Energy and Climate Engagement Sessions

March 2024

Otipemisiwak Métis Government in collaboration with Iron and Earth.

Otipemisiwak Métis Government

IRON + EARTH

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Report Overview

In March 2024, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government (Oh-teh-pim-swak) partnered with Iron & Earth to deliver a series of community engagement events. These sessions were conducted to understand how the Otipemisiwak Métis Government can support and advocate for Métis people in adapting to a changing energy sector. In total, seven in-person events were conducted across Alberta, including Smoky Lake, Edmonton, Medicine Hat, High Prairie, Fort Vermillion, Fort McMurray, and Calgary. These in-person events were supplemented by online discussions and a survey completed by 118 Métis participants. In total, 283 people participated in the engagements.

Each conversation was structured around three questions aimed at gauging Citizens' knowledge and interest in energy, their perspectives on renewable energy development, and the key requests they have of government in supporting Métis Citizens during the energy transition.

Citizens across in-person and online sessions expressed having a strong relationship to the energy sector. They consistently highlighted their key energy priorities as lowering energy costs, reducing environmental impact, and ensuring reliable energy access. Participants spoke about seeing a place for both fossil fuels and renewable energy in their lives, sharing a preference for a localized approach to renewable energy developments, over a one-size-fits-all approach. Overall, participants expressed a desire for balance and transparency from leaders setting net-zero goals. Looking to the future, community members shared a range of requests from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, including: expanded access to information, financial support for retrofits and utilities, continued community engagement and consultation, training support for workers, and advocacy with other governments and the energy sector. 98% of participants shared that they learned something new from participating in a community conversation.

Introduction

About The Project

About Otipemisiwak Métis Government within Alberta

The Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government, formally known as the Métis Nation of Alberta which was first conceived in 1928 and is the government of over 70,000 registered Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens across the province of Alberta. The Métis Nation holds inherent rights to their lands and resources, as well as rights to self-government and self-determination. The mandate of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government is to be a representative

voice on behalf of Métis people in Alberta, provide Métis people an opportunity to participate in government's policy and decision-making process and, most importantly, promote and facilitate the advancement of Métis people through the pursuit of self-reliance, self-management, and self-government.

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government's jurisdictional boundaries covers the entirety of the province of Alberta, less First Nations and Métis Settlement lands. In June 2019, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government signed the first ever self-government agreement between the Government of Canada and a Métis government. With the signing of the Agreement, Canada formally recognized that the Métis Nation within Alberta, as represented by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation, holds the inherent right to self-government. In late 2022, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, then still known as the Métis Nation of Alberta, underwent the largest ratification vote ever undertaken by an Indigenous nation in Canadian history where Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation Citizens overwhelmingly adopted a new Constitution—the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution.

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government delivers services to its Citizens through its departments of Health, Youth, Children and family Services, Environment and Climate Change, Consultation, Culture, Harvesting, and Registry, and through its affiliate institutions, Métis Nation Holdings, Rupertsland Institute, Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc., Métis Capital Housing Corporation (MCHC) and Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC).

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 is committed to meeting communities where they are at, by supporting self-determined, community-driven solutions, and offering non-prescriptive support. We take the time to build relationships and adapt to individual community needs whenever possible.

Community Talks is Iron & 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.

Why this partnership was created

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government and Iron & Earth had a unique and exciting opportunity to form a strong and impactful collaboration. The partnership focused on collaboration between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment & Climate Change team and Iron & Earth's Community Talks team, which was led by Iron & Earth's Métis program manager and had established relationships with the community and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. The partnership was solidified as Iron & Earth's engagement model, mandate, and vision aligned well with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) as unanimously resolved by Métis Citizens in 2017 at the Annual General Assembly.

Led by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, Iron & Earth, through their Community Talks initiative, facilitated a series of community engagement sessions with Métis Citizens across the province based on Community Talks approach and past engagement efforts. These sessions provided a space for Métis Citizens to openly share valuable experiences, insights and perspectives on their relationship to the energy industry, the energy transition, their awareness of their energy sources, impact from extreme weather events and their expectations from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. Additionally, participants could provide input on how the Otipemisiwak Métis Government can better support Alberta Métis Citizens.

Community Talks' engagement approach is based on consent and agency, supported by socially just models designed to meet people where they are and build trust. Its learning methodology and focus on the most vulnerable allowed for maximum program flexibility, ensuring the program resonated with the Métis community and aligned with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's practices. Community Talks strives to initiate dialogues about the impacts of environmental, social, and economic shifts with diverse communities throughout Canada. This begins with building relationships that go beyond a simple consultation process. It aims to engage with communities on their terms, gaining insights into their perspectives on climate change, energy transitions, community-led solutions, and their readiness for each. The value of this partnership was multifaceted. It aimed to increase engagement with Métis people in Alberta and significantly enhance Métis voices.

Why the Alberta Métis community was selected to have a conversation

The Environment and Climate Change department under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government strives to continue reducing our carbon footprint and the damaging effects of climate change to ensure Métis Citizens can practice their culture and traditions in a resilient and interconnected ecosystem supported by clean air, water, and land.

The Otipemisiwak Métis Government Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was developed following the Annual General Assembly in 2017, where it was unanimously resolved to fully support and direct the Otipemisiwak Métis Government in "[…] designing and undertaking climate change initiatives and programs, including actions aimed at reducing GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions, increasing Métis involvement and awareness of climate change, while creating capacity and economic opportunities for Métis Citizens." In response, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government CCAP was launched and included five core strategic goals: reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, create opportunities for Otipemisiwak Métis Government institutions, create opportunities for Otipemisiwak Métis Government citizen, increase Otipemisiwak Métis Government capacity to implement climate change programs and increase understanding of climate change and encourage social change to take action.

These community sessions were conducted to better understand how the Otipemisiwak Métis Government can support Métis peoples and their communities in adapting to a changing energy sector, and advocate for active Métis participation in the transition. Additionally, the information gathered, and conversations held will inform future programs offered by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

The following locations were selected for the in-person portion of the engagement sessions:

1. Smoky Lake
2. Edmonton
3. Medicine Hat
4. High Prairie
5. Fort Vermillion
6. Fort McMurray
7. Calgary

The selection of each location was based on several factors, including previous engagement levels, accessibility considerations, current events, and program logistics. It reflects locations with previously low engagement, rural or remote locations, as well as highly populated areas. This selection also considers the fact that Alberta is a large province, and communities in different

locations have drastically different needs and situations: different climate impacts, renewable projects potential, and accessibility. Additionally, it was important to ensure that the majority of Alberta Métis territories were represented.

In addition to the seven in-person sessions, virtual options were provided to ensure broader participation. These included three online sessions and a large-scale online survey. These alternatives were offered to maximize the opportunity for Métis Citizens across the entire province to engage in the process, aiming to minimize the exclusion of anyone who might have wanted to participate but could not make it to the in-person events. This inclusive approach ensured that a diverse array of voices and perspectives were heard and considered.

About the organizations roles

Otipemisiwak Métis Government

The roles and responsibilities for which Otipemisiwak Métis Government was responsible and contributed to this project included: session advertisement, registration and planning, along with lead and assistant facilitation roles. Most importantly, the role of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government is to listen to Citizens, take their feedback and experience into consideration when planning and implementing future programs and operating in an advocacy capacity where gaps are identified.

Iron & Earth

Iron & Earth's partnership was represented through various roles. I&E was responsible for event planning and coordination, logistics, hiring and training of the sessions team, disbursement of wrap-around supports and completion bonuses for participants, and took on all data collection, processing and analysis as well as the development of this report. I&E also provided the financial contribution necessary to make this project a reality and would like to acknowledge Employment and Social Development Canada's Sectoral Workforce Solutions Program, McConnell Foundation, and Peter Gilgan Foundation for graciously providing funding for this project.

Program Staff and Teams

About the Project Team

The sessions were planned and implemented by team members from both Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change Department and Iron & Earth. Iron & Earth's Community Talks project team comprised several key roles, each member contributing unique expertise to ensure the project's success. The Community Sustainability Manager led the team, providing overall leadership and direction, also handled partnership coordination, and supported the

data analysis and report writing. The Communities Director and Just Transition Lead advised and provided support where needed. The Community Engagement Coordinator played a crucial role in supporting and coordinating the Community Engagement Officers, data processing and analysis and report writing. The Data Analyst coordinated the transcription cleaning and anonymization, and supported the data processing and analysis and took on all quantitative analysis presented here. Rounding out the team was the Administrative and Logistics Support, whose meticulous attention to detail ensured smooth behind-the-scenes operations.

The core team members from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government included the Climate Engagement Coordinator and Policy Analyst, who was supervised by the Environment and Climate Change Engagement and Policy Manager, and Director of Environment and Climate Change. Additionally, the Environment Engagement Coordinator and Policy Analyst, Energy and Sustainability Manager, Sustainability Project Coordinator and Renewables and Energy Efficiency Project Manager attended sessions.

About the Sessions Team

The sessions team consisted of both Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change and Iron & Earth Community Talks staff.

Iron & Earth hired two community engagement officers for this project to represent the diverse and unique interests of their communities, actively participating in the process and collaborating on developing robust local community engagement strategies. For this project, both officers were registered Métis Nation of Alberta Citizens and had deep, well-established connections to the Alberta Métis community. These officers were responsible for attending each session as facilitators, supporting the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change staff. Their role was critical for the project and exemplified Iron & Earth's core values of "for community, by community" acting as exceptional representatives who embodied these principles.

Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change department provided both the lead facilitator and additional facilitators for breakout groups. All facilitators had a background in climate change, environmental stewardship or the energy sector. Different team members were encouraged to participate in sessions as facilitators to expose staff to these important conversations and include feedback within their work. One lead facilitator attended each session, with multiple assistants, chosen based on the number of registrations for each session. The lead facilitator introduced each session, and was responsible for opening the workshop, overseeing the logistics and answering any questions.

Below are anonymous testimonials that highlight the dedication and effectiveness of both Iron & Earth Community Talks and Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change staff.

Iron & Earth Facilitator A

Their Métis heritage originated with the Swampy Cree in Churchill, Manitoba. Facilitator A grew up on a family farm in northern Alberta. Their father and grandfather were trappers, hunters, and guides who taught them to respect the land and nature. It wasn't until later in life that they learnt of their Métis heritage. Looking back now, they notice that they lived and conducted themselves in many of the traditional Métis ways, even though it was not recognized as such. Because of this, they feel a sense of obligation to recognize and be proud of who they are. They try to instill these values and ideals in their children, any extended family, and fellow Métis Citizens that they are able to connect with. They believe that we have much to learn from our ancestors about how to protect Mother Earth and live in harmony.

They have spent a lot of time researching and learning more about their culture and heritage. They have a thirst to grow their knowledge and be able to ultimately help their people. When they learnt of the project with Iron & Earth, they jumped at the chance to be part of this initiative. This project is very important to them because they were physically going to the Métis communities and listening to the people, connecting with them. They actively listened to their ideas, stories, concerns in an interactive, peer dynamic. Being a Community Engagement Officer for this project resulted in personal growth for them on many levels. The most predominant being their awareness of climate change; reflecting on the need for clean energy and how relatable this issue is to the Indigenous ways of knowing and being. They've even switched to a hybrid vehicle and are looking into solar energy for their farm.

Iron & Earth Facilitator B

The collaboration between Iron & Earth and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government established a remarkable partnership that fostered a space of mutual understanding and cooperation. As a facilitator for Iron & Earth, the sessions were conducted in an open, non-judgmental manner that encouraged organic dialogue and made certain that everyone felt not just heard, but truly understood. Engaging with fellow Métis Citizens from diverse backgrounds across the province was an enriching experience. Traveling extensively throughout Alberta, they immersed themselves in conversations about reaching net zero by 2050 and the phased transition away from oil and gas. Growing up on a northern Alberta ranch, their identity has always been intertwined with farming and ranching. However, they've come to acknowledge the crucial balance between environmental stewardship and the economic realities of the province's oil and gas sector.

For them, the most important aspect of this project was ensuring that everyone's voice was heard. It was about listening to everyone's perspectives, no matter what. Through this project, they gained a lot of insight into what other Métis people think and worry about in relation to energy and the environment. Their Métis heritage taught them to balance environmental care with the needs of their community. They've always been adept at adapting to change, and that's what this project was all

about - safeguarding the environment and nurturing economic prosperity. It's about ensuring the protection of the land for the future while still caring for one another.

Otipemisiwak Métis Government Facilitator A

They participated in two sessions, one online and one in-person. As an employee of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, they were able to directly hear the voices of the Métis community, and their unfiltered thoughts on the energy transition. It was an invaluable experience to be in a space where all viewpoints were encouraged to be shared, and the group was able to achieve a true open dialogue, with unique perspectives being provided by all participants. These sessions will contribute to the Métis community's voice being heard in energy and policy matters. Iron & Earth's partnership in facilitating these events contributed significantly to their overall success and effectiveness.

The opportunity to participate in these sessions was very important to them personally, and to their work for Otipemisiwak Métis Government. Seeing the impact that the energy transition is having on Citizens will be invaluable for informing future projects

Otipemisiwak Métis Government Facilitator B

Another team member helped facilitate three community engagement sessions, and their biggest takeaway was how important it is to sit down and spend time with members of the Métis community. In the short hours they spent in each community, they learned so much about Citizens' values, their concerns, and how they feel the impact of a changing climate and changing energy sector. As a staff member of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, it is incredibly important that we listen deeply to the Citizens we speak to and that we reach out across the province to hear different viewpoints. They believe these sessions did exactly that. Any successful transition to renewable energy must include the voices of Métis people. These sessions will help lift those voices up and show how strong, curious, and resilient we are – exactly what we need as our world shifts in response to a changing climate.

