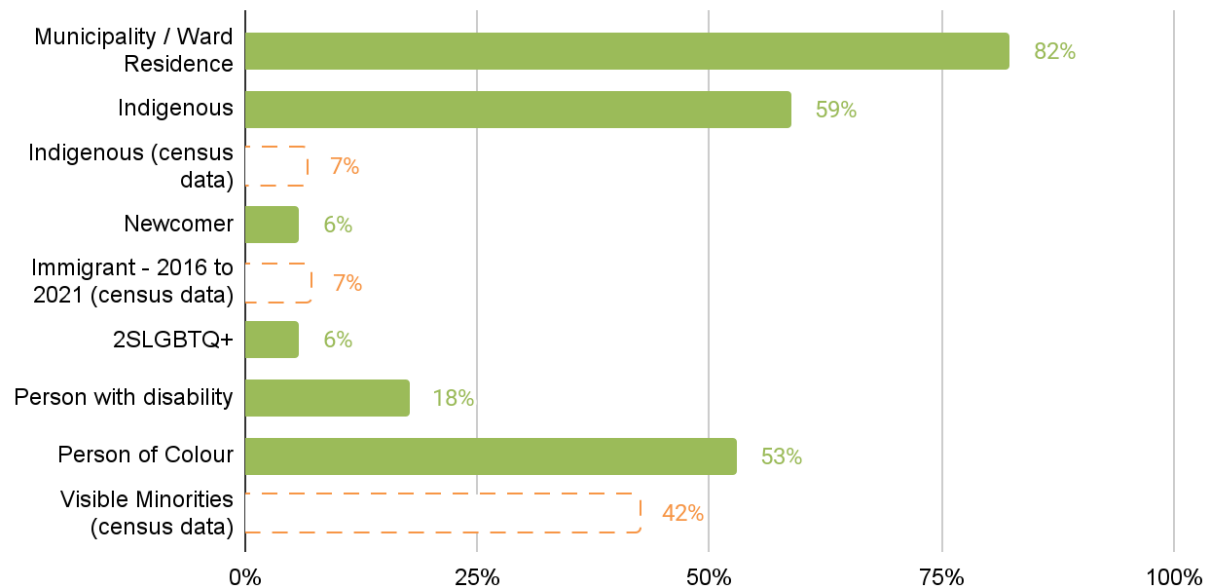


Figure 1.7 shows that all attendees speak English at home and none speak French. No attendees indicated that they speak another official language. Compared to the census profile, English speakers were overrepresented at this event. Note that “English”, “French”,

and “Prefer Not To Say” are provided as default answer options in the registration forms, while the third option “Other” prompts participants to enter an unlisted language. Although participants were able to choose more than one entry, the provided options might have affected the representation of non-official languages.

Figure 1.8 - Identification Categories (Attendees and Census Data)



As detailed in *Figure 1.8* above, 82% of attendees are residents of Dene Ward. Over 59% of attendees identify themselves as Indigenous, while 6% identify as newcomers and 53% identify as person of colour. Compared to the demographics percentages from census data, the representation of Indigenous attendees is high, while the representation of immigrants who arrived between 2016 to 2021 (compared to the “Newcomer” category”) is appropriate. Persons of colour, compared in the chart to the category of “Visible Minority” in the census profile, is a slightly higher representation of the demographics percentage.

Figure 1.9a - Income Levels

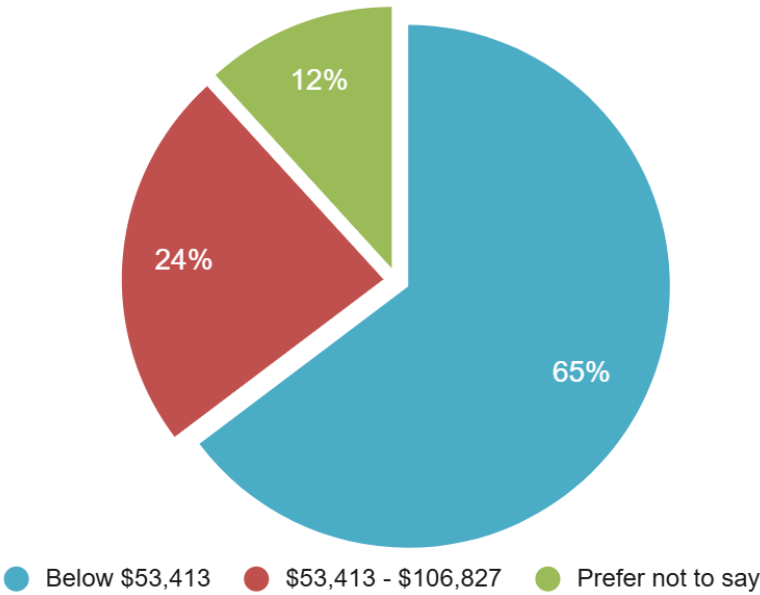


Figure 1.9b - Income Levels (Census Data)

