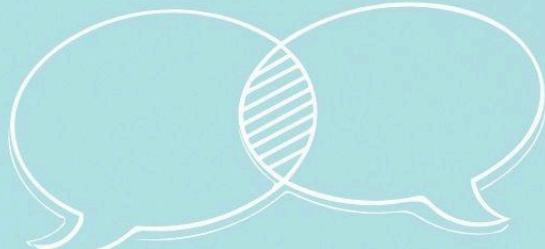


COMMUNITY TALKS
EDMONTON
REPORT

Report No. 1 of 3

November 23, 2024

Dene



**IRON +
EARTH**



Community Talks - Edmonton, Alberta

Full Report on Session One: November 23rd, 2024

Summary

This report summarizes the first community conversation hosted in Ward Dene (Northeast Edmonton) and Sherwood Park, Alberta by Iron & Earth, in partnership with David Suzuki Foundation. This event series is funded by generous support from Alberta EcoTrust Foundation and Natural Resources Canada. We focused on gathering insight into the key challenges and desires of community members to form the basis of our next two events.

Through the discussion three common themes emerged as most important to community members. First, attendees spoke about the rising cost of living (particularly with regards to energy costs) and a desire for job security, shaped by many participants' experience working in the energy industry, or supporting family members employed in this sector. Second, participants discussed the negative environmental and health impacts they've experienced while living and working in close proximity to energy production sites. Third, people were candid in sharing their overwhelmingly negative feelings about energy production in all forms, including oil and gas *and* renewable energy. However, they shared predominantly positive feelings towards the idea of an energy transition, expressing a desire for more energy options that are affordable, safe, and reduce environmental impact.



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 the city 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

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>



Sherwood Park is a hamlet within the municipality of Strathcona County, which borders the eastern edge of Edmonton.⁴ It's home to more than 70,000 residents, making it the largest hamlet in the world, and was initially developed in the early 1950s as a one-hundred home community for workers employed in the energy plants located east of Edmonton.⁵⁶ Ward Dene and Sherwood Park were jointly selected for community engagement due to their close proximity to energy production: these communities hold "Canada's largest hydrocarbon processing centre."⁷ 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.⁸ The refineries process hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil per day, employing thousands of local residents.⁹ Given their closeness to Edmonton's industrial sector, residents of Ward Dene and Sherwood Park have a unique and urgent perspective to offer on the topics of climate change and energy transition.

⁴ Strathcona County. May 11, 2022. "Sherwood Park."

<https://www.strathcona.ca/council-county/facts-stats-and-forecasts/communities/sherwood-park/>

⁵ 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/>

⁶ Strathcona County, 2022.

⁷ 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>

⁸ Explore Strathcona County. n.d. "The Industrial Heartland."

<https://explorestrathconacounty.com/ourplaces/the-industrial-heartland/>

⁹ ibid.



About the conversation participants

For the first event in Ward Dene/Sherwood Park, 25 people registered and 16 (64%) attended the session. The following analysis is based on the registration forms of people who attended the session. Some demographics charts include 2021 Census Profile data¹⁰ of the Edmonton population from Statistics Canada, to provide a comparison of the attendees' representation to the community demographics.