About the Session Methodology

Sessions

The engagement sessions hosted were based on Community Talks engagement approach, tailored to each community's unique styles and needs. It involved gathering groups to discuss three key questions, guided by a prepared script. Responses were audio recorded for thorough documentation. Each session had three to five breakout groups with three to ten participants each. Sessions lasted about two hours, starting with participants going to a registration table to ensure they have either registered online or were provided a physical form to complete. Participants were also provided with a consent form to read and sign. Catering was provided at each session and participants were free to get food and beverages once they were finished at the registration table.

Once all participants had taken their seats, the session started with an opening prayer from a Community Métis Elder or Knowledge Holder, followed by an introductory presentation by a lead facilitator from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change department to provide context and frame the discussion topics. Breakout groups, led by Community Engagement Officers and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change team, discussed the questions provided, ensuring respectful dialogue and inclusion of all participants. The session ended with a closing presentation summarizing key points and outlining the next steps. This methodology emphasized community-driven dialogue, cultural respect, and thorough documentation to capture and value the community's collective wisdom and perspectives.

Breakout Questions

The format of the community conversation remained consistent in each location. While facilitators were encouraged to allow the conversation to evolve organically, every discussion was structured around the same three questions, with 20 minutes dedicated to each thematic area:

1. Do you think about where your energy comes from? How are you connected to the energy industry?
2. How do you feel about more development of renewable energy sources?
3. What should the Métis Nation be prioritizing in this energy transition?

Survey

An online survey was launched following the in-person and virtual engagement sessions as a mechanism to bolster engagement and provide a platform for participants who could not make the other sessions. With the consent from participants, demographic information was collected and the three questions were asked. The survey remained open for one month and was shared on social media channels as well as sent to participants who had registered for a session and did not end up attending.

Post-Session Data Analysis

The sessions' recordings were transcribed using Otter.ai before sending the documents to staff and facilitators for accuracy checking and anonymization. Survey and in-person session registration data were anonymized by removing identifying personal information such as names, email addresses, physical addresses, phone numbers, and Otipemisiwak Métis Government citizenship numbers. The processed transcripts and survey and registration data were then analyzed using the mixed method analysis software Dedoose.

The transcripts were subjected to two layers of analysis. First, a general thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and topics discussed by Citizens. Themes identified in this report reflect ideas that were discussed repeatedly by many people. However, we sought to ensure that participants whose

perspectives were in the minority are still represented throughout the discussion. Second, a sentiment analysis to identify how people feel about different forms of energy production and kinds of technology, such as solar energy or electric vehicles. Whenever a participant discussed a type of energy or energy-related technology, we interpreted their statement to identify the feeling behind it, assigning it a label of either "positive" (explicitly supportive of the energy/technology), "negative" (explicitly disapproving of the energy/technology), "mixed" (expressing both positive and negative feelings about the energy/technology), or "neutral" (conveying a statement that is neither negative or positive about the energy/technology).

Recordings and transcriptions processed in Otter.ai are kept private and confidential. No participant data is saved after being processed through Otter.ai, or used in the model and algorithm training. All Otipemisiwak Métis Government data uploaded to Dedoose do not contain personal information from participants such as names or addresses. In addition, Dedoose does not share user information or data with third party organizations without explicit permission or justification.

About the Session Logistics

Privacy

Each participant received a letter of consent to sign, detailing the processes for participation, reimbursement, and confidentiality. The letter explained that the conversation would be recorded, but transcripts and collected documents would be shared only between Iron & Earth and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government project team. Participation was anonymous, and all transcriptions were anonymized before the analysis process began. Any anonymous quotes in this report comply with the signed consent form. Participants were also informed they could leave at any point during the session and that taking photographs/video was strictly prohibited. Any anonymized raw data remains with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government project team for future use, with the exception of participants that requested to have their data deleted at the end of the project.

Registration

Registration for the in-person and online sessions was managed through google forms, allowing participants to pre-register before attending the event. To ensure accessibility, in-person registration forms were available for walk-in participants. The registration form included a variety of questions which pertain to completion bonuses, stipend needs and demographic information:

Contact Information. Contact information was only collected to be able to disburse any funds to the appropriate participants and be able to contact participants should there be a reason.

Completion bonus. Each participant was given a choice to receive $100 CAD or donate their time to the session. This pertained to both the in-person sessions and the draw prices for the online sessions and survey.

Stipends. Stipends were available to those who requested them, Iron & Earth would reimburse participants for transportation costs related to attending the event and childcare or dependent support costs related to attending the event.

Demographics. The demographic information was collected for a quantitative analysis and understanding population-based factors of the engagement. This demographic information was anonymized, and all analysis is anonymous.

Promotion

The outreach and promotion efforts were spearheaded by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change department, which played a crucial role in ensuring the message reached a wide audience specific to the Métis Community in Alberta. This comprehensive campaign included various promotional activities such as sending detailed emails, social media posts, distributing in their newsletters, and making networking calls to district representatives to ensure thorough coverage and engagement.

In addition to these efforts, the Community Engagement Officers significantly contributed by providing personal promotion within the communities. These officers not only organized but also participated in intimate and meaningful activities, such as having tea with interested community members, which allowed for direct and personal dissemination of information. They also actively spread the word in-person, ensuring a more personalized approach to outreach and fostering a deeper connection with the community members.

Accessibility

Accessibility and reduction of barriers to participation were critical in the planning and design for these sessions, and several considerations were made for each session to ensure inclusivity. Dietary needs were addressed by offering a wide variety of options to cater to different preferences and restrictions, including vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free choices. Additionally, cultural foods, such as Bannock, were given special priority to respect and honor the diverse backgrounds of the participants. Venues were chosen not only based on their proximity to the community but also on their accessibility features, ensuring that spaces were equipped with necessary accommodation like wheelchair access. This careful selection process was essential to make sure that all participants could engage comfortably and safely.

For in-person sessions, further efforts were made to reduce barriers by providing travel stipends and childcare or dependent care allowances. These provisions were crucial in ensuring that participants who might otherwise be unable to attend due to logistical or financial constraints could take part in the sessions. The program recognized the immense value of the participants' time, knowledge, and contributions, offering a completion bonus to those who wished to be compensated for their involvement.

For online sessions, similar considerations were made. Childcare or dependent care stipends were also provided to support participants, enabling them to engage fully without the added stress of caregiving responsibilities. A draw entry for a designated prize was offered as an incentive instead of the completion bonus, in line with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's Environment and Climate Change department's standard practice for online engagements, which was also provided to survey participants.

Feedback

After each session, a feedback form was provided to each participant to gather their overall experience, insights on what they liked, and suggestions for improvement. The feedback forms included questions about satisfaction levels, prior knowledge, learning outcomes, topics participants wished were covered, missing representation from certain groups or individuals, suggestions for improvements, and an open space for additional comments.

Demographics

About The Conversation Participants

The data below was taken from the registration forms filled out by participants prior to the conversations, and walk-in participants during our in-person sessions. 184 people filled out the registration forms prior to the conversations, and 11 walk-in participants filled in the registration forms at the session locations. 39 of the 184 registrants did not attend the sessions. Meanwhile, of the 165 attendees, 7% of attendees did not have registration forms associated with their names. The data analysis provided below does not take into account the participants without registration data. The survey data analyzed uses responses from 118 individuals, after having removed 7 repeat submissions. In conclusion, of the 283 total participants, 263 were analyzed and included in the report's data analysis.

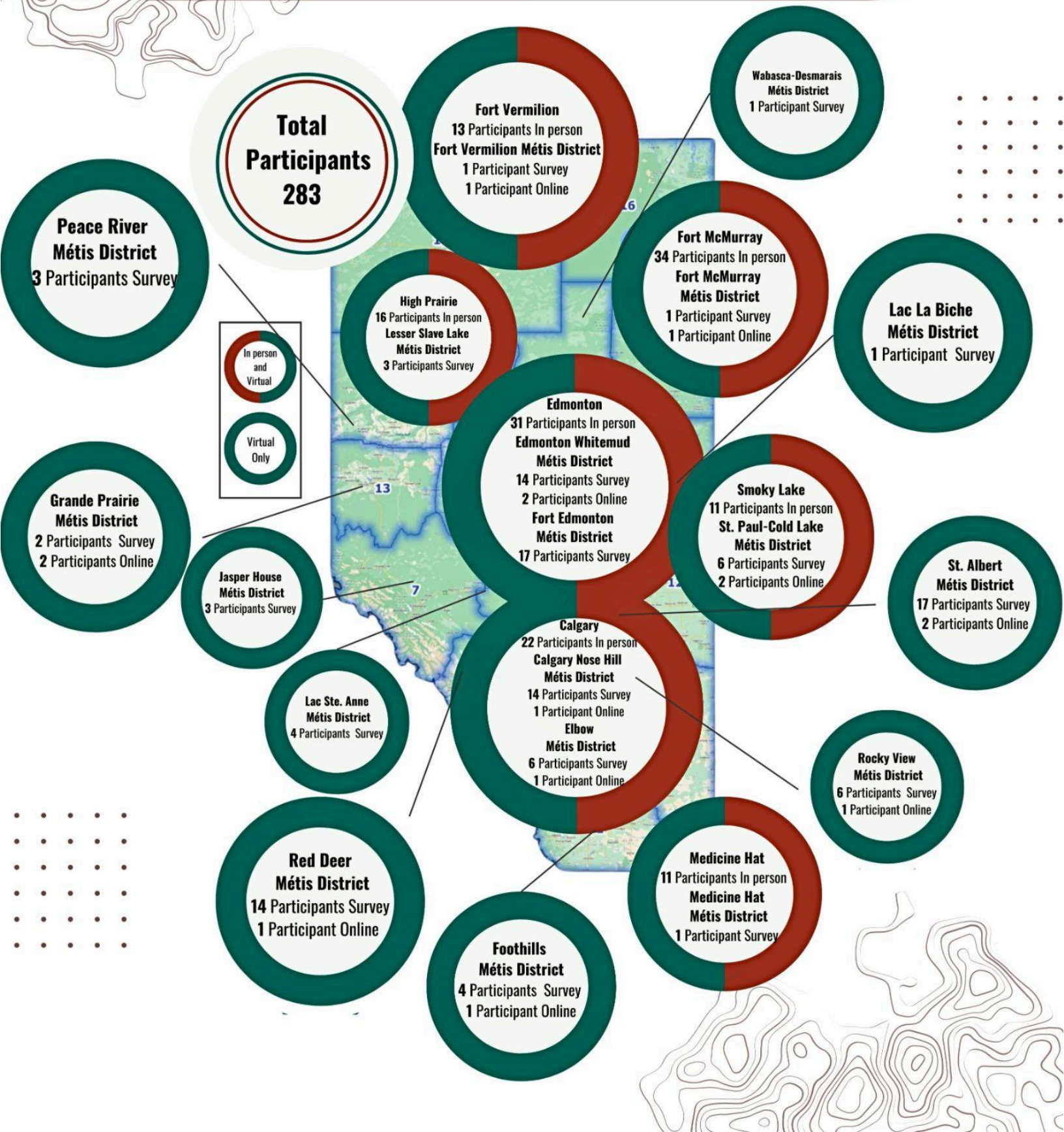
The in-person registration and online survey forms contain several differences in the provided answer options and questions. A few questions only included in the survey form are about community size and population; and questions relating to consent. The last section in the form is for participation in a gift card raffle, where personal information questions such as names, address, phone numbers, and Otipemisiwak Métis Government citizenship number are located. Questions relating to consent are only found in the survey form, with the exception of two questions on Otipemisiwak Métis Government contacts and data destruction which are in the feedback form for in-person participants.

The in-person registration includes questions relating to monetary support for childcare and dependents; transportation; and honorarium for participants' time, and the session that participants

were attending, which are not relevant for online survey participants. For personal questions, the in-person registration includes a question for “full name”, while the survey form asks for first and last name separately.

Both forms also include different answer options in some of the questions. The in-person registration includes “Other” options for “Citizenship status”, “Educational background”, “Roles”, and “Languages at home”, which may have prompted respondents to provide a variety of answers not included in the options. Additionally, on the question on gender, the in-person registration includes a set of options and “Other”, while the survey form provides an open answer text field. On the question on respondents’ job sectors, the survey form puts the question under “Energy Sector Engagement” and contains the options “healthcare”, “education”, “None of the above”, and “government”, while the in-person registration puts the question under “Demographics” and does not include the two options mentioned previously. Additionally, the survey form did not include an open-ended option for “Other”, which is provided in the registration form.