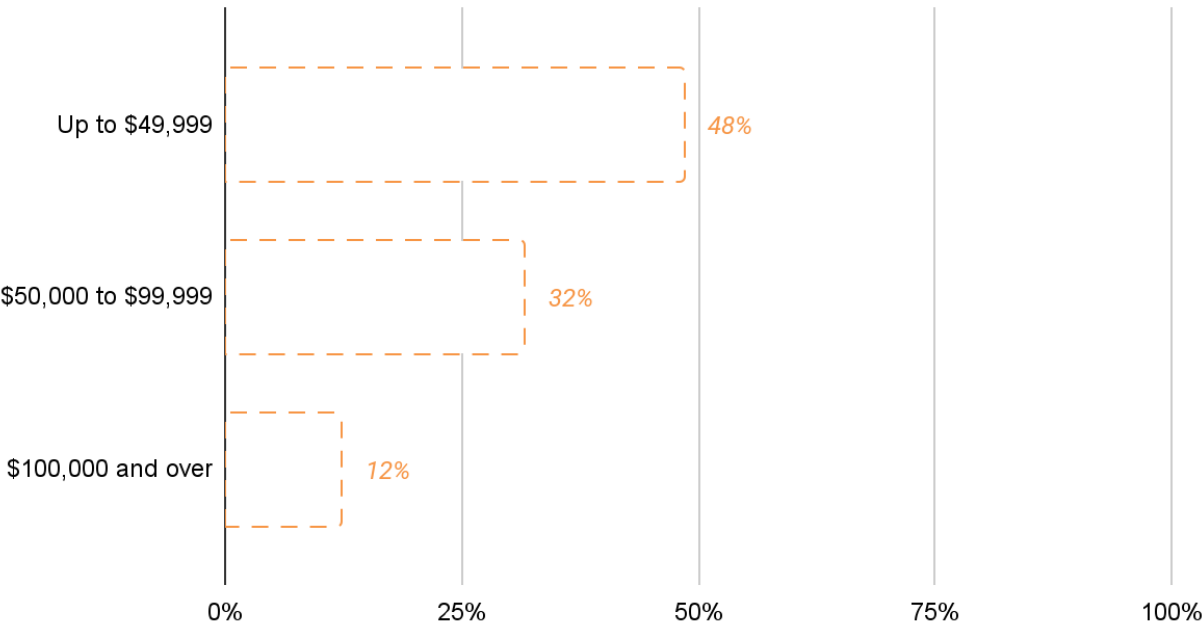


Figure 1.9a shows that over 65% of attendees are low-income, defined in the form as earning below \$53,413. Figure 1.9b provides the income levels of the Edmonton population before tax.