Figure 1.1 - Outreach Result

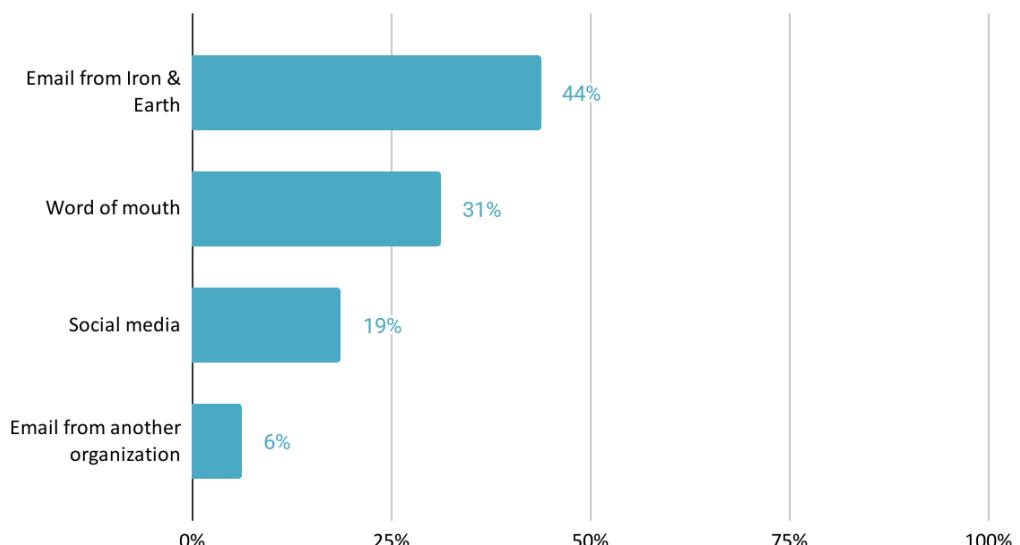


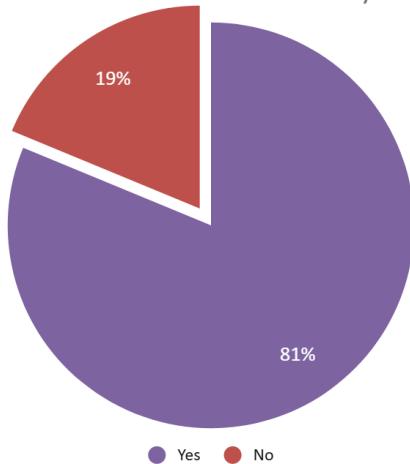
Figure 1.1 demonstrates the various methods of how participants were informed about the community conversation. The top two most successful outreach methods were direct emails from I&E, followed by word of mouth.

¹⁰ 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/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 13, 2025).



Figure 1.2 - First Time Attendance at Community Pathways Event



As indicated in *Figure 1.2*, most participants had not previously attended a Community Pathways Event prior to this session, with only 19% of participants indicating that they were returning participants.

Figure 1.3 - Honorarium & Reimbursements Summary

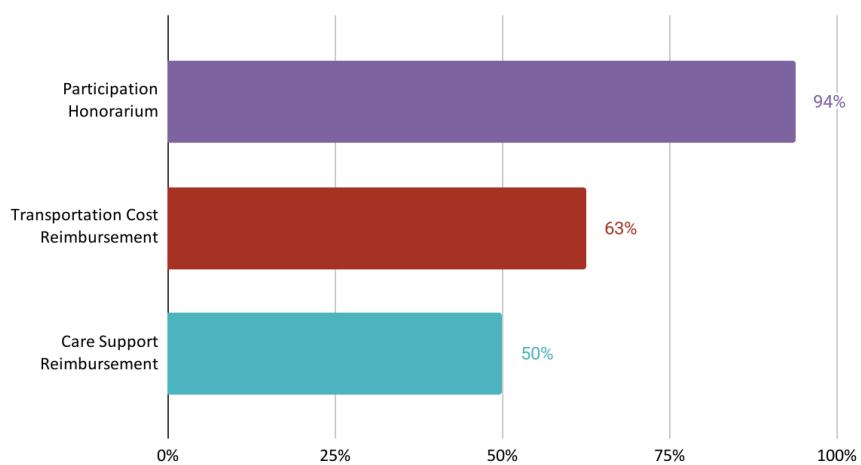


Figure 1.3 shows that nearly all attendees chose to receive an honorarium for their participation. About half of the attendees opted for reimbursements for transportation costs and care support. The accommodations, provided as monetary deposits, were available to all participants.



Figure 1.4 - Age Groups

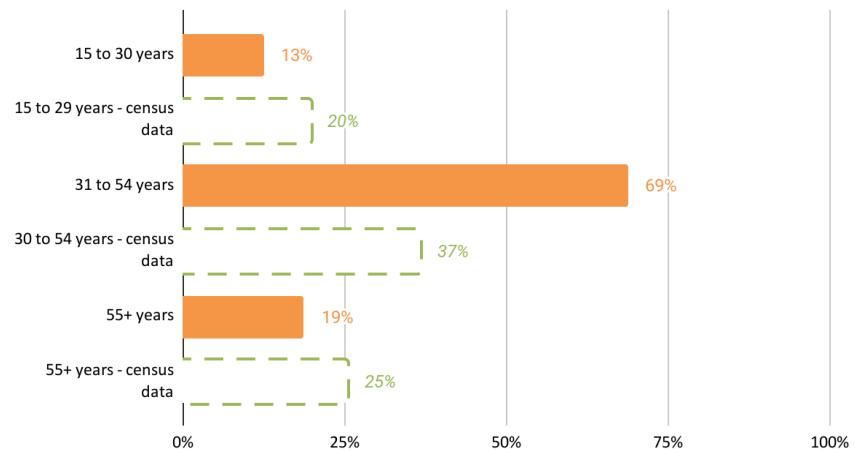


Figure 1.4 provides details on participants' age groups, demonstrating that the most common age group in attendance was 31-54 years. This group was overrepresented at our event, with nearly twice the demographic population percentage, while the 15-29 and 55+ age group representations are slightly underrepresented. 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.