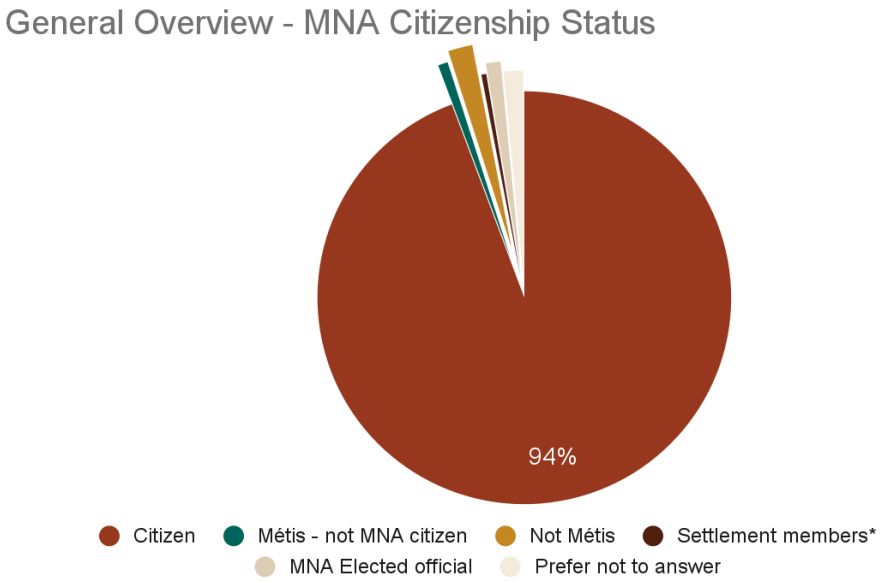
Participant Location Breakdown



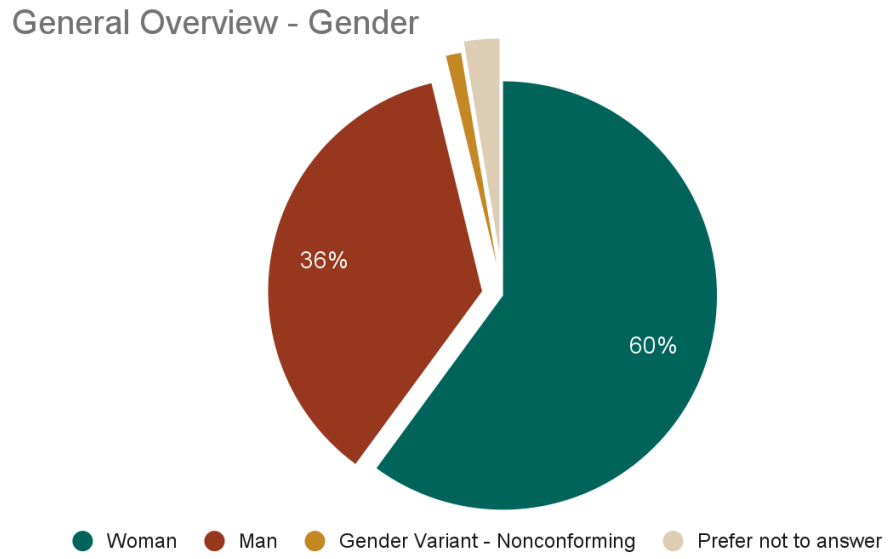
Demographics - General Overview

The comprehensive charts presented below provide an in-depth overview of all locations, encompassing a wide range of demographic information. These visual representations delve into various aspects of the participants, including their citizenship status, gender identification, age distribution across different groups, district of residence, educational attainment, and employment sectors.

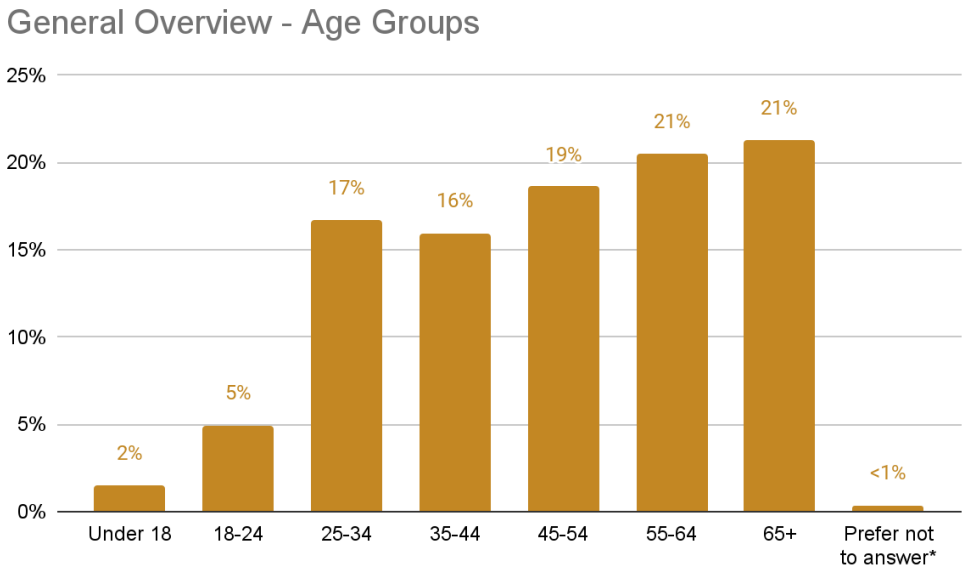
Some data points within the charts are marked with an asterisk (*) indicating specific circumstances or variations in data collection methods. For instance, some information may have been exclusively available through the online survey form, while other data points might have been collected solely through in-person registration processes. Each asterisk-marked entry has detailed explanations following their respective graphs.



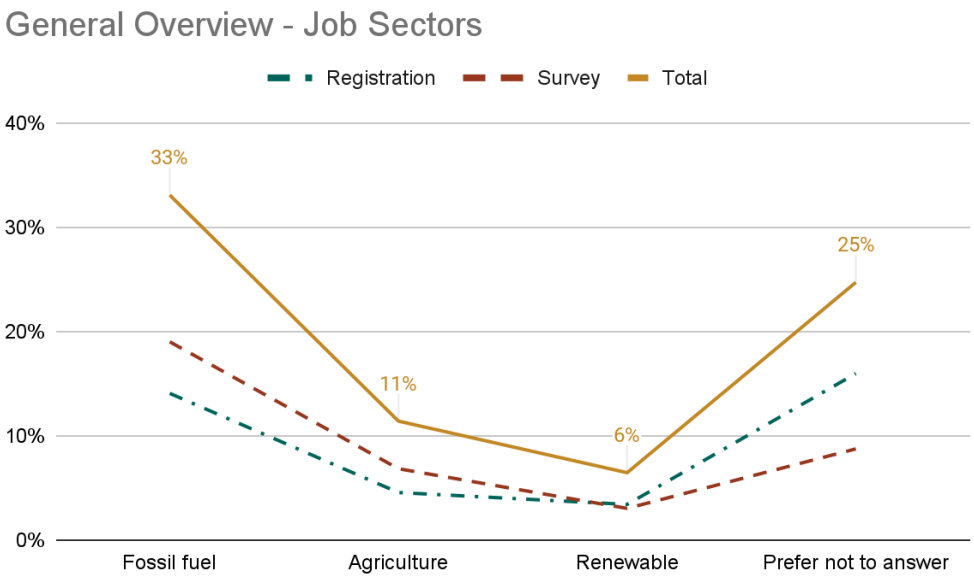
In the registration survey, 94% of participants indicated that they are Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens. 1% identify as Métis but not Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation Citizens, while another 2% do not identify as Métis. 1% are Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation elected officials. 2% of participants prefer not to answer. 1% of participants answered “settlement member” in the provided “Other” option.



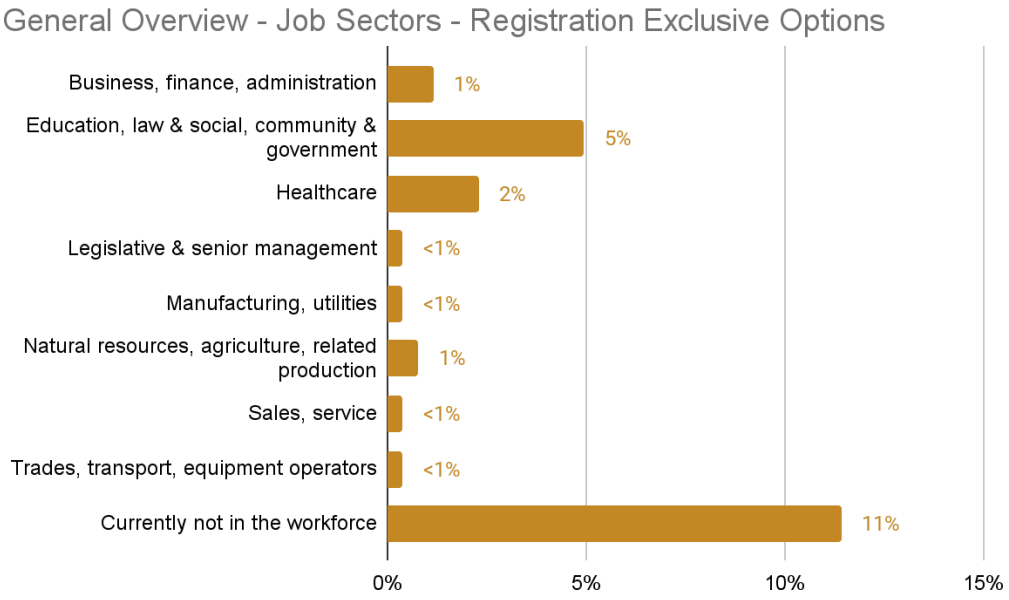
In the gender category, 60% of respondents identify as women and 36% identify as men. 1% identify as gender variant - nonconforming, and 3% prefer not to answer. The in-person registration forms provide answer options that were revised to suit the question on gender, such as "female" to "woman". The survey form provides an open answer text box and no options.



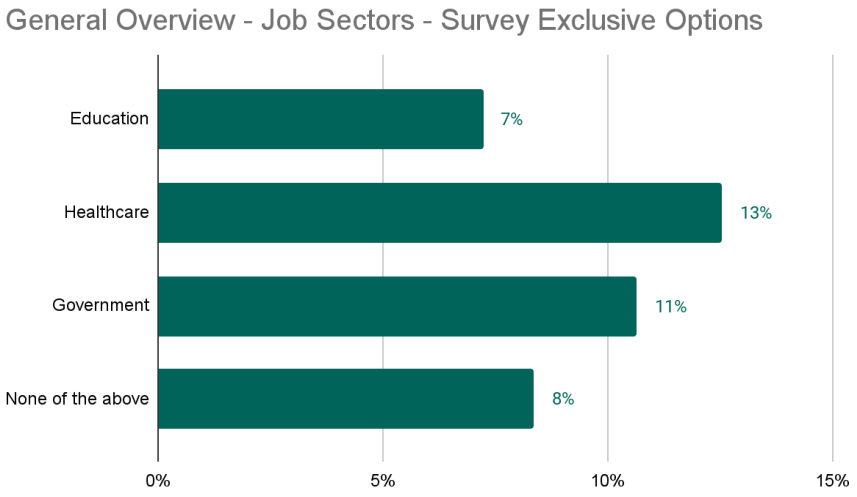
In the age groups distribution, the highest number of participants are in the 55-64 and 65+ age group, followed by 45-54; 25-34; 35-44; 18-24; and under 18, consecutively. Participants who chose Prefer Not to Answer make up less than 1% on the in-person registration forms. The "Prefer Not to Answer" option was not provided in the survey form; however, this question was not made mandatory and respondents could choose not to answer the question.



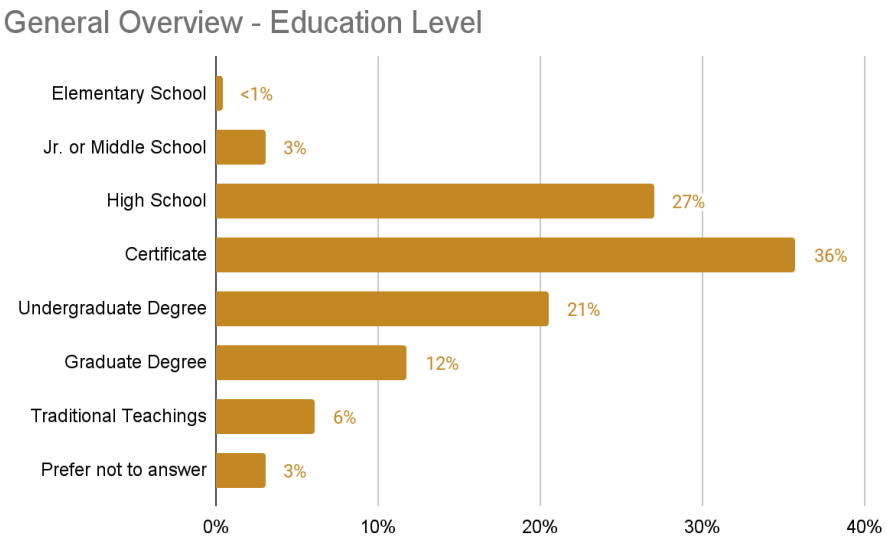
In the job sectors question, 33% of participants answered that they have worked in the fossil fuel industry (specified as "oil and gas" in the registration form), followed by 25% who prefer not to answer, 11% in agriculture, and 6% in renewable energy. This chart summarizes options that are provided in both the survey and registration forms. Participants were able to choose multiple options of job sector categories that outlined their work history, therefore the percentages do not represent unique individuals. The tables below break down additional options exclusively found in one of the forms.