Figure 1.10a - Job Sector Categories

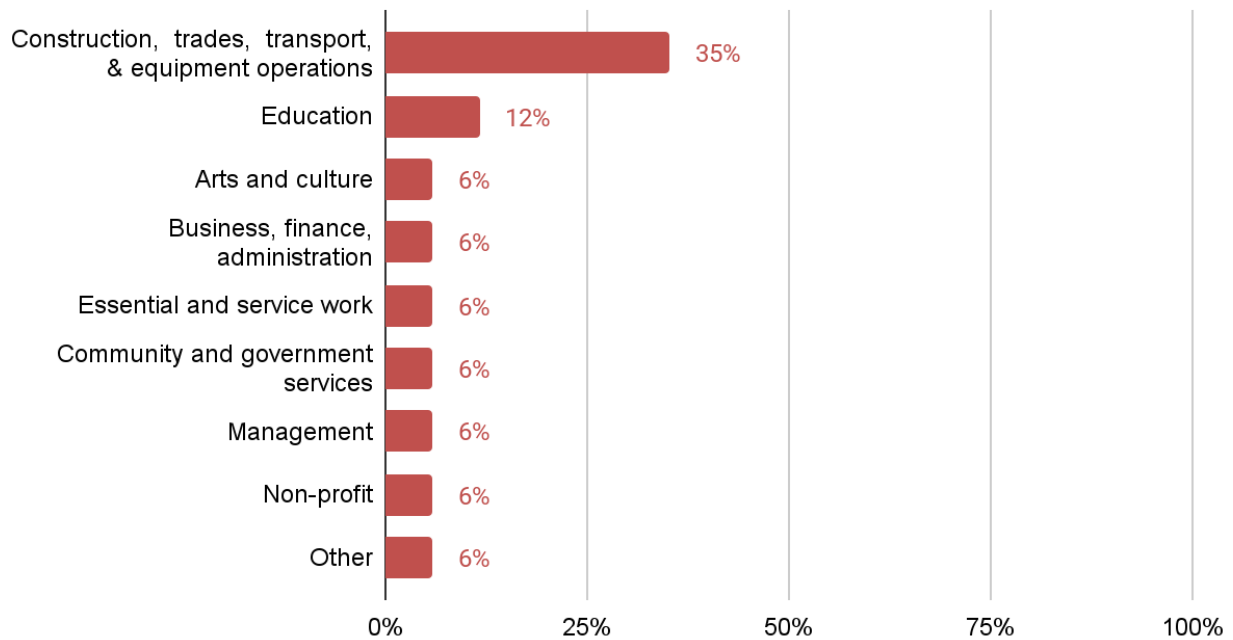


Figure 1.10b - Job Sector Categories (Census Data)

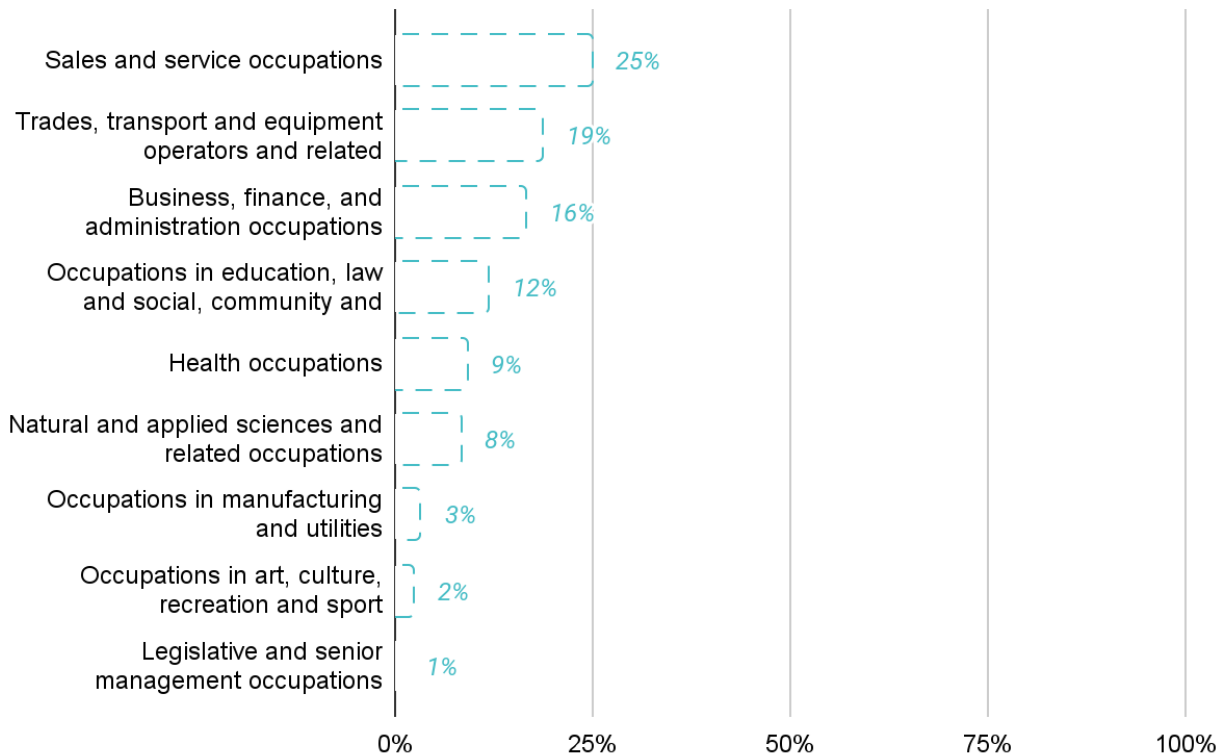


Figure 1.10a shows the breakdown of attendees' jobs. For this question, some attendees chose one or more industries. 35% are working or had worked in construction, trades, transport, and equipment operations; followed by 12% in education. For comparison, Figure 1.10b shows that a quarter of the demographics in Edmonton are in sales and service; followed by trades, transport, and equipment operations at 19%, and business, finance, and administration at 16%.