Figure 1.5 - Gender Groups

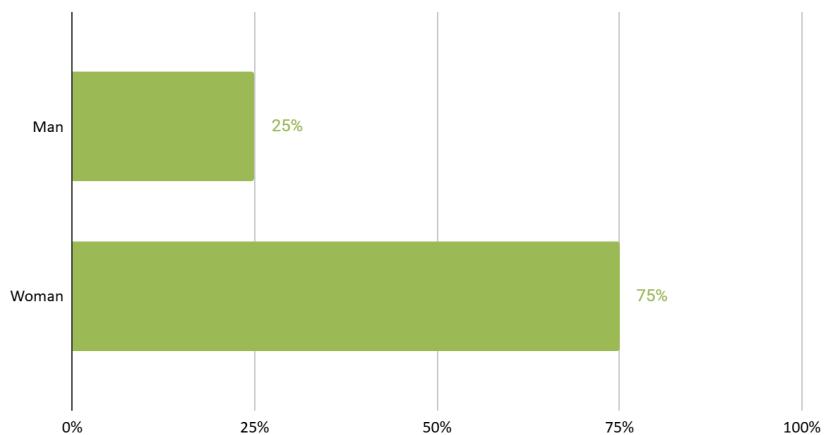


Figure 1.5. Shows that women represented 75% of attendees at the first Ward Dene/Sherwood Park community conversation.



Figure 1.6 - Spoken Language At Home

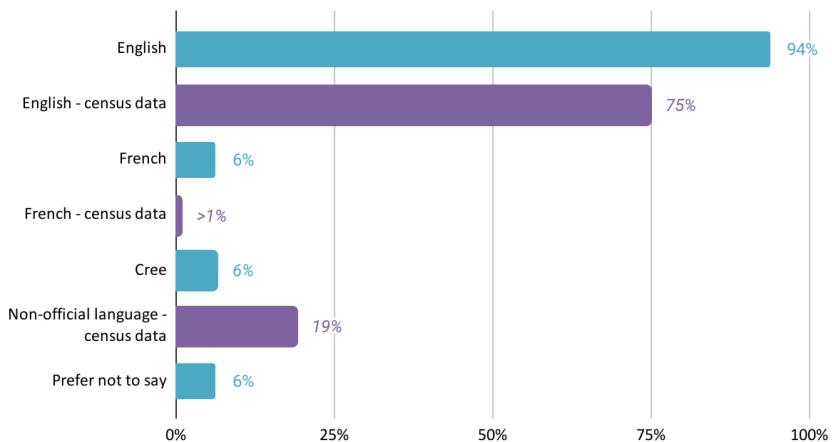
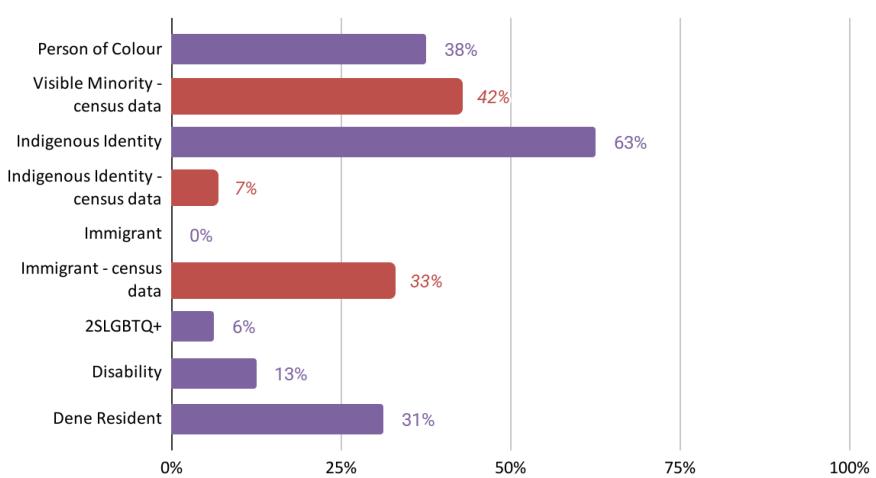


Figure 1.6 shows that over 90% of attendees speak English at home, while 6% speak French. Compared to the census profile, both English and French speakers were slightly overrepresented at this event. The only non-official language represented in the event is Cree. Note that "English", "French", and "Prefer 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 1.7 - Identification Categories



As detailed in Figure 1.7 above, over 60% of attendees identify themselves as Indigenous, while 38% identify as person of colour, and 31% as resident of Ward Dene. Compared to the



demographics percentages from census data, the representation of Indigenous attendees is high, while immigrant representation is lacking. Persons of colour, compared in the chart to the category of “Visible Minority” in the census profile, is representative of the demographics percentage.