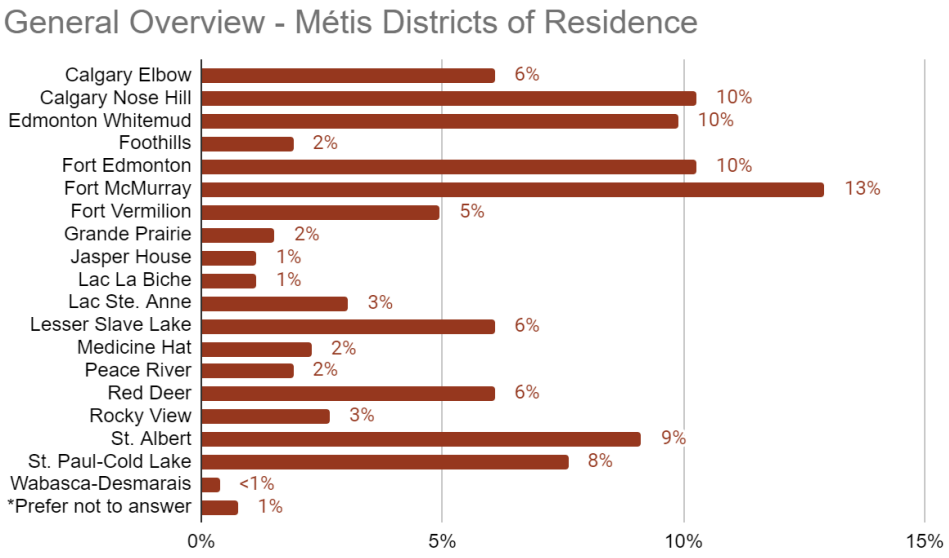
The registration form provided the open-ended answer option “Other”, prompting participants to enter a diverse array of answers. For the purpose of data presentation, these answers had been categorized to the answers above, following the broad occupational category work domain commonly used by the government of Canada. Due to this recategorization, the answers for registration exclusive options are separated from the answers “government”, “education”, and “healthcare” in the survey form results. The option “currently not in the workforce” was modified to include participants who answered “retired” in the “other” open-ended answer, students, and homemakers. The percentages are calculated based on the total number of registration and survey forms.



The survey form included options “education”, “healthcare”, “government”, and “none of the above”. Participants may have interpreted the option “none of the above” to include answers that did not fit the provided options, including retirement. Due to the broad interpretation of this category, the answers from survey exclusive options are kept separate from the recategorized answers from the registration form. The percentages are calculated based on the total number of registration and survey forms.



Regarding the education level question, participants could select multiple answers. However, we recategorized the responses to exclude lower educational prerequisites, such as "elementary school, high school" or "undergrad degree, graduate degree." The exception was traditional teachings, which could have been included with other institutional education levels or provided as a standalone answer.



Finally, for districts of residence, 10% or more of participants reside in Fort McMurray, Calgary Nose Hill, or Fort Edmonton. Less than 5% of participants reside in Grande Prairie, Peace River, or Lac La Biche. 1% of participants prefer not to answer the question.

Demographics - Location Breakdown

The visualizations presented below offer a comprehensive look at the demographic data collected each in-person and online sessions, as well as the survey conducted.

The charts below break down the following specifications:

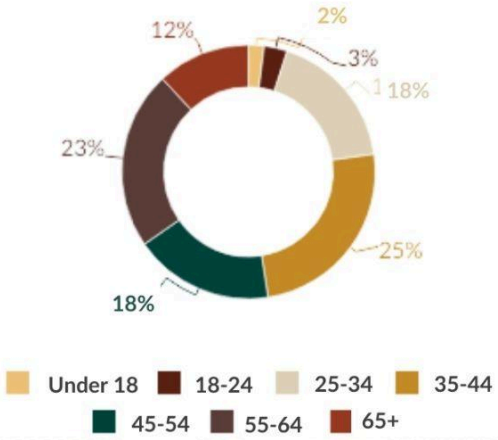
- Number of session attendees (in-person)
- Number of discussion groups during the sessions (in-person)
- Registration form fill-out rate (in-person)
- Online responses (survey)
- Age range
- Education levels
- Traditional Indigenous roles
- Job sectors*
- *Only the job sectors breakdown includes an option for "prefer not to say

SURVEY

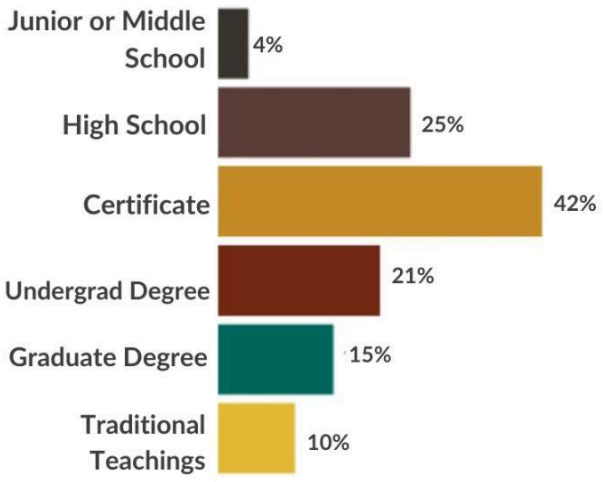
118

Unique online responses

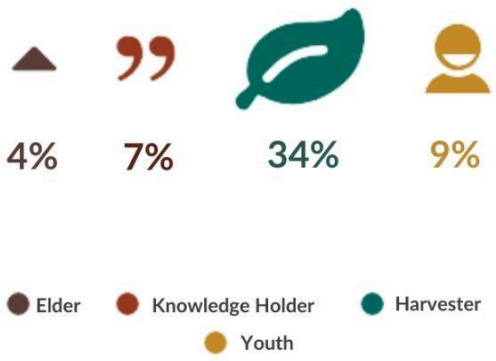
AGE RANGE GROUPS



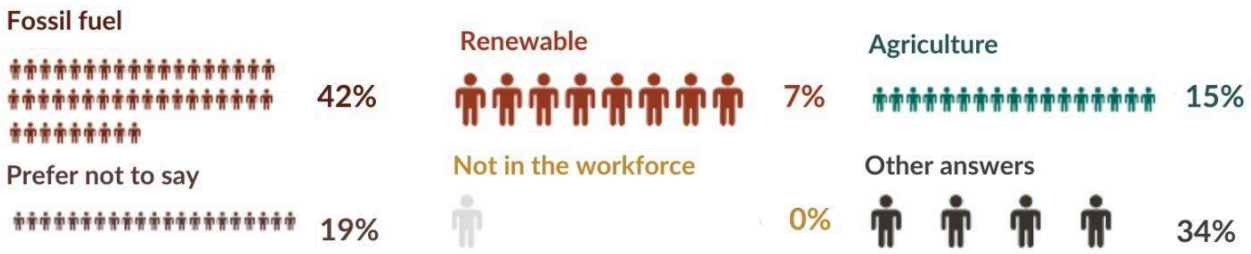
EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE



JOB SECTORS



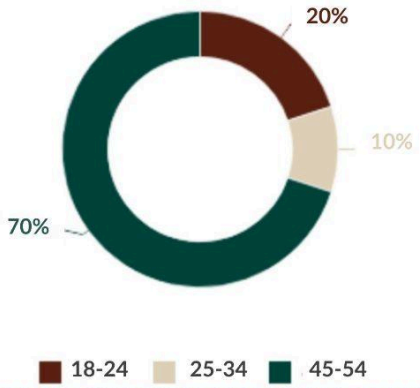
SMOKY LAKE

12
Session attendees

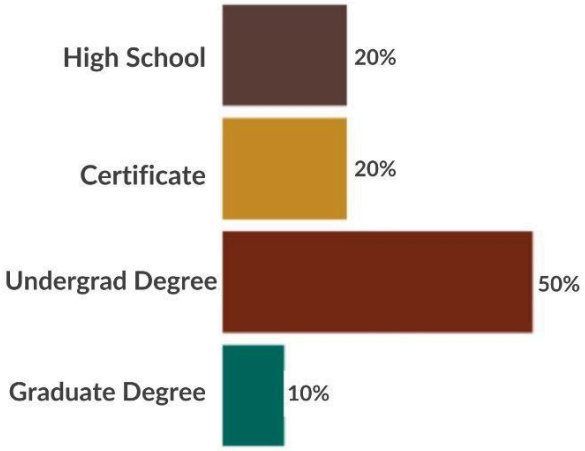
2
Discussion Groups

83%
Registration fill-out rate

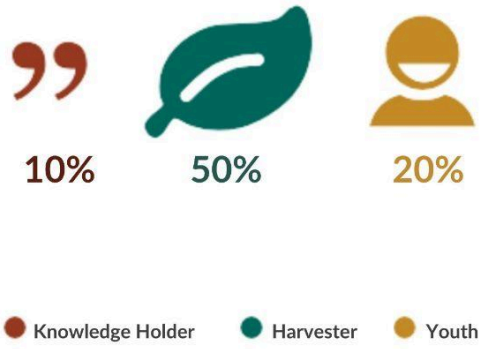
AGE RANGE GROUPS



EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE



JOB SECTORS

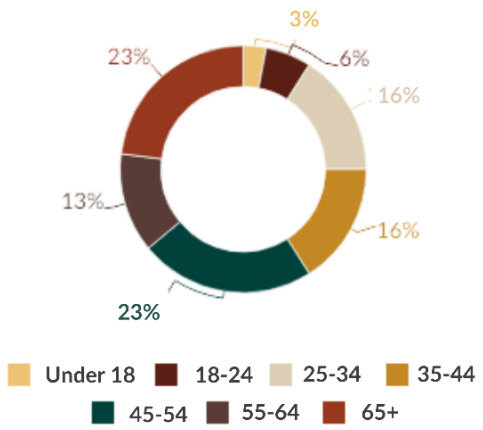
EDMONTON

31
Session attendees

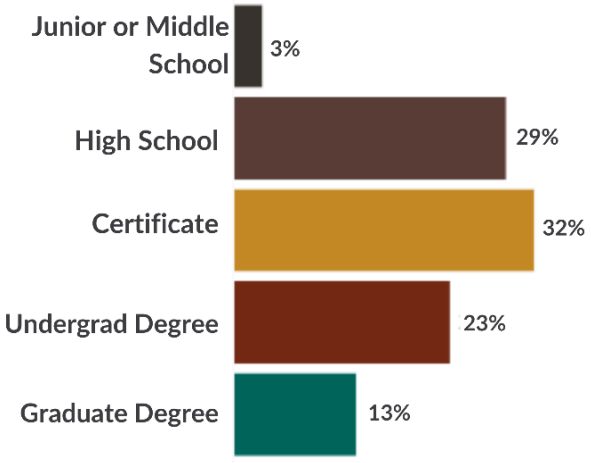
5
Discussion Groups

100%
Registration fill-out rate

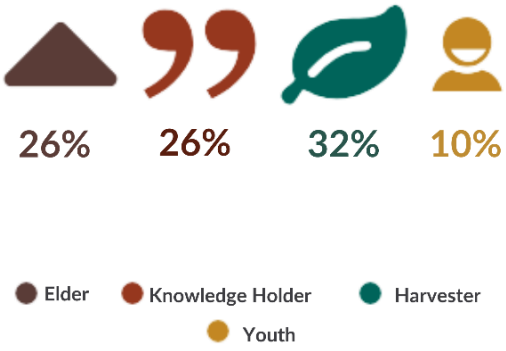
AGE RANGE GROUPS



EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE



JOB SECTORS

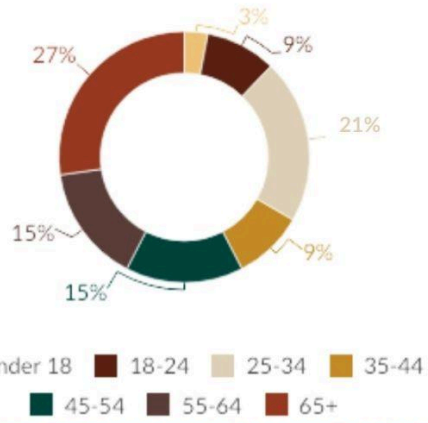
FORT MCMURRAY

34
Session attendees

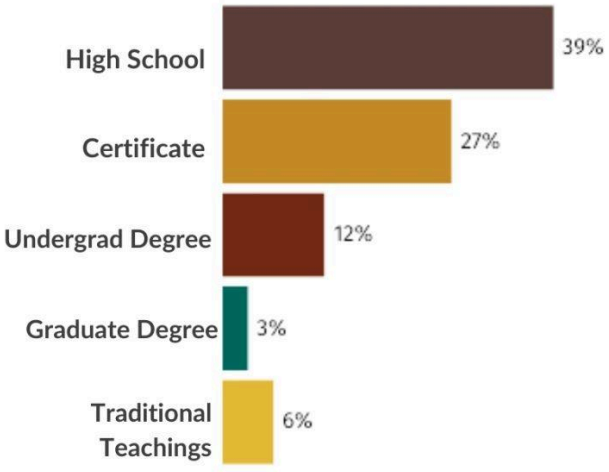
4
Discussion Groups

97%
Registration fill-out rate

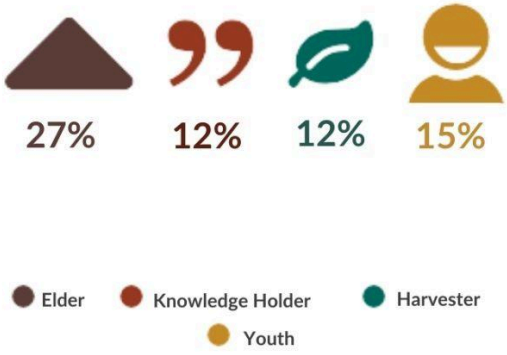
AGE RANGE GROUPS



EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE



JOB SECTORS

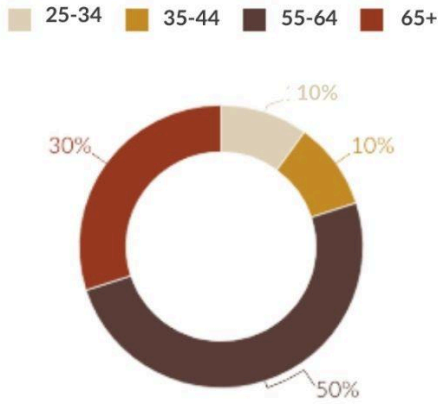
CALGARY

22
Session attendees

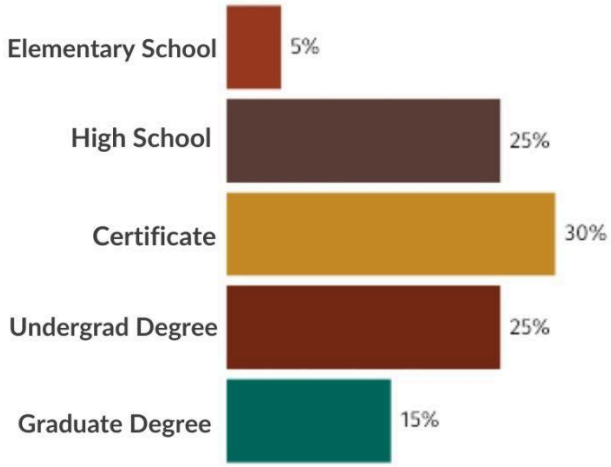
5
Discussion Groups

91%
Registration fill-out rate

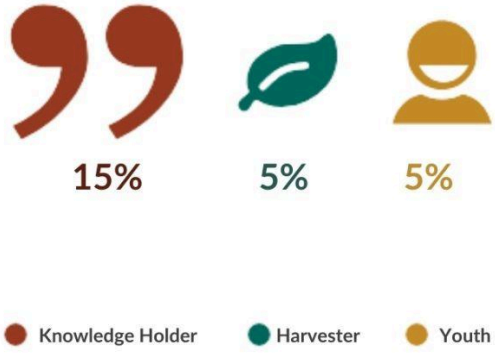
AGE RANGE GROUPS



EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE



JOB SECTORS

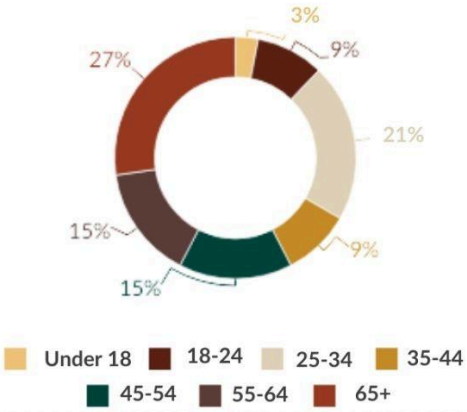
FORT VERMILION

13
Session attendees

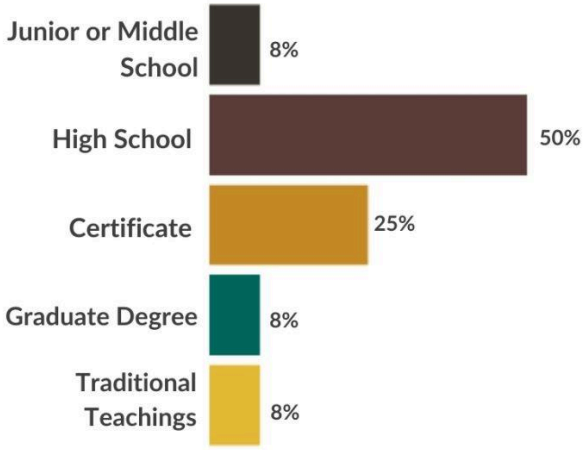
3
Discussion Groups

100%
Registration fill-out rate

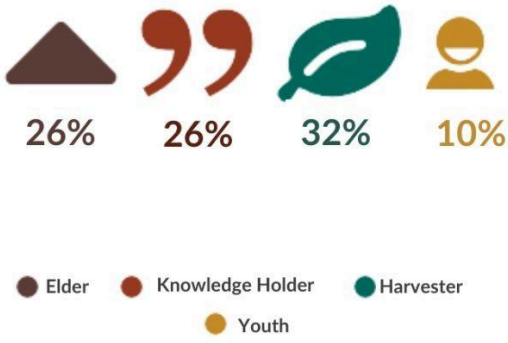
AGE RANGE GROUPS



EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE



JOB SECTORS

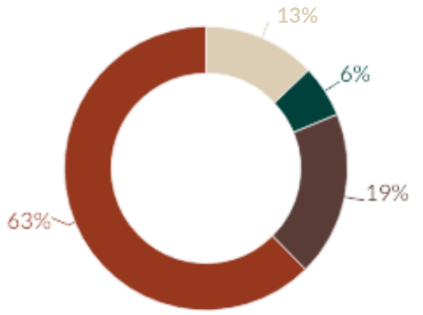
HIGH PRAIRIE

16
Session attendees

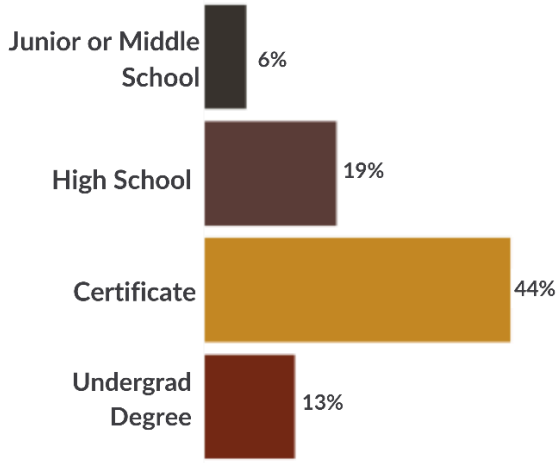
2
Discussion Groups

100%
Registration fill-out rate

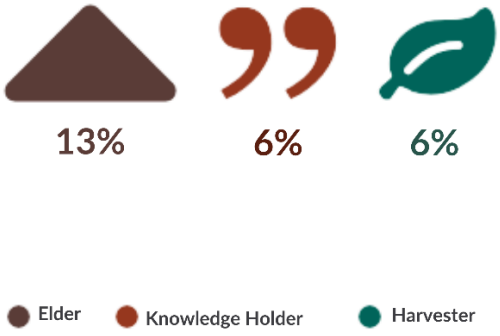
AGE RANGE GROUPS



EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE



JOB SECTORS

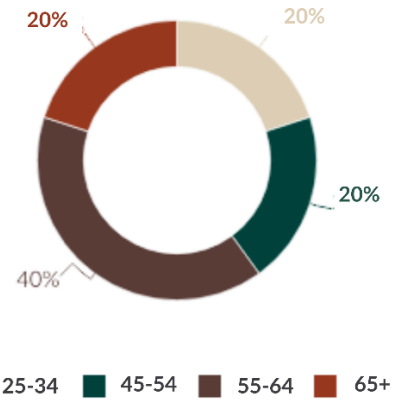
MEDICINE HAT

11
Session attendees

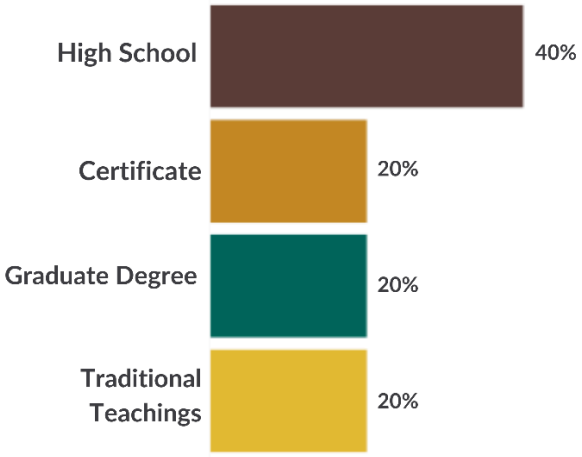
3
Discussion Groups

45%
Registration fill-out rate

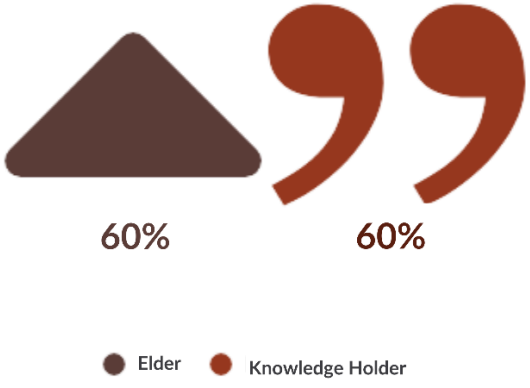
AGE RANGE GROUPS



EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE



JOB SECTORS

Fossil fuel 20%

Renewable 0%

Agriculture 0%

Prefer not to say 0%

Not in the workforce 20%

Other answers 60%

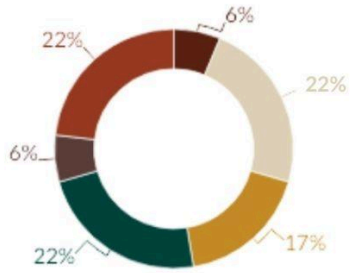
ALL ONLINE

11
Session attendees

6
Discussion Groups

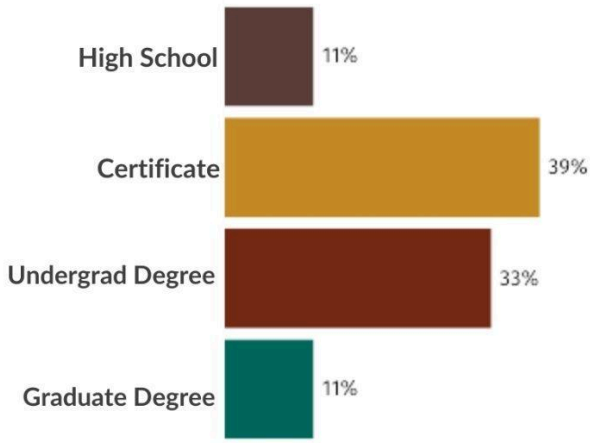
61%
Registration fill-out rate

AGE RANGE GROUPS



18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

EDUCATION LEVELS



TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS ROLE

6% 22% 22% 6%

Elder Knowledge Holder Harvester Youth

JOB SECTORS

The Community Conversations

Leading Themes

Connections to Energy

Most Métis Citizens we spoke with expressed that they actively think about where their energy comes from. In the survey completed by 118 Métis Citizens, 78% of respondents expressed that they think about the sources of their energy usage. A few people said they think very little about where their energy comes from or how it is generated, such as one individual who shared, "What I know of it is very little…honestly, I'm not even entirely sure where our energy comes from." However, most participants expressed having a relationship with the energy sector.

The most common relationship described by the Métis community members who participated in this project was that of **consumers**. A citizen from Smoky Lake stated that, "As a consumer, I wish I personally had more energy." "I pay my Epcor bill every month, that's about the extent of my involvement," shared another participant in Edmonton. "[I] don't notice it until there's a power outage, running around trying to turn the lights off," said another person. The idea that people think most about energy when it isn't present was common. For example, participants across the province discussed a series of grid alerts issued by the Government of Alberta in Winter 2024 as a turning point in their thinking about energy supply and reliability. As phrased by one survey respondent: "I didn't think about where my energy came from until the grid alert."

Many engagement participants had direct ties to the energy sector as **employees and families of workers**. People offered a range of experiences working in oil and gas throughout these discussions. Many people expressed immense gratitude for the quality of life that working in energy has provided them and their families: "It supports part [of] our way of life, especially in these times of inflation," shared one survey respondent. A Fort McMurray community member simply stated: "That's my industry and it's been very good to me." Others also spoke candidly about challenges they've experienced working in the energy industry, with one Calgary participant describing the industry as "very cyclical." Another person in Calgary spoke about watching a family member navigate the instability of working in energy: "He's retired now but he saw his [employment] go up and down, because he's been laid off many times."

Some participants articulated thinking about their connection to the energy sector as intertwined with their **concern for the environment.** As one survey respondent shared: "We have come to rely on oil and gas natural resource extraction…however, I do not believe these resources are sustainable as they are destructive to the environment both locally and globally, and will run out." One participant from Edmonton expressed a reticence to highlight the negative environmental impacts of Alberta's fossil fuel industry: "My personal connection? I would say something too controversial…I know we're

Albertans [and] you don't want to admit it, but coal and natural gas are not very clean."

People also spoke about energy as ingrained in their daily lives and the **culture** around them, from the media they consume, to the landscape they drive by, to the debates that characterize politics in Alberta. This idea was captured by one participant in Medicine Hat, who shared: "I don't think I thought about it…until all of sudden you start seeing the windmills and solar panels…and listening to the controversy on the radio about the pipelines."

Key Energy Priorities

Across the seven in-person sessions, three online events, and the community survey, the Métis Citizens we spoke with raised a wide range of important concerns about the sources of their energy production. Across all engagements, three issues were consistently most important to community members:

The costs of energy. Participants across the province were overwhelmingly concerned with affordability, especially the cost of paying for housing and utility bills. Many people shared fears about their daily needs becoming more expensive, expressing fears about individuals bearing the financial burden of expanding access to renewable energy. "We have no money to spend and the rents are going high…by the time everything is renewable we won't have any money left," lamented one High Prairie resident. Another participant in the Calgary community session stated: "Everybody's electrical bill [is] up through the roof already, so what's gonna happen down the road?" While some people expressed an interest in making investments that could reduce their environmental impact and lower their utility bills, the upfront costs associated with things like installing solar panels or purchasing an electric vehicle were often discussed as too much for the average consumer. One community member in Fort Vermillion put it straightforwardly: "To go green right now or semi-green, you got to be rich to do it."