The Community Conversation

Community Talks events are designed to create an inclusive and collaborative space where community members can engage in meaningful discussions about local issues. To ensure a welcoming environment, we are mindful of language choices, guiding facilitators to avoid introducing polarizing terms. For instance, instead of using "climate change," facilitators reference "extreme weather events." Facilitators are also trained to keep discussions focused on community issues by steering conversations away from specific political figures or parties. This approach allows participants to lead the conversation organically and introduce these terms in their own way. For more details on the language used during this session, please refer to our event script (see Appendix A).

The event took place at the Clareview Community Recreation Centre, Multi-Purpose Room 4 in Ward Dene on May 3rd, 2025, with a turnout of 18 participants. The session began later than anticipated due to a rally promoting Alberta separatism, which took place at the Alberta legislature.¹⁴ This rally likely impacted participation as several individuals indicated that they attended the rally as part of the counter-protests immediately prior to attending the event, and indicated that family members joining would be arriving late.

Participants were assigned to three breakout tables, each led by a trained facilitator. Event staff were trained to assign 4 to 6 participants per table, ensuring balanced conversations where each participant has an opportunity to speak. To ensure accurate transcription, facilitators used recording equipment rather than relying solely on written notes. To respect each participant's consent and data preservation preferences, all names were anonymized and assigned numbers. Notepads were provided to participants who preferred expressing their thoughts in written or graphic form.

¹⁴ Millions, Bianca. "Edmonton Rally for Alberta Independence Met with Opposition from Indigenous Community." CityNews Edmonton, May 4, 2025.
<https://edmonton.citynews.ca/2025/05/03/edmonton-rally-for-alberta-independence/>.

2. What We Heard

Introduction

The third Dene/Sherwood Park community conversation built upon themes identified in the first two events. During the first conversation, participants discussed the rise in the cost of living, the impacts of inhabiting and working close to energy production sites, and enthusiasm for energy transition. During the second conversation, participants discussed their desired supports in navigating the cost of living crisis and attaining job security. They continued to express skepticism towards energy companies, requesting an accountable and transparent energy industry. In response to those discussions, we posed the following questions to participants:

1. What kind of support or programs have helped you in the past, and which ones have failed you?
2. What would make you trust that a job training or hiring initiative was actually going to help you or your family?
3. If you were in charge of a local energy project, how would you make sure it benefited the community long-term?

In response to these prompts, participants offered the following insights:

- They shared overwhelmingly **negative experiences** accessing support services
- They offered a range of requirements for a **community-designed jobs program**
- They shared their visions of what **community energy projects** could look like in their neighborhoods, expressing interest in solutions that could unite the community and provide long-term benefits to locals

Negative Experiences Accessing Supports

When asked about which social supports had been most beneficial to them, participants shared overwhelmingly negative experiences accessing social programs, across employment services, environmental initiatives, and healthcare.

The root of these negative experiences was varied. One participant shared frustration about the bureaucracy of training programs they had tried to access, having been excluded due to stringent timing requirements that conflicted with their school schedule, saying “unless you timed [everything] perfectly, you couldn’t apply for it.” A participant employed in the nonprofit sector, responsible for delivering support to low-income families in Edmonton, identified lack of funding as a core reason for sub-par support options:

Funding is always an issue, especially after the COVID pandemic and [with] the high cost of living...the resources are very limited...we feel so bad...these are the challenges we face, everybody, including [on the] individual level, family level, [and] community level organizations, and then the government as well — the government has so many mouths to feed right now and their resources are very limited.

A few participants shared a sense of disillusionment with the capacity of social support programs to address the issues facing their community, advocating for broader systems change instead of better support programs. One person shared a need for a "complete economic rehaul," while another stated, "We have a broken system here. Let's fix it and let's stop putting band-aids on that underlying issue, and start going from there." The following quote elaborates on this notion:

I'm an advocate too, [but] all the supports and programs, honestly, they're a band-aid to the actual solution. If we don't deal with the actual realities and get to the root of the problem, then making programs and support programs, we're only putting a band-aid on it....are we really helping the people or not?