Figure 1.8a - Income Levels - Attendees

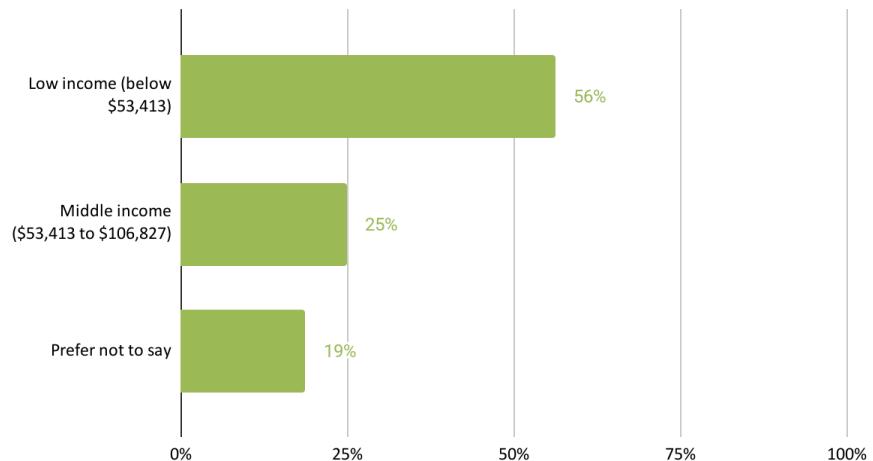


Figure 1.8b - Income Levels - Census (Before Tax)

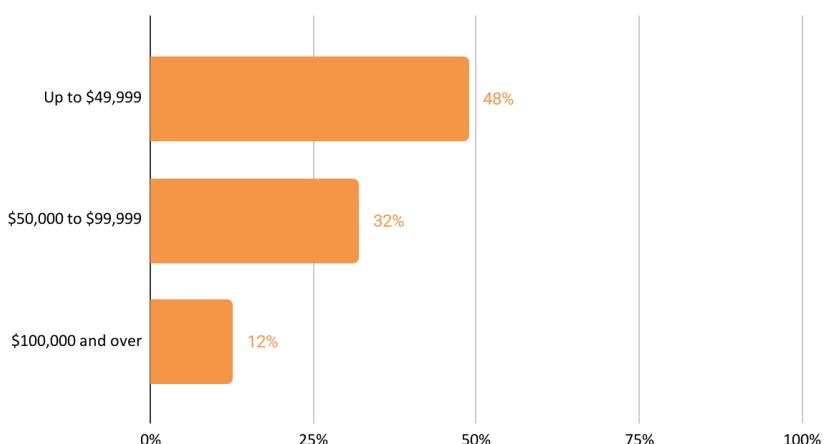


Figure 1.8a shows that over 50% of attendees are low-income. Defined in the form as earning below \$53,413. Figure 1.8b provides the income levels of the Edmonton population before tax, showing that our event was representative of community income levels in Edmonton.