Reducing environmental impact. The people who participated in this engagement expressed deep concern for protecting the land, water, air, and animals around them. They consistently advocated for implementing energy systems that produce the least amount of harm to the environment. While some participants expressed pride at the care that's taken to reduce the impact of oil and gas extraction on the earth, others expressed worry that existing energy production systems are harming the environment: "We're going to collapse if we don't start taking care of our water, our forests and our earth. We just can't keep going at the same rate we're going," shared someone in High Prairie. Participants also frequently urged leaders to reduce waste and environmental harm when considering transitioning to renewable energy. Specific concerns included the full lifecycle of solar panels and wind turbines, the potential harm of wind turbines to migrating birds, the impacts of lithium mining for EV batteries, the disruption of hydroelectric dams to river systems, and the potential large-scale risks of nuclear energy.

Ensuring reliable energy access. As previously discussed, these sessions took place shortly after a series of grid alerts issued by the Government of Alberta urging consumers to reduce their energy usage. In lieu of these events, reliability was top of mind for participants, many of whom expressed frustration that individual consumers were expected to monitor their consumption when large businesses and commercial buildings continued to operate. Speaking about the alerts, someone from Calgary said, "downtown was still lit up, so we're a little bit ticked off." One citizen from Smoky Lake succinctly articulated the high stakes issue of reliability in a cold climate:

> We want to make sure that if something were to happen, that people aren't going to freeze or lose connection to the world. If we lose energy, we'll be able to call 911 if there's an emergency. We need to make sure those things are there.

Visions of Energy transition

Participants were honest about their emotions regarding the transition from fossil fuels to various other forms of energy, with reactions ranging from excitement and curiosity, to uncertainty and fear. While each person and place had unique concerns, a few key themes emerged across the conversations and survey.

Overall, participants indicated that they see a place for *both* fossil fuels and renewable energy, expressing enthusiasm for the idea of diversifying their energy systems. In each location and within the survey, there were some participants who articulated being unable to envision any kind of shift away from fossil fuels, as one person shared in Fort Vermillion: "It's gonna be pretty hard to replace the oil and gas…it's been there forever and that's what people believe in." Many participants were particularly confident about the long future of fossil fuels as a feedstock in the creation of various consumer products, including in the renewable energy supply chain. However, overwhelmingly, most participants were open to or passionate about the idea that renewable energy could play a role in their lives. For example, reflecting on how other countries have begun to transition towards other energy sources, one Fort McMurray participant shared:

> I know for sure that we have to adapt or we'll get left behind. We have no choice but to evolve, regardless of how much we love our oil sands. I don't know what that solution is, but…we definitely have to evolve with the times.

One participant in Edmonton expressed passion for the idea of diversifying our energy systems:

> I think we need both fossil fuels and renewables in the future, and it seems very polarized, you're either for renewables or you can't stand them. We need to come together a little bit more, and work on our community, and our kinship together and prioritize our relationships.

Another former oil and gas worker who attended online reiterated the view that, while fossil fuels can't be immediately phased out, shifting away from oil and gas production should be a long-term goal:

> I've worked in the oil and gas industry my whole life, like over 40 years…for a long time, I thought we could do so much better. Oil and gas, I agree, isn't going to go away tomorrow. But that doesn't mean we should be building new tar sand plants, or new, big fossil fuel structures. Because it's harming our Earth [and] it's just making this world less livable. So I really feel strongly that we need to work harder at this, it needs to become more of a priority.

Participants emphasized a preference for a localized approach, rather than prescribing the same plan for every community. One consistent concern across all locations was that technologies like solar, wind, and geothermal energy may not work due to local weather conditions such as extreme cold temperatures. As such, people felt most comfortable with avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach, tailoring energy transition policies at the most local level possible. "Do pilot projects in each district…[try] different technologies until you find out the one mix that kind of fits everybody, where you're using a little bit of everything, but not all one source," one person in Fort Mcmurray suggested. As phrased by one Calgary community member, "Every province is different, every area is different. So yes, you need sustainable energies, but it also has to [be] what's the best for that area."

Overall, the Métis Citizens we spoke with returned to ideas of balance and transparency as guiding values in the energy transition. They urged leaders to be clear and consistent with their plans, expressing frustration that public plans regarding net-zero have not always been clear, or that policies are varied across different levels of government. One Edmonton resident provided an example of this uncertainty: "It's very kind of confusing and daunting when you think about it…They're saying cutting back on oil and gas is scary, but they are building a pipeline to Vancouver." Several participants expressed a sense that they're being forced from one industry into another. "They're going to switch it whether we like it or not," stated one individual in Medicine Hat. In this context, maximizing clear and realistic goal-setting was of the utmost importance to people across the province, as emphasized by one online participant: "I think that there needs to be more conversation and more transparency…it does affect everybody's livelihood and we need to transition, but we need to do it in a realistic and compassionate way."

Citizen Requests for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Each community expressed a wide range of desires from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. Amidst these diverse solutions, a few key themes emerged:

Expanding access to information. Participants were extremely enthusiastic about gaining more knowledge about energy, particularly renewable energy technologies. People repeatedly expressed feeling overwhelmed by the amount of information accessible to them, and desired more guidance in

understanding how renewable energy works. “I feel like it all stems from discrepancy in knowledge. When you look at Alberta, a lot of our knowledge is oil and gas. That's what we know,” shared one online participant. A Smoky Lake resident highlighted the importance of ensuring the community is aware of the benefits and risks of all forms of energy production: “They need to give everybody the facts…people don't know. They're asking us to make decisions and it depends on what you know.” Likewise, somebody in Fort Vermillion emphasized that all communications must be made accessible: “You know, there's a lot of Métis that do not even know about this, they do not have a computer, or else, they're in a place where they don't get reception…communication through technology is not reaching everyone.” Participants were particularly curious about accessing information on the Otipemisiwak Métis Government’s energy-related plans, as one survey respondent shared: “I would greatly appreciate details regarding the MNA's past, present, and upcoming projects, with a focus on education and information dissemination.”

Providing financial support for retrofits and utilities. Citizens were curious about how the Otipemisiwak Métis government could support the community in accessing grants, incentives, and rebates for renewables and energy efficiency retrofits. “I feel like the Métis Nation should be prioritizing the cost of these new sources. Some renewable energy sources can be expensive so being able to mitigate this for Citizens would make the transition easier,” shared one survey respondent. Beyond retrofits, participants were curious about how the Otipemisiwak Métis government could support Citizens absorbing the high costs of utilities, particularly Elders who may be living on fixed incomes: “People are living in poverty and [under the] poverty line, seniors on disability. It's impossible to keep up with utility bills,” someone in Edmonton urged. One High Prairie resident put it simply: “In my opinion, cut the cost for the Métis nation [on] all the energy that we use.” A Fort McMurray community member framed the Métis government providing advocacy, information, and financial incentives as a form of modeling behavior they want to see in their Citizens:

> As far as the Métis Nation, we would ask that we model the behavior we want, that we possibly look at a larger voice to help us with this transition and with this information, and then we would encourage working with municipalities on…the grants and some of the things that we can do to ease the financial burden.

Continued community engagement and consultation. Métis Citizens were enthusiastic about further engagement initiatives in the community, expressing excitement at the opportunity to voice their concerns. They emphasized that all governmental bodies and energy companies must engage the community regularly. Reflecting on the event, one Fort Vermillion participant said, “I think it's [got] to be done on a regular basis, too. Because once this meeting is over, we'll go home and forget about it.” Across locations, participants often emphasized that future engagement should be focused on three demographics. First, oil and gas workers who may be uniquely impacted by expanded renewable energy development, youth who will lead the future of the community, and Elders who have knowledge to pass along: “You have to tailor the education too. You can’t educate seniors the same way you're going to educate kids. It's a little different,” an individual in Calgary reiterated. Overall, participants were passionate about enforcing rigorous consultation processes for any and all

energy development projects, as articulated by a Medicine Hat citizen: "Before they do anything with the land, I think that they should talk to Indigenous communities in those specific areas."

Creating training support for workers. Participants expressed that no energy sector workers can be left behind in the process of expanding renewable energy production. One person in Fort McMurray shared the following reflections on renewable energy:

> I'm all for it, as long as it doesn't hinder people's jobs. It'll create more jobs, but what about those people that are older, and can't or won't go back to school to do this. How do you phase those people out, who still want to work?

In the face of potential job losses, Citizens urged the nation to invest in creating and subsidizing training opportunities for Métis people who want to insulate themselves from potential job loss. A participant in Medicine Hat emphasized that being proactive about investing in training will be critical to a smooth transition: "[Build] that confidence, give them the training, give them an opportunity to provide for their families. They're not gonna freak out so much when you're taking the oilfield away, because they have these opportunities in place for them." Several participants reiterated that any Otipemisiwak Métis Government-led renewable energy projects should be staffed by Citizens, and include training for apprentices seeking experience on the ground.

Conducting advocacy with government and industry. Participants often expressed that they need the Métis government to be their voice in conversations with energy companies and other governments. Speaking about the process of advocating with the federal and provincial government, one Calgary attendee stated that, "it's just a messy, gross process. It's such a colonial process as well that we're forced to try and fit into. So it's really not fair at all, really." Within this imperfect system, participants want their nation's leaders to "really [put] that pressure on, especially the provincial government right now." Another Calgary community member reiterated this idea: "[It] would be good for the Métis government to kind of put ourselves [out there] more…we need to be out there. We're kind of second class Citizens."

The content of this advocacy was not consistent across all locations: some participants expressed that they want the Métis government to advocate for slowing down or halting the transition, whereas others emphasized a desire for Métis leaders to lobby other governmental bodies to speed up renewable energy development. However, what remained consistent was a desire for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to be unrelenting in elevating the voices of Métis Citizens in conversations with other governments and private industry, to win benefits for the community. An online participant synthesized this idea:

> I think the Métis Nation also really has to be a strong advocate for its people. And to reiterate that, you know, its people have a long history with the land. They were still the keepers of the land. And they ultimately have the best interest for the land at heart. This transition looks like

it must be done in a sustainable way so that its members aren't negatively impacted through job loss or whatever that looks like.

What We Heard In The Sessions

Session Breakdown

Smoky Lake

Local Context: Relationship to Energy, Métis Identity, and Expectations of Government

When asked directly about their relationship to energy, participants shared a wide range of answers. Most people expressed that they don't spend much time thinking about where their energy comes from, when balancing a range of other concerns in their daily life. As one person expressed: "I don't think most people usually think about that on the day-to-day because they're busy doing other things." Several people agreed with this sentiment, stating that their primary relationship to energy was as a consumer, as captured in the following anecdote: "We get a bill every month, pay it, [and] then don't think about it until next month."

However, other participants described having more complex relationships to the energy sector. One person articulated an evolving relationship to energy over the course of their lifetime, with shifting feelings of gratitude as their levels of access changed: "As a child, we didn't get power until 1972, so I know what it's like. I know, once we did get power, how appreciative we became. When we moved to town…it was taken for granted for many years, until conversations started happening around energy, energy efficiency, [and] climate change." Another person described how having direct ties to the oil and gas industry shapes how you relate to energy production:

> I know many, many people in oil and gas…my son, for example, is an apprentice heavy duty mechanic. He's not directly employed at oil and gas, but he's the guy working on the big trucks that are going and hauling all this stuff….When energy is what's putting food on your table and taking care of your family and taking care of your children's needs, I suppose you have to look at it and think about things in a different way.

One participant explicitly tied their experience as a Métis person to their appreciation and gratitude for energy: "I live in an Indigenous community, one of the Métis settlements. One road in, pretty much one road [out]. If anywhere on the outskirts of our community someone has a crash and hits a power pole, the entire community all of a sudden…wonders where your power is coming from, because the entire community blacked out."

Throughout the conversation, other participants consciously reflected on their experiences as Métis people, sharing how their lived experiences shape their relationship to their surroundings. "We were raised to give thanks to the Creator for the sun, for the waters, for the air, all of that stuff," one participant shared. Another person reiterated this relationship of respect: "We understand that as

Métis people we live off the land or lived off the land, we're taught how to do it. We didn't want to damage the land that we lived off for our kids. We saw what happened in other places. We want to protect and conserve it."

The Smoky Lake residents we spoke to were skeptical about the likelihood of the government reaching their net-zero goals, and uncertain about their community being prioritized in these plans. When speaking about the government, they most often explicitly discussed federal figures and policies: "They've been talking about this for years, but I'm still trying to figure out how Trudeau is gonna get to zero emissions, I'd really like to know that," one person shared. Several participants expressed a desire for the government to set realistic goals, particularly regarding large-scale infrastructure projects. "I think sometimes what's happening is we're putting the cart before the horse," said one individual. Another agreed: "Government needs to make sure that we have the infrastructure and the support ready to go before we start implementing these things." Additionally, participants emphasized a desire for collaboration and alignment between different levels of government, particularly during climate emergencies, as captured in the following story:

> I border Saskatchewan and we had a fire. It came in from Saskatchewan [and] it happened to come in between the two settlements…so here's this fire just burning and nobody's doing anything about it. The municipal district is not going to deal with it, the province of Saskatchewan is not going to deal with it because [it's] on the other side of the border — that's First Nations land and on this side, it's Métis land. It's not in the green zone so the province of Alberta doesn't really give a hoot…What becomes the priority for Governments? Communities? People?

This vignette reflects a broader desire from the community to feel prioritized by governing bodies. As rural Métis community members, some individuals expressed a sense that their needs are not currently being met by government, making plans for a transformation to their energy systems seem like a faraway goal:

> A lot of the things for the federal government are out in Ontario and Quebec…when looking at these little communities that are more Northern, we need more support to be able to have an equal standard of living to these lower latitude cities and communities. We are more reliant on energy to make that possible, especially during the winter months. They're trying to push moving towards climate action and removing these energy sources when some communities don't even have access to clean drinking water. Why aren't we fixing these already systemic issues that we're dealing with before trying to implement all these new things?