When discussing programs related to sustainability, people felt as though there were no existing programs aimed at supporting people in transitioning towards alternatives to oil and gas as consumers and workers — or if there were, they were not being communicated about effectively. "Honestly, it doesn't seem like there's any kind of programming that educates the public to lean towards the greener alternatives. I've never heard of anything. All I know of is [the] carbon tax," shared one participant. Another person agreed: "Nobody knows that there's alternatives...they feel like they have no other choice but oil and gas, because there's nothing shared with anybody." One participant shared frustration about how these existing options have been communicated, saying: "The thing is, all these programs have come out, [but] not all the people are aware of them."

Community-Designed Job Program

In the previous session, participants spoke at length about their challenges finding stable employment during difficult economic conditions. In response, we asked them to describe the kind of hiring initiative they would like to see in their community.

A track record of job placements was crucial to participants. "The jobs are not available right now," said one participant. Another person agreed, elaborating on their challenges in finding stable employment: "A few years ago when I was a student, that whole student reimbursement thing for jobs helped me a lot trying to get work experience, but now I'm

competing against all the students who are getting their wages subsidized a lot.” In response, clear evidence that a training program had placed trainees in positions was non-negotiable, as captured in the following quote: “[They need to] have a history of helping other people, not just saying they’re going to help people. It would be nice to have somebody that actually has a history.”

It was important to participants that training programs and employers treat their employees as **human beings, not just as generic workers**. Participants emphasized that organizations are made up of people: “People are resources too, they have a bunch of knowledge. When I sit down with somebody... I want to get to know what they’re doing, how they’re living their life, and their story, why they’re at this job.” The following quote captures the importance of connecting with workers on a human level:

People excel where they’re comfortable, where they feel like their purpose is given, even within a company... [help] them feel like they find their purpose, some kind of purpose or passions, things that they’re interested in. Because who wants to go to work and be unhappy, like, you’re forced to go there?

Mentorship opportunities were important to community members, especially women working in the sciences. When asked about positive experiences they had with employment programs, two participants identified mentorship programs as crucial to them: “They were really great in helping women, you know, learn more about the options out there that maybe we don’t normally go in.” While one participant stated that their experience with one-on-one mentoring “didn’t help [their] career much,” they still identified it as a positive experience.

Given the high cost of living, participants also identified **wage transparency** as an important factor when considering employment programs and prospective employers: “Something that could be changed is having to post actual pay grades. Like, no one actually does and that’s something you can actually change with laws and legislation. You must post your actual pay grades.”

Indigenous participants spoke at length about their experiences with **racism and exploitation**. As one person shared: “It should be definitely mandatory for anybody that does work with the First Original People of this land to have training, knowledge, understanding, because there’s a lot of stereotyping and racism going on.” Community members were clear that employers looking to hire Indigenous employees or trainees cannot tokenize them, sharing frustration with persistent feeling that their participation in programs

was a way for organizations to access Indigenous specific grants and loans. The following quote elaborates on this experience:

Token Indian — that's what I felt like at the end [of the training program]...The company I worked for, it was a good program, everything was all good. But after a while, I just started seeing that [Indigenous people] are only here for you to get your grants and your loans and everything. You don't care about us... we see it in plain sight...we were the people [the employer] needed for his grants, so that was frustrating. In the end when I saw it all, I was pissed off, I just kind of walked away.

Visions of Community Energy

In the previous sessions, participants expressed negativity about their existing energy options, sharing a desire for more options that are affordable, safe, and reduce environmental impact. In response, we asked participants to describe their ideal local energy project.

Particularly in light of the separatist protests happening at the Alberta legislature on the day of this event, people wanted the **community to feel united** in accessing affordable, reliable energy that financially benefits the community. As one person said, “people should be working together and not fighting, because there's a common goal. We're all in this boat together, we're all struggling. The high, rising costs of housing, of gas, of food, of everything, we're all going through the same thing.” Another person reiterated that a shift towards different energy options was a no-brainer, if it was clear the shift would benefit their community: “If it's benefiting our community, our land, and stuff like that, why would I want to lean towards gas and oil, right?”

Investment in community energy projects must be predicated on **bringing financial benefit to locals**, by lowering the cost of utilities for consumers and generating returns for the community. “Electricity and those things [are] so expensive. It would help,” shared one person. One Indigenous participant emphasized the importance of financial payouts to the community: “At the end of the day, I'm not trying to be rude here, but it is our land and they're draining it, right? [We need] royalties.” Participants consistently returned to the notion that affordability trumps all other issues: “People are low income...they want to support the environment, right? But you're just trying to make ends meet, like paying your bills. You're not thinking about that stuff.”