Figure 1.9a - Job Sectors - Attendees

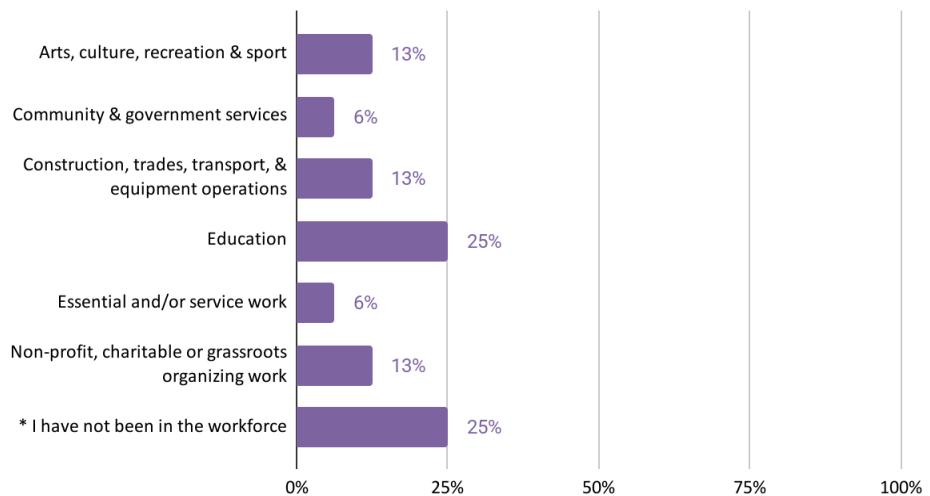


Figure 1.9b - Job Sectors - Census Profile

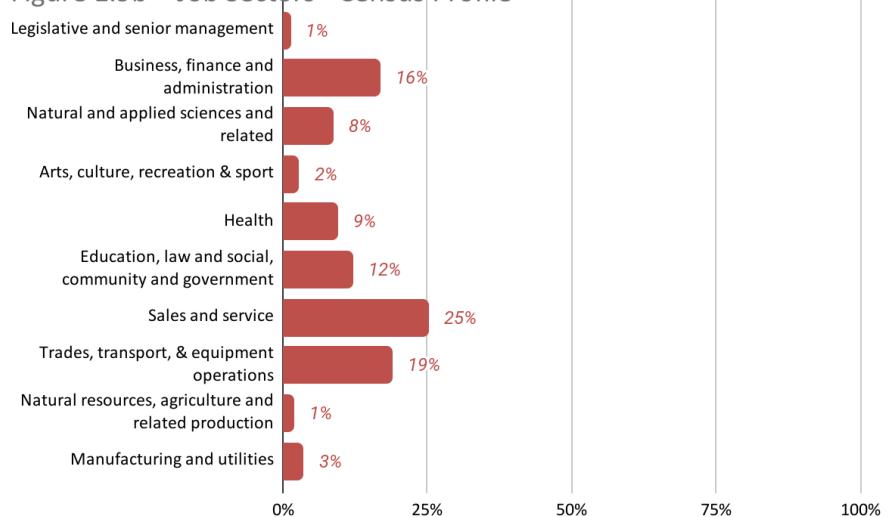


Figure 1.9a Provides detailed information on participants' job sectors: 25% were in education, another 25% had not been in the workforce. Figure 1.9b shows Edmonton demographics' job sector breakdown using the National Occupational Classification (NOC). The largest sector is sales and service, while 12% work in education, law, social, community, and government services.



The Community Conversation

The goal of these conversations is to create a collaborative, inviting environment for community members to discuss local issues with their neighbours. To achieve this goal, we pay close attention to language, ensuring that facilitators avoid potentially polarizing words and phrases when discussing topics that could elicit an emotional reaction from participants. For example, instead of using the term “climate change” we instructed facilitators to discuss “concerning weather events.” Additionally, rather than introducing the term “energy transition,” we discussed “changes in the local economy.” This approach allows participants to self-guide the conversation and introduce these terms organically. Facilitators were trained to guide the conversation away from discussing specific political figures or parties, to ensure the conversation was focused on local issues as much as possible. For more details on the language used in this session, please refer to our event script (see Appendix A).

This event took place at the Kingsway Legion in Ward Dene on November 23rd, 2024. Community turnout was impacted by weather, as Edmonton experienced significant snow accumulation (up to 35 centimeters) on the day of the event.¹¹ At the original scheduled start of the event, less than 5 participants had arrived. The session began approximately 20 minutes later than scheduled to allow opportunity for participants to join despite the weather conditions. Participants were provided complimentary food, and were offered reimbursements, childcare and transportation stipends to reduce as many barriers to attendance as possible.

The 16 participants were arranged between three breakout tables, with one trained facilitator at each table and a Community Engagement Officer who floated between the tables keeping track of time and ensuring tables remained on topic. Facilitators used recording equipment to capture the conversation and note pads were available for participants that preferred to express themselves in written or graphic form. Consent and data preservation preferences were collected and names were anonymized in the subsequent data analysis conducted. After the session formally ended, many participants remained behind to inquire about the next engagement session and requested additional information about Iron and Earth. The atmosphere in the room after the event was positive, with participants socializing and arranging carpooling to public transit afterwards.

¹¹ Robb Trevor. November 23, 2024. “Edmonton weather: Snowfall warning continues up to 35 cm in some parts.” *Edmonton Journal*. <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/edmonton-weather-snowfall-warning>



2. What We Heard

The first Dene/Sherwood Park community conversation focused on gathering broad perspectives from participants about the primary issues occupying them. Given the close proximity of this area to the energy industry, we intentionally included a discussion of energy production and the local economy.

The following questions guided the discussion:

1. What are the biggest challenges facing your community today?
2. How does energy production impact your daily life?
3. How do you see your community adapting to changes in the local economy, especially in terms of job opportunities and industries?

Three key themes emerged from this conversation. First, participants discussed the rising cost of living (particularly regarding energy costs), and a desire for job security. Second, community members spoke about the various environmental and health impacts they've experienced living and working in close proximity to energy production sites. Third, people shared a lot of negative feelings about energy production of all forms, however they shared a predominantly positive sentiment towards energy transition, expressing a desire for more energy options that are affordable, clean, and safe.

Affordability & Job Security

Throughout the discussion, people frequently reflected on how the rising cost of living has impacted their day-to-day lives and shaped their decision-making regarding consumption and career paths. As one person remarked: "I've lived in Edmonton and around here for almost 10 years, and the trajectory of employment rates and even just housing and being able to afford groceries...it's astronomical within like, the past five years." Participants repeatedly commented on what they perceived as a rise of homelessness in Ward Dene and Sherwood Park in recent years, connecting this to an increase in costs. For example, one participant discussed how quickly people can lose access to their basic needs if they lose income: "If you don't have your cash in [your] pocket, suddenly [the world] becomes hostile, and that's really unfair to people, I think, because of the ways in which we understand poverty. It can come onto somebody, it's not a choice."