Several Smoky Lake community members expressed an interest in feeling included in decision-making over the future of their energy systems, rejecting unilateral governing on energy. One person expressed a sense of defeat that the government appears to be in full control of the energy transition: "Whether we like it or not, this has been a transition. Because in the end, we don't have the last say,

the government does. So sometimes I feel like I'm defeated, like, literally defeated." Another person shared their frustration over the provincial moratorium on renewable energy development: "I couldn't understand why Indigenous communities or even average Albertans just sat back and let her put a moratorium on the sun, a moratorium on the wind. We're trying to educate people, trying to get the buy in, we're trying to get this and yet one person can put a halt and a stop to everything. What's up with that?"

Key Energy Priorities

Reliability. An important concern for Smoky Lake participants was energy reliability. As previously discussed, the stability of the electricity grid loomed large over the conversation, in the aftermath of the alerts issued over the previous winter. For example, participants expressed concern about whether the grid could handle widespread adoption of electric vehicles (EVs): "It's a balanced system and we don't have a lot to play with," shared one individual. "Them coming in and wanting to charge cars, I personally don't think we're quite ready for it." Others shared similar concerns regarding the reliability of heat pump technology: "Heat pumps, sure they'll work around here for 80% of the time, but people don't live 80% of the time." When asked what the Métis Nation should be prioritizing, one person directly stated: "Reliability. I think we are all worried about the heat in our house, just coming from last winter." Looking to the future, other participants advocated for using fossil fuels to supplement sources of energy that may present issues with reliability: "Things are great when they work but what if they don't? That means necessarily having an oil and gas-based backup, for cases of emergencies."

Cost. Also a priority for discussants was the cost of energy and renewable energy technologies. Participants shared worries about the upfront costs to individual consumers seeking to integrate lower-carbon technologies in their everyday lives. Several people expressed concerns about the financial barriers to purchasing an electric vehicle and community costs of installing local charging infrastructure, others were concerned about the cost of solar panel installations, and a few individuals expressed frustration at the carbon tax. These ideas are summarized succinctly in the following passage: "There has to be a balance with renewable energy. It has to be economical for people to buy in. The bottom line is if you're not making ends meet financially, you're probably not going to want to buy these things."

Environment. Another key concern for Smoky Lake participants was the environmental impact of renewable energy technology. "I think Albertans in general are really concerned about the environment and Albertans are some of the most conscious of the environment," shared one person. "Hunters and fishermen for instance, I think we really do care." In particular, participants raised many questions about how EV batteries, solar panels, and wind turbines are disposed of: "[We need to] figure out how to deal with some of the waste from these new renewable energy sources — like how to deal with the batteries and solar panels — before we can fully transition." In addition to many questions about the lifespan of solar, wind, and EV technology, one person raised concerns about the impact of hydroelectricity: "Hydro isn't necessarily the way to go because it disrupts ecosystems."

Local Weather. When discussing the adoption of different energy sources in Smoky Lake, participants emphasized that extreme fluctuations in temperatures must be accounted for: "Well in our weather, how can we go zero emission…you don't know how our winters are going to be, you don't know what the summer is going to be like. If we have no sun for so many days because it's cloudy, then what?" Participants had questions about the reliability of different technologies like heat pumps, geothermal energy, electric vehicles, and solar panels in extreme freezing events. One person advocated against an all-or-nothing approach in this context: "A hybrid system probably would work the best, especially in colder climates."

Health and Safety. Participants continuously expressed respect and concern for the health of local people, animals, land, and water, particularly with regards to the installation of wind energy systems. Speaking about a planned installation of wind turbines along the North Saskatchewan River, one person stated that, "if it's done in a safe way [it's okay], but if it's any danger to people, livestock, landscape…it's not a good thing." Others echoed this sentiment: "I also heard that people living around the turbines have lost cattle…There's a lot of health concerns, not only for livestock, for humans as well." One participant shared fears of the impacts of wind turbines on endangered bird species: "Whooping cranes, there's only 600 of them left. Those wind turbines are going to kill a lot more birds than any tailing pond."

Visions of Energy Transition

Some participants expressed a sense of fear and despair at the future. For example, one participant reflected on what the future holds for their descendents: "As I get older, I'm thinking, what exactly is it that we are leaving behind and how sustainable is it going to be for my great grandchildren?" Another participant shared a similar sentiment from the perspective of the millennial generation: "A lot of my generation is saying 'we can either keep trying or who cares at this point, because it's already going to go all up in flames anyways', which is just something that sucks."

Reflecting on the impact of the energy transition on workers, one participant shared the potential fears of those who work in oil and gas: "There's a lot of fear with this transition. Is it happening too fast? There's also got to be concern[ed] about [if it's] going to be equitable, is it going to lead to a larger gap between the wealthy and the poor?" Another person echoed this idea, saying: "It's one thing to transition when you may have the same skills, but are you going to get paid the same? Those are very high paying jobs."

However, others expressed hope in the power of setting realistic, attainable goals: "As a person, if you have an unrealistic goal eventually you're just gonna give up and say, 'forget it, we'll move on to something else.' They have to be realistic goals." Another person emphasized that change takes time and patience, but is ultimately possible: "It doesn't mean we can't still change. People don't necessarily want to, because you grow up used to all these things…People don't want to get on board with that, because change is scary, change is different." Someone else echoed this belief, saying "I think over time [these] concerns will be alleviated. It's going to take time."

Overall, the Smoky Lake residents we spoke with articulated a vision of the future rooted in a sense of realism and balance, expressing tolerance for complexity, contradictions, and challenges. “There's positives and negatives from every decision you make,” one person said, when discussing the upsides and downsides to different renewable energy sources. Another person reiterated this point, stating that “there's no 100% environmentally friendly way to get energy.” Someone else shared a similar perspective: “There's never anything that's really cut and dry as a perfect solution.”

Energy Sentiment Analysis

SMOKY LAKE

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 1 time throughout the conversation, primarily in a positive tone (100% positive).

EVs: EVs were discussed 30 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (67% negative, 20% neutral, 13% mixed).

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels (including oil, gas, and coal), were explicitly mentioned 13 times in the discussion, with a range of sentiments (46% positive, 31% neutral, 15% mixed, 8% negative).

Geothermal: Geothermal energy was mentioned 4 times throughout the discussion, with a range of sentiments (50% positive, 25% mixed, 25% negative).

Heat pumps: Heat pumps were mentioned 4 times throughout the discussion, with a range of sentiments (50% mixed, 25% negative, 25% positive,).

Hydroelectric: Hydroelectric energy was mentioned once throughout the conversation, with a negative sentiment (100% negative).

Nuclear: Nuclear power was discussed 7 times during the conversation, framed in an overwhelmingly positive light (86% positive, 14% neutral).

Solar: Solar energy was mentioned 16 times throughout the discussion, with a range of sentiments (63% mixed, 19% positive, 19% negative).

Wind: Wind energy was discussed 22 times throughout the conversation, with a predominantly negative sentiment (59% negative, 36% mixed, 5% neutral**)**

Citizen Requests for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

People want more information. The Smoky Lake residents that participated in this conversation were enthusiastic about learning more about renewable energy, and passionate about education in general. "I think the nation needs to prioritize educating our Citizens, right from babies to our Elders," one person shared. Topics of interest ranged from community gardening, the intricacies of EV charging infrastructure plans for rural communities, the pros and cons of wind turbines, and a more thorough exploration of how our tax dollars are used. For example, reflecting on hostility towards the carbon tax, one community member noted that "one solution is to be more transparent with what the carbon tax is being used for, so that people can see that and then that resentment isn't there. People have a lot of misconceptions of what it's for."

Participants were universally excited about building energy efficient homes. They discussed the importance of expanding housing as our country grows and emphasized that all new homes should be built with energy efficiency in mind. As one person stated, "Canada now wants to build thousands of homes that were behind. They should stop and think maybe they should insulate these homes a little better before they build them. That would cut down a lot of wasted gas." Another person emphasized that building green should be a critical part of any net-zero strategy: "if they want us to get to net zero, why aren't they encouraging all the new builds that are happening, to be net zero? Like people's houses, first should be a priority to get to net zero." Several individuals emphasized that this should be a top priority for the Métis Nation of Alberta: "As we move forward, and we get money to build, we need to look at how [to be] efficient and how we're doing things as a Métis Nation."

Community members we spoke to were clear that more community engagement is necessary to continue making progress. Participants expressed a desire for more conversations with Métis leaders on the topics of energy and climate, as phrased by one person: "Maybe it's even an idea to have engagement sessions with our leadership and their affiliates….We are all working together to move this nation forward as a collective…we are stronger when we're holding hands with the government." Another person spoke candidly about their desire for authentic engagement: "Just go talk to people out there, like a normal person, and not the government." People were particularly passionate about conducting engagement and education initiatives with young people in the community:

> [Something] really important is educating youth in our future, getting more community involvement, and getting an open conversation without a lot of hostility…making it a good conversation instead of something that people are either nervous or scared [about]. Our youth is our future with this and it's really important to educate them because they're going to be the ones that are going to be taking this on, this new chapter.

Edmonton

Local context: Connection to Energy, Climate Change, and Affordability

During the Edmonton community discussion, participants expressed a range of connections to the energy industry. Primarily, they spoke about their connection to the energy sector as consumers, discussing the monthly transaction of paying their utility bills as the extent of their thinking about energy production. "I pay my Epcor bill every month, that's about the extent of my involvement," shared one person. "I don't notice it until there's a power outage, running around trying to turn the lights off," said another. A few people had some experience working in energy and its adjacent industries, but even more participants had familial connections to the oil and gas industry, as one person shared: "I grew up with lots of pipe fitters and welders, so [I was] always around these people and the work. I remember the strikes and [it's] a difficult field to be in because [of] the hours and the time away from family and community is very hard, but nonetheless it was a very profitable way to look after your family."

Many Edmonton participants discussed the significant changes they have witnessed in their surroundings and explicitly linked these changes to climate change. While one individual questioned the validity of the climate crisis, most other participants pointed to drought and wildfires as evidence of human-caused climate change, and expressed concern over the impacts these events have had on forests, human health, crop yields, and housing prices. Linking the issues of affordability and climate change, a few people expressed frustration that oil and gas companies they deem responsible for the most significant contributions to climate change are not bearing the same financial burdens as individual consumers: "Considering that oil companies are actually spilling oil and stuff like that…Where's their carbon tax?...Why is it this little man paying for these, the environmental impacts caused by these giant companies?." Participants frequently talked about how daily life is getting too expensive.

Throughout the discussion, participants frequently returned to serious fears around cutting down trees and wildfires. Many people expressed a sense of grief over the destruction of treasured forests to commerce and natural disasters, with one person sharing that watching so many trees burn feels like the loss of a home. "Trees being planted don't solve the problem," lamented one person. "We've lost all of the benefits of all of those flowers and herbs that nurtured our ground and nurtured Mother Earth. They got rid of that and now they're putting up all these other little trees." Many other participants discussed deep existential fears of how wildfires and climate change may negatively impact their lives and the lives of their descendents, as one person shared: "I've had dreams of the world burn many times and it disturbed me. I am a cancer survivor and I can't have children I would have wanted. But at the same time, I don't think they would have brought another being into the world because it doesn't feel like a future."

Key Energy Priorities

Environment. The most frequently discussed topic relating to energy for participants in Edmonton was the environmental impact of energy production. Participants spoke about the issue of orphaned

oil and gas wells, fracking-related earthquakes, the impacts of EV battery disposal, concern for migratory birds being harmed by solar panels and wind turbines, fear over the potential impacts of nuclear exposures to the environment, and the negative consequences of hydroelectric dams. Overall, participants were highly sensitive to the environmental impacts of their energy usage: "I know we have to do our part. Even though our impact is very little in Canada, we have to do our part to look out for the future. But we really need to be real about it and I think taking care of our Earth, slowing down and not letting money and power be the driving forces."

Cost. The financial burden of energy production was also top of mind for participants. They expressed unhappiness with the rising price of utilities, and fear that a transition towards renewable energy would be too expensive for them to bear: "How will we afford it? Where's the money coming from?...In Métis culture, everybody works together as a family…we're trying to make our people stronger for the future. So that we retain our culture, our sense of self…Are we giving up on that?" While some people expressed hope that technologies like heat pumps and solar panels may eventually bring their costs down, most participants were reticent about taking on extra costs to lower their environmental impact.

Reliability. Energy reliability was another top priority in Edmonton, with participants pointing to the grid alerts issued by the province as a source of stress and concern. Some community members discussed have already taken steps to improve their reliability in the aftermath of the alerts, including having backup battery systems if their power goes out and relying on wood fireplaces to heat their homes. Some were fearful that added stress on the electrical grid due to adoption of EVs may result in more power outages, as captured by the following quote: "They just don't have the electrical energy to charge that if everybody's vehicles are electric. We just don't have the capacity."

Local weather. Another major concern was the suitability of different technologies to the landscape of Alberta. The top three technologies that people expressed doubt over were wind, solar, and EVs, with participants sharing reservations about their ability to withstand extreme cold and the absence of sunny or windy days.

Aesthetics. A few people shared discontents with the visual appearance of various forms of energy. "We're going to chew up a whole bunch of farmland and build windmills that look ugly," shared one person. Others shared this feeling and offered concerns about the unsightly appearance of solar panels. In response, a few individuals expressed finding oil and gas infrastructure unpleasant to view: "I think the oil sands are way worse to look at. That's just my opinion, though. We don't see it, it's out of sight, out of mind."