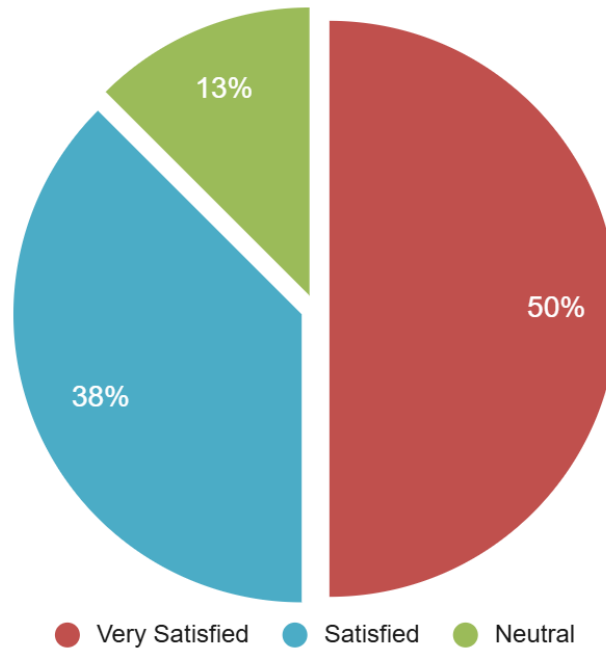
As in previous sessions, participants reiterated the importance of **transparency** for any energy projects operating in their community. Consistent communication between the

company, workers, and community was crucial to community members: “Depending on the type of work for people that are interested in, [we need] a day to come and observe what’s really going on within what kind of work is going on.” Another person reiterated the importance of transparency in local operations in preventing resistance from forming: “A lot of people are visual people and if they don’t see something happening, they’re not going to understand it and they’re going to be against it.”

Community members discussed the importance of **local hiring** and prioritization of the local economy: “Keep the money in the community, rather than hire people across the country for them to come here, make all that money, and go back home.” Others agreed: “There are plenty of experienced people in this community. It wouldn’t be a problem. I think you could find people in Edmonton and Sherwood Park who know a thing or two about energy.” Participants were also passionate about utilizing Canadian materials and manufacturing, rather than outsourcing materials from abroad.

3. What We Learned

Figure 3.1 - Level of Satisfaction



We shared a Google feedback form at the end of our session, which was completed by all participants. As shown in *Figure 3.1 - Level of Satisfaction*, half of the participants rated their level of satisfaction as “Very Satisfied” (50%), followed by “Satisfied” (38%), and “Neutral” (13%).