Participants reflected on many aspects of affordability, including housing, with one person commenting, "How many people can actually afford [a house]?" Others discussed the challenge of affording education: "It's like this vicious cycle where you're trying to get ahead, and then all of a sudden, tuition increases." However, conversations about affordability most often centered on energy costs. Although one individual emphasized that "we're in the age of cheap energy...it's unprecedented in human history," other community members were adamant that the cost of energy was becoming unaffordable for them: "A lot of the...energy prices that we are paying, they seem to do [a] roller coaster up and down, up and down," shared one person. Another person described their "approach to dealing with [their] energy footprint" as: "how do I best deal with what my needs are [and] how are they balanced with my income?"

In addition to affordability, people shared their difficulties navigating the job market, with one person commenting that "you have your masters, and then...you can't find a job." Participants discussed a consistent draw towards working in the oil and gas industry to meet the rising cost of living. One person put it succinctly: "[Energy] puts food on my table." Another person reflected on how the fossil fuel industry is a reliable source of income for them as someone trying to plan their retirement while still providing for their families:

I need to work, so I always end up having to go back into the oil industry just because that's where the money is...I [also] have a solar panel background too, [but] it's hard to want to go to that, because the money is not as high...I'm getting older, I have a few more years before I retire, and I still need to make sure that I have a job, basically. So it's hard to figure out: where do I want to go to get the money [so] that I feel comfortable taking care of myself and my kids?

Another individual with a long history of working in energy reflected on how the boom and bust cycle of oil and gas has also created challenges for them regarding job security: "When work is slow, it makes it hard for people that depend on that work for a living...People struggle, have a hard time and lose houses, lose vehicles, lose everything." Overall, the pursuit of job security in an increasingly expensive world was repeatedly discussed as a reason why community members felt both drawn to and frustrated with working in the energy sector.



Impacts of Industry: Environment & Health

In addition to discussing job security in the energy sector, community members frequently discussed the impacts of energy production they had observed while living and working in close proximity to the oil and gas industry. The impacts that were discussed were often environmental: "I'm scared to drink the water here. I don't trust it," shared one individual. People drew on their own experiences working in industry to frame the discussion of a desire for better environmental protections for their community:

Even working in the refineries — they need to take better precautions for the environment, like a lot of precautions. They have tailing ponds right there, right open, wide open. Every spring, you see little baby ducks swimming around in that polluted water, and then they grow up, and then, who knows if somebody shoots them and eats them. That's just wrong.

Another person reiterated this perspective:

You need the money, you gotta pay to provide for your family, but at the same time, it is ruining the environment..when I was working down, I forget which area it was...they had big, huge [petroleum coke] piles all over, and then they just sat on the land there. When it would get windy, that dust would just get blown into the town, blown into the country, into the forest, the river is right there, as if that [petcoke] dust is not going to get blown into that river. I guarantee all those animals, those fish, all those moose, deer, everything there is polluted... It's having a very bad impact on the environment and the people, people are getting cancer at faster rates.

As the end of this quote implies, community members often linked environmental impacts with the health impacts of oil and gas production. Some community members discussed the prevalence of asthma in Sherwood Park, and the broader health ramifications of working in energy, as captured in the following quote:

Seeing a lot of older people in the trades that I have worked with and talked to, I see how their health is suffering really bad...Their breathing and their lungs are really horrible, and they wish they'd never done it...I know when I worked in Fort McMurray at [oil company]...you're putting your life in danger every single day...it's actually very terrifying, and it's dangerous to the health, because every day after work, I'd go back



and I'd shower and blow my nose and wash up and have that [petroleum coke] dust in my nose...when you clean your ears, it's on the Q-tips.....It's the dust from the oil [and] you're breathing that in all the time, it's very dangerous.

Participants discussed the health impacts of working in energy as extending beyond physical health to include mental health impacts. The negative mental health impacts were mostly discussed in reference to participants who had experienced doing shift work in fly-in fly-out communities. "Nobody's happy there. Yeah, you're happy for a paycheck...but people are there because they [need to] make money, you know, they need to live...you have no choice." In the following quote, one participant reflected on the grief of learning that former colleagues in the trades had passed away:

A lot of people in the industry, they turn to drugs ...[You have money, but] what are you going to do with the money? Some of them don't have a family of their own either... it affects all of us in the trades, always needing a job and thinking 'Okay I gotta go back,' [but then] hearing the people that passed away and stuff.