Figure 3.2 - Feedback Form Results

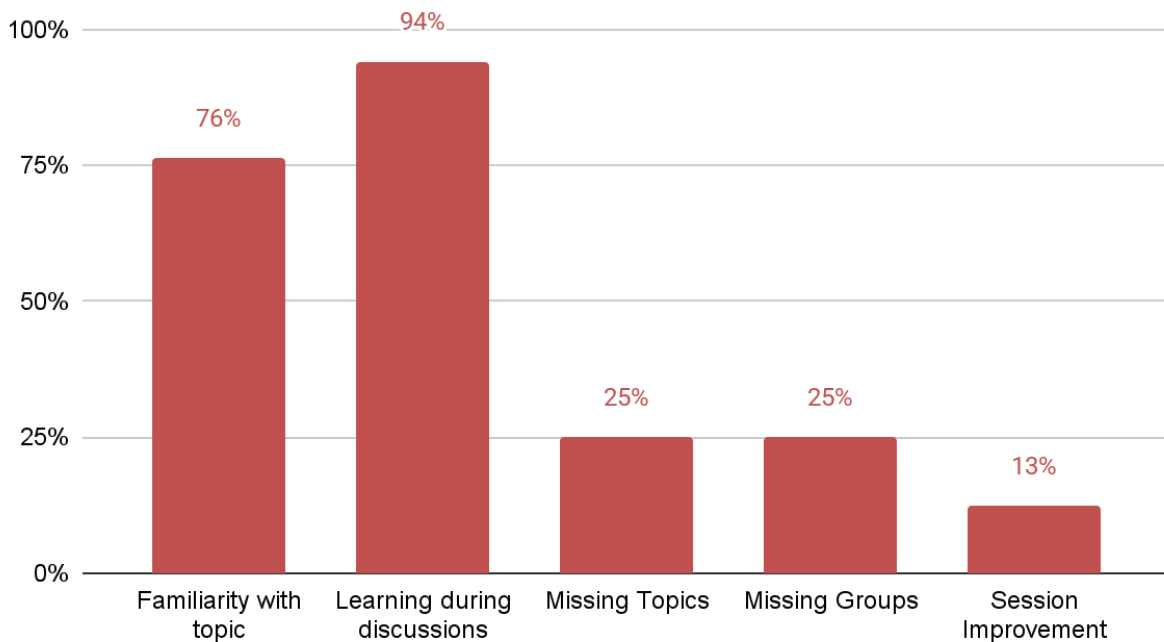


Figure 3.2 - Feedback Form Results provides a summary of the rest of the questions: familiarity with discussion topics, learning experience during the discussions, missing discussion topics that participants would have liked to explore more, and suggestions for future sessions improvement.

76% of participants were familiar with the topics prior to the discussion, and 94% participants learned something new about the conversation topics during the session. 25% of respondents identified missing topics in the conversation, such as mental health issues, resources on green energy, advice on handling conversations on the topic of climate change with climate change skeptics, and low carbon transitions. 25% also felt that there were some groups, communities, and individuals missing from the discussion, such as energy companies, and supporters of land and water protection. One participant would have liked to hear from people who were actively utilizing training initiatives, in relation to question 2 of the session. Feedback on the discussion includes more interactivity (such as games and quizzes) and a request for more time.

Conclusion

The results of the third and final community conversation in Ward Dene and Sherwood Park indicate that participants have a clear vision of the kind of support they seek from decision-makers and employers regarding job security and energy transition. Participants reported negative experiences with support services in the past, across sectors including employment, sustainability, and health.

When asked to describe their ideal job training initiative, they shared a range of ideas, prioritizing a proven track record of placing trainees in paid positions, a shift from generic training to a personalized, human-focused model, mentorship opportunities, wage transparency, and education on colonialism.

In discussions about potential local energy projects, participants expressed interest in solutions that could unite residents and deliver long-term community benefits. These included lowering energy bills, generating royalties, maintaining transparent communication about project updates, and prioritizing local hiring and manufacturing.

Overall satisfaction with the event was high: 88% of the 15 attendees reported being either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with their experience, and 94% indicated they learned something new from the discussion.

4. Next Steps

This event concludes Iron & Earth’s first round of engagement in Ward Dene and Sherwood Park. In the coming months, these findings will be verified through a series of dotmocracy-style engagement events to ensure that the themes collected resonate with the broader public. At the same time, our team will begin a local advocacy campaign, sharing our findings with decision makers and stakeholders to ensure that community priorities are heard by those in positions of influence.

If you would like to learn more about the program’s progress and the work that continues beyond the sessions, please contact us at communities@ironandearth.org.

Appendix A

The following appendix contains the script that was used as a general guide by the facilitators for the Community Conversation conducted by Iron & Earth.

Script for Facilitating an Iron and Earth Session - Third Dene Session

CONVERSATION TIME BREAKDOWN:

1. Session Introduction: 20 minutes
2. Breakout Group Setup: 5 minutes
3. Breakout Conversations: 60 minutes
4. Break: 10 minutes
5. Reporting Back: 5 minutes
6. Session Conclusion: 20 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 120 minutes

DOORS CLOSE TIME: 2:15:pm/when max capacity is reached; 40 people

START TIME: 2:00 pm

END TIME: 4:00 pm

SETUP START TIME: 1:00 PM

SETUP PERSON:

- Set up presentation slides on projector
- Registration: Checking registered names and hand out registration forms if they haven't filled them, for those unregistered. Ensure all participants sign the provided letter of consent.

SESSION INTRODUCTION: 20 Minutes

Session Overview Introduction:

Greetings everyone and welcome to the third Community Conversation hosted by Iron & Earth in Dene ward in Edmonton. This series of discussions is taking place here with a focus on livelihoods, climate change, and opportunities and developments related to achieving a net-zero economy.

[primary facilitator introduce themselves]

- *name*
- *pronouns (if desired)*
- *association with Iron & Earth*
- *Why are you facilitating today? / provide goals for session*

We would like to acknowledge the Indigenous land where we are today within Treaty Six Territory and Métis North Saskatchewan River Territory in amiskwaciy-wâskahikan, so-called Edmonton. The home of many Indigenous Peoples including the Cree, Tsuut'ina, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Haudenosaunee, Dene Suliné, Anishinaabe, and the Inuit.

We are grateful to have David Suzuki Foundation as our local partner. Funding for this event is generously provided by Alberta Ecotrust Foundation.

This is Iron & Earth's third session with the Dene and Sherwood Park communities with the goal of building relationships that go beyond a simple consultation process. We aim to meet communities where they are at, to understand their ideas on extreme weather events, the transition, potential solutions, and their level of preparedness on each of these issues. We shared with you a 1-page highlights from our previous communities so that you have an idea of what to expect from the session. We recognize that each community is different.

After our conversation, we'll create a brief report to serve as a resource for understanding the needs and desires of community residents. We'll share it with you, our outreach network, key stakeholders, decision-makers, and publish it on our website.

For the rest of this session, we'll talk about your community and its current challenges. Your breakout group will address three questions about the community, its challenges, and your vision for the future. There is also pen and paper if you prefer to share your ideas in a written or graphic form.

Each group will have a facilitator. You'll be in those breakout groups for about 60 minutes, with each question taking up to 20 minutes.

Finally, we'll come back together for a quick wrap-up and aim to be done by 4:00PM

If you haven't filled out our registration or consent forms please fill it and give it to one of our facilitators.

IMPORTANT: This is a space that welcomes diversity of opinions, we ask that these conversations are approached with mutual respect and care. We endeavor to have a meaningful conversation with the participants who have diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experience.

Privacy Policy:

We shared a letter of consent for you to sign. In it we explained the participation, reimbursement and confidentiality processes. From it:

We would like to highlight that we will be recording today's conversation, but the transcripts and documents collected will only be shared between Iron & Earth staff. After this process ends, the notes will stay with Iron & Earth. These notes will be used to produce our reports. However, your participation will remain anonymous.

We do want to include some quotes in the community and final reports, but they will have no name attached to them.

We also want to make sure that you know that you are free to leave at any point during this session. We truly appreciate your time and respect your privacy.

Lastly, we ask that you please do not record, or photograph the conversation.

Facilitator Introductions:

We have 3 other local facilitators with us today.

[Secondary Facilitators please introduce yourselves]

- Name
- Pronouns (if desired)
- Association with Iron & Earth
- Why are you facilitating today? / provide goals for session

Conversation Introduction:

What is this conversation about?

- Livelihoods: Our livelihood is our means of meeting our basic needs, such as food and shelter

- Climate Change: Human driven extreme weather events and increasing global temperatures, are having significant impacts and posing major challenges for communities
- Energy Transition Opportunities: The shift from an energy mix based on fossil fuels to one based on renewable energy sources.

What's going on in Dene?

- The City of Edmonton has been experiencing a variety of concerning weather events including heat waves, cold snaps and extreme precipitation events.
- This area is undergoing a period of rapid development of agricultural lands, with lots of new projects and businesses seeking out the community as a place to invest and build
- In 2025, both Edmonton and Strathcona County will have municipal elections, making this an important time to gather community priorities.
- Refinery Row — the unofficial name granted to a group of oil refineries and businesses servicing the energy sector — is located east of Ward Dene in West Sherwood Park. This close proximity to energy production is one important reason why we're having this conversation here.

BREAKOUT CONVERSATIONS: 60 Minutes

[Facilitators remember to turn on recorder in the breakout group]

[Ensure to fill in the speaker tracking sheet and name list for the table]

1. Question 1 20 Minutes

What kind of supports or programs have helped you in the past, and which ones have failed you?

2. Question 2 - 20 Minutes

What would make you trust that a job training or hiring initiative was actually going to help you or your family?

3. Question 3 - 20 Minutes

If you were in charge of a local energy project, how would you make sure it benefited the community long-term?

BREAK: 10 MINUTES

Reporting back to the room: 5 minutes

CONCLUSION: 20 MINUTES

Desired outcomes and impacts of this project

We conduct three sessions within each community. This is the third for Dene Ward and Sherwood Park; and this will be the final session in this area. We'll create a report for each session, and these reports will summarize the needs and desires of Dene Ward and Sherwood Park residents. We'll share these reports with our outreach network and key stakeholders and decision-makers, as well as publish them on our website for public access. We will be conducting our next three sessions in the Karhiio community starting in Spring 2025.

If you're interested in learning more about the program's progress and post-session work, please reach out to communities@ironandearth.org and one of our team members will be happy to provide an update.

Please share your feedback on this conversation. Let us know if there's anything important we missed, anything you learned, or anything else you want to tell us!

[Share feedback forms and give time to fill them out]

On behalf of Iron & Earth, I'd like to thank you again for joining us. Have a wonderful rest of your day!

[SESSION END]

[Collect remaining registration and consent forms and Audio Recording Devices]