Positive Sentiment Towards Energy Transition

Community members spoke candidly about a range of energy sources and energy-related technologies, such as oil and gas, solar, wind, carbon capture and storage, critical minerals, and electric vehicles. As discussed in previous sections, participants shared at length about their dissatisfaction with the cost of energy and the negative environmental and health impacts of energy production they'd observed in their communities. While there were a few positive reflections, an analysis of the sentiment and tone of participant comments shows that participants shared overwhelmingly negative feelings about *all* of these topics.

This negative perception of all forms of energy technologies is contrasted with discussions of energy transition, which were overwhelmingly positive. Most participants present at this community conversation shared a sense of urgency that some kind of change to our energy systems is necessary: "I think we're at that crossroads. [If we] keep on doing what we're doing and there's not going to be very much left..we're at that point where, if we don't do something now, it's not going to be good." Another participant agreed: "I think we need to just pull the trigger and get the transition going." Community members frequently discussed having conversations with people who work in energy, and seeing an openness to new forms of work and energy in them:



A lot of the people that I worked with and spoke to...I'd tell them 'You know what, I do feel really guilty. I know what we're doing. We're taking a part in destroying our land, and I don't feel comfortable here.' And they said 'You know what? I feel the same way,' but this is what they tell me: they did it all their life and they don't know what else to do. I know if they had that opportunity to go somewhere else, and if it was made available to everybody to get a job and to be able to live, I'm sure a lot of people would do it.

When discussing what they desire from future energy systems, participants emphasized an interest in not recreating the environmental harms of previous energy production systems with new technologies. For example, some people shared fears about the full life-cycle of solar panels: "Where are they going to put them? [It's] the same thing as the oil industry," shared one individual. Another person reiterated that without careful attention, renewable energy development can recreate negative environmental impacts from fossil fuel extraction: "I know that they're thinking about extracting lithium, and that's a huge concern, because when they extract that, it completely damages the environment for years and years and years to come."

In terms of pace, people were in favour of a gradual shift to diversify our energy systems to include "A slow transition," one person emphasized. "Small steps, so it's not so drastic," offered another. A gradual pace was particularly important from a worker's perspective, as captured in the following quote: "How many people work in Fort Mac...that's the reason why I'm saying that [it] should be done in piecemeal." It was critical to participants that people do not feel "forced" into a transition.



They also shared that the energy sector must be made a more equitable place to work. For example, one participant shared difficulty finding work as a woman in the solar industry: "It's hard to find a company that will accept a woman to come out and work. I was doing solar panelling, but it's a male dominated [industry] where they want to do all the work." Participants also expressed that First Nations communities must be leaders in the transition to cleaner, safer, more affordable energy production:

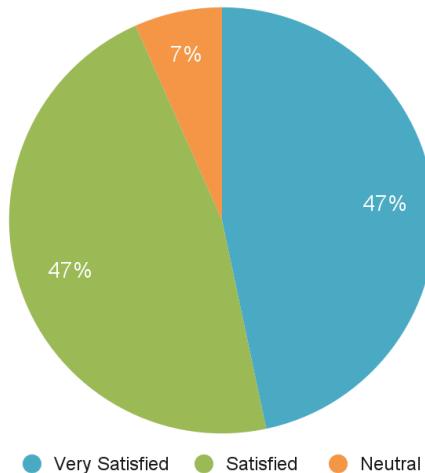
[Energy production] has a positive impact on our lives...[However], how do you produce this energy in a way that will not have [a] negative impact on [the] environment?...These resources have been extracted from First Nation communities...We have to involve the First Nation people, the leaders, and then the people themselves.

The primary concerns people raised about transitioning to alternative energy systems were around costs and environmental impact. However, a secondary concern voiced by many participants was around the polarization of energy issues in the communities. The task of getting the entire community on board with change was framed as a difficult one. One person shared that they are confident that, "[Alberta is] set up infrastructurally to take on the task," but the rhetorical support for energy transition simply isn't present yet. "I think that Alberta is so divided, there's people that are on two different extremes. So it'll be hard to find the middle ground," shared another individual.



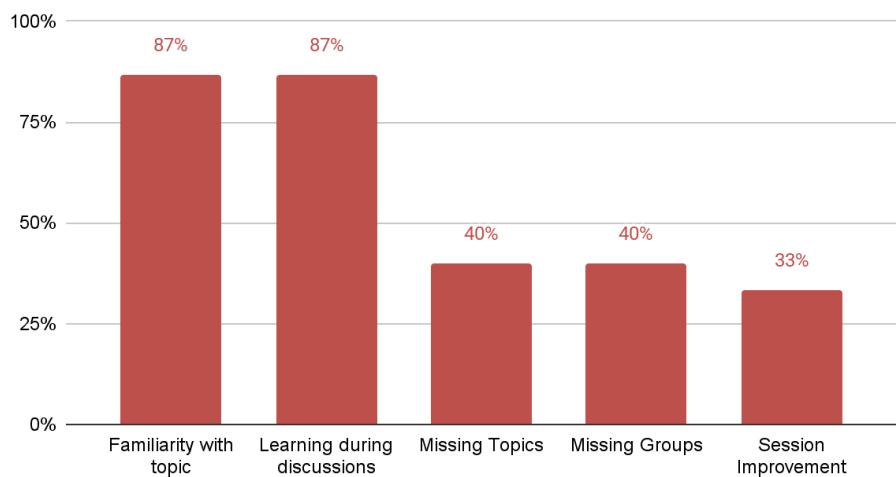
3. What We Learned

Figure 3.1 - Participant Satisfaction Levels



We shared a Google feedback form at the end of our session which was completed by 15 of 16 participants. From the provided options: “Very Unsatisfied”, “Unsatisfied”, “Neutral”, “Satisfied”, and “Very Satisfied,” most participants rated their level of satisfaction as Very Satisfied (46.7%) or Satisfied (46.7%), followed by Neutral (6.7%).

Figure 3.2 - Discussion Topics Feedback



87% of participants were familiar with the topics prior to the discussion and 87% participants learned something new about the conversation topics during the discussion.



40% of respondents identified missing topics in the conversation, such as the potential impacts that individual families can have on the energy transition, the severe impacts of climate change, potential partnership options in the community, perspectives on these topics from the surrounding areas, and more in-depth discussion of renewable energy options and oil and gas. Meanwhile, 40% felt that there were some groups missing from the discussion, such as representatives from the provincial and federal government, members from the Edmonton District Labour Council, and leadership from First Nations and Métis settlements.

Feedback on the discussion include: a desire for more information about Iron & Earth, an interest in lengthening the discussion to allow for more in-depth conversation, and catering that includes dessert and more soft drinks. 87% of attendees would like to continue the conversation and 80% would like to be contacted for future projects or activities relating to these topics.



Conclusions

Overall, the first Ward Dene/Sherwood Park community conversation indicates that community members are passionate and informed about energy-related issues. Many participants brought with them firsthand experience working in energy or the trades, or had loved ones with extensive experience in the energy sector. This close connection to energy production has resulted in a complicated community-level relationship to the sector.

Participants shared candidly about their challenges keeping up with the cost of living, commenting on how Edmonton has grown consistently more expensive in recent years. They shared difficulties navigating the job market, and a consistent draw towards working in oil and gas in an effort to maintain a solid stream of income, despite the booms and busts of the industry. They discussed the various impacts of energy production they've witnessed in their community, discussing negative environmental impacts of fossil fuel extraction and fears of how exposure to byproducts of oil and gas may affect their long term health. Mental health impacts also frequently came up in conversation, with participants discussing how mental health issues impact tradespeople, particularly those doing fly-in fly-out shift work.

The 16 participants who attended this session were overwhelmingly satisfied with their experience, with 87% of attendees sharing that they had learned something new in the conversation.



4. Next Steps

Iron and Earth will proceed with using these findings to inform the second and third installments of the Ward Dene/Sherwood Park community conversations. Once all three events conclude, the findings will be verified with the general public through continued community engagement efforts, before being mobilized through a local advocacy campaign, to bring these findings to the attention of local decision makers. Iron and Earth will return the findings to community participants to continue the dialogue. Eventually, our team will begin to verify the findings with the broader Edmonton community to ensure that the voices present at our engagement events reflect the perspectives of the general rest of the community. If you would like to learn more about the program's progress and the work that takes place after 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 - First 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: 4:45:pm/when max capacity is reached; 50 people

START TIME: 4:30 pm

END TIME: 6:30 pm

SETUP START TIME: 3:30 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 first 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 themself]

- 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 amiskwaciwâskahikan, 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 first 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 6:30PM

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

Setting-up Breakout Groups: 5 minutes



(Note for Community Engagement Officer and Facilitators: Please ensure you stay on time, you are responsible for keeping your groups on time.

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

[Participants must do some kind of round table of names at the beginning of the breakout recording. This is only for reference purposes, the name will not show in any of our results]

1. Question 1 20 Minutes

What are the biggest challenges facing your community today?

2. Question 2 - 20 Minutes

How does energy production impact your daily life?

Followup question, if needed: When someone mentions “energy” what do you think of?

3. Question 3 - 20 Minutes

How do you see your community adapting to changes in the local economy, especially in terms of job opportunities and industries?

Followup question, if needed: What kind of future do you envision for local workers?

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 first for Dene Ward and Sherwood Park; we will complete two more sessions after this one. 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.



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]

Finally, we would like to remind everyone that all reimbursements are subject to a processing time of 10 business days and can only be received via an e-transfer or direct deposit.

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]