Vision of Energy Transition

Participants in Edmonton held a mix of perspectives on the prospect of a shift from fossil fuels to other forms of energy. Some people were explicitly enthusiastic about the idea of change, such as one former oil and gas sector employee, who shared: "I'm excited about the path to net zero…it's an exciting opportunity." Overall, most people expressed that they desire a balanced approach to energy

production, with space for both fossil fuels and renewable energy: “I think it's important to have a sustainable economy. We need to balance the cost of developing new technologies with costs [of] the future. We don't want to destroy [our] planet obviously, [or] the economy in the process. It's a matter of taking a balanced approach. I don't think we'll get there unless we focus on it and [put] effort into it.” The idea of diversification resonated with many participants, as phrased by one person: “We don't have renewable energy without fossil fuels. It's impossible. You can't have one without the other…It really needs to be diversified, the grid. You don't need to solely rely on one or the other, I think we need both.”

Within this vision, participants expressed dislike for a one-size-fits-all approach to integrating renewables into existing energy production systems. “There's a place for every technology but it's not gonna fit every situation,” shared one person. Another person emphasized that energy transition policies must be as localized as possible: “I think government people, they need to look at the jurisdictions in the areas and pick technology and certain things that fit that sector, not just come across a policy that is going to blanket a country and doesn't have to actually work in all the areas.”

Energy Sentiment Analysis

EDMONTON

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 8 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a positive tone (25% negative, 13% neutral, 63% positive).

EVs: EVs were discussed 24 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (92% negative, 4% neutral, 4% mixed).

Geothermal: Geothermal was discussed 12 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (17% negative, 33% neutral, 50% positive).

Heat pumps: Heat pumps were discussed 1 time throughout the conversation, primarily in a mixed tone (100% mixed).

Hydroelectric: Hydroelectric was discussed 5 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (40% negative, 20% neutral, 40% positive).

Nuclear: Nuclear was discussed 13 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (46% negative, 23% neutral, 8% mixed, 23% positive).

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels were discussed 22 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (27% negative, 5% neutral, 9% mixed, 59% positive).

Solar: Solar was discussed 37 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (38% negative, 14% neutral, 19% mixed, 30% positive).

Wind: Wind was discussed 15 times throughout the conversation, in a primarily negative tones (60% negative, 20% mixed, 20% positive).

Citizen Requests for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Increased access to information, education, and project updates. Participants were passionate about education as a general focus, with one person sharing, "We need our own school system, with our Elders and knowledge keepers and seniors teaching." In terms of specific topics of interest, Edmonton participants were passionate about learning more about sustainability tips they could integrate into their daily lives surrounding sustainable and self-sufficient food production, including gardening, cultivating bee hives, and bartering with their neighbors. "I think Métis nation of Alberta needs to be prioritizing growing and gardening…Putting together a teaching of how we can grow and also how to trade," commented one person. Participants were also interested in educating kids about different forms of energy and getting youth interested in renewable energy. For example, when asked what they would like the Métis government to prioritize, one person said: "Prioritizing education and getting kids excited about the development of this future."

In general, participants desired more education on the energy sector, the various options available to them, and projects being taken on by the Métis government. Several participants urged the government to utilize existing information channels like the newsletter to educate Citizens, as captured in the following quote: "In the newsletters would they be able to showcase the different energy sector(s), so the people in the energy industry know the benefits and stuff of [wind] turbines or solar…maybe in the newsletter each week or each month have a showcase on hydrogen [or something] so that people become more familiar with the different sectors." Regarding the government's own projects, community members were interested in more regular project updates and transparency in order to make up their own minds about the value of renewable energy. The following quotes discussing Salay Prayzaan, the Métis Crossing Solar Project, capture this idea:

> I haven't heard much about it in the Métis newsletters with [the] solar farm at the Métis Crossing and I'd like to know more about it. Like, what are they doing with the energy? How much energy is it generating? Has it worked? How did it work for the winter?
>
> I don't know anything about it. I don't know anything about anything we're talking about really, but it would be nice to know. Okay, does it work on really smoky, overcast days? [What about] when there's snow covered?
>
> Can they make that meter live so that on today, when you go on the internet, you can see? This is an idea…we [could] log into the Alberta Métis Nation website? I didn't even know that [it] was operational yet.

Create support systems for transitioning workers. Even participants who were excited about the prospect of new opportunities associated with the net-zero economy shared fears about what felt like inevitable job losses involved with a structural change to Alberta's economy. One individual from a farming family discussed how their family had developed the ability to adapt and be resilient to changes due to inherent uncertainty in farming with climatic and market changes. They emphasized that people have been through this kind of shift before and they will go through it again and come out

stronger, but need leaders in the community to invest in skills training to make the shift as smooth as possible. Participants reiterated that while all workers must be supported, as the future of the community, youth must be a key focus in developing skills training initiatives. “There's so many of our youth going into the trades and that, and we have to look after the industry that's going to be there,” urged one participant.

Continued community engagement and consultation work within the Métis community, both with governing bodies and the energy industry. “I want to do open communication between the companies and the community,” shared one individual. “The Indigenous people have the most concern about the land than anyone…talk to the Indigenous people,” said another. Several participants expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to speak about these issues and a desire for more engagement: “I don’t think this is happening enough and I think all of these talks need to be happening on a regular and faster basis.” Another person reiterated the importance of uplifting Métis voices in the world of sustainability and energy: “I mean, everybody has their own voice and the more people that speak out, the greater chance of success. But I only heard recently, since I heard about the energy engagement sessions, that there was even a Métis voice In climate change.”

For future sessions, some people articulated a desire for more intentional knowledge transfer between the Métis government and Elders in the community. “Another group that should be addressed is the Elders in the community, because the Elders are the people who listen to and have the knowledge,” one person shared. Another emphasized that older community members can be some of the people most nervous about shifts in the economy: “Go out and speak to the Elders on what their views are and [teach] them [about] solar so that they're not scared, because a lot of Elders are scared of change.”

Fort McMurray

Local Context: Connection to Energy, Affordability, and Job Security

The Fort McMurray community members we spoke with expressed having deep ties to the energy sector, describing the oil and gas industry as a pillar of their lives. For example, at one table, the Métis government facilitator asked attendees if they had either worked in energy or had a family member who was employed in oil and gas, and every person answered yes. "I think living in Fort McMurray, we're all connected to it and we all know someone or have a family member that works in the industry. I mean, our city is structured to serve the oil sands," shared one person. When asked to describe their connection to energy, another person shared that people around the province and country all travel to Fort McMurray to work in energy. They stated that if someone has a desire to make a living in energy, they've either worked in Fort Mac or hope to.

When describing the nature of these connections and experiences, people offered a wide range of perspectives. Some attendees, shared extremely positive feelings about their experience working in oil and gas, including gratitude for opportunities the industry has provided for them and their families, as one participant states:

> It's a good way to provide for a family. I mean, growing up here, there was a dirt road out there. It's helped the city to grow a lot by providing community activities. Compared to what I had to what my son has here locally…there's a lot more things available. I don't know how it would work if you kind of phased out, like what happens to people here? How do people find other jobs…how do you sustain life here? Considering it's grown based on sites and then phasing it out in 50 years, what happens to Fort McMurray?

Others shared mixed or negative feelings about the industry, such as frustration at the unpredictability of job availability and guilt over how oil and gas extraction impacts the environment:

> As a family we didn't know if [we were] going to work or have a job…that's how I'm connected and I have friends and family that still work in oil and gas and you see just the uncertainty and stress in their lives.

Another participant was candid about their grief over having worked in industry:

> I can tell by the way you guys talk, a lot of people still love oil and gas. But after me being here all this time, all these years, and seeing what it [has] done to this town, I feel guilty that I worked at that plant.

Participants discussed how much Fort McMurray had changed in their lifetimes. They discussed how the influx of fly-in and fly-out, transient workers has changed the community. "Even at Syncrude still, I thought there was a lot of local people but there's still a lot of people that live in Edmonton who leave right after for their shift work — it's crazy," said one person. Several people expressed frustration with

how outsiders who conduct shift work in their town but lack a connection to the community complain about their home. Participants also discussed some local environmental impacts of living close to energy production, including water contamination and air quality issues.

In addition to reflecting on their experiences working in industry, participants described their struggles keeping up with the cost of daily life, expressing frustration and confusion about why their utility bills are so high when they live so close to the beginning of the energy supply chain. "You can't afford gas, you can't afford groceries, you can't afford anything," expressed one participant. They shared their discontent with feeling overly taxed via Canada's carbon pricing system and their dislike of excessive waste and overconsumption. One person reflected on changes they've seen in the quality of products in their lifetime: "You had quality over quantity — when you built a washing machine it lasted you for your lifetime… it didn't last five years, right? Consumerism is what's driving the fossil fuel industry."

Key Energy Priorities

Environment. A critical concern for Métis Citizens in Fort McMurray was the environmental impact of their energy systems. "I know we need to develop and other things have to change and stuff like that, but just do it in a clean environmental way," shared one participant. They expressed concern with how new renewable energy systems may impact the environment, including fears surrounding critical minerals mining, and the disposal of wind turbines and solar panels. They also shared concerns with how the change and growth of the energy industry in their town has impacted the local ecosystem: "We got to watch the trucks get bigger and bigger and watch the exhaust come out of the back end. It just got darker and larger." Participants consistently indicated that this belief in the protection of the environment must be made compatible with maintaining high quality of life for local people: "I am all about the environment and wanting to do better but also not hinder jobs and careers for people."

Cost. Another important issue for community members in Fort McMurray was the cost of their energy systems. They discussed the high cost of their utility bills and expressed fear that expanding renewable energy would make their lives more unaffordable: "A lot of people want to do better for the environment. Absolutely. But…I want to save money on my monthly bills. I care about the environment but this is also important." Participants were specifically concerned about the cost of wind and solar energy to the individual consumer. However, one individual who had successfully installed solar panels in their house was enthusiastic about the financial benefits they had seen: "At home I love it because you are saving on…your gas bill or fuel bill."

Local weather. Participants raised contrasting ideas and concerns about the suitability of their climate to various forms of renewable energy. For example, one person commented on how much sunshine Alberta gets, saying that solar energy would be optimal for the community. Whereas another person questioned how solar could function during winter, saying: "Solar is not going to cut it out here. We are too far north." Other concerns included the impacts of hail and snow on solar panels, as well as how density of trees in the area may impact the functioning of wind turbines.

Health and Safety. Several participants shared fears about how working and living immersed in the oil and gas industry impacts their health. “Especially in the wintertime when it was cold, [there was] just a brown smog over the pit and we were breathing it all the time,” shared one individual. Discussing their participation in community engagement, one person shared: “I wanted to find out how people were feeling about these oil companies putting their tailing ponds into the Athabasca. There’s no freakin’ way they can treat that water and then put it into the Athabasca to be safe.” A few people discussed their fears about the safety of nuclear energy, particularly amidst wildfire season.

Reliability. Participants expressed frustration about managing the grid alerts, with one person commenting that “it was quite scary to realize how fast we can lose our power.” Other people commented that living so close to the industry brought them comfort, as local outages are unlikely due to their connection to the same grid as local power companies. Some participants expressed worries that adding electric vehicles to the grid would create further pressure on the electrical grid. One person was very curious about learning more about how installing solar panels could potentially support them during rolling blackouts.

Visions of Energy Transition

Participants in this conversation were candid about their fears over job insecurity. The deep connection between the community and the fossil fuel industry means that many people in the community fear that renewable energy could disrupt the quality of life that working in oil and gas has afforded them. “I don’t think nobody sounded concerned until this year,” shared one person. Another participant articulated the struggle that local workers face in considering the shift: “If you work in that industry, how do you support a transition like that? You know? You're kind of in a catch twenty-two. You're in that industry, you don't want to give that up.” However, fears over job loss were not limited to energy transition. Participants described fears of being pushed out of energy jobs due to automation, artificial intelligence, and immigration. Overall, participants were deeply concerned about the long-term stability of their livelihoods, as well as the ability of young Métis people to build a fruitful career.

Participants expressed certainty about the long future of oil and gas, while acknowledging a role for renewable energy as a supplement. “It's great to diversify the sector and have different sources of energy sources,” stated one person. “We feel that there's a balance between fossil fuels and renewable energy,” shared another. However, some people expressed anger at the idea that the government is pushing them to transition, with one person describing the transition as “getting rammed down your throat,” and another saying it’s “like [being] herded with a cattle prod.” They described a vision of energy transition that is voluntary, transparent, and fine-tuned to each specific community. Some participants spoke about renewable energy as though it was simply not possible in Northern Alberta communities: “A lot of the renewable energy stuff is for communities South. Solar works like wind — if there is no wind, you’re just not making coffee that time or turning your oven on.” As such, some participants advocated for pilot projects to test local-level energy transition initiates: “I kind of like the idea of test pilots, but all over because when you look at wind energy, some areas are windier than others. Some are sunnier than others…the North is different from the South.”

Energy Sentiment Analysis

FORT MCMURRAY

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 19 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a neutral tone (26% negative, 63% neutral, 11% positive).

CCUS (Carbon Capture, Utilization, Storage): CCUS was discussed 6 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (17% negative, 50% neutral, 33% positive).

EVs: EVs were discussed 38 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (37% negative, 55% neutral, 8% mixed).

Geothermal: Geothermal was discussed 25 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a neutral tone (8% negative, 72% neutral, 20% positive).

Heat pumps: Heat pumps were discussed 1 time throughout the conversation, in a neutral tone (100% neutral).

Hydroelectric: Hydroelectric was discussed 9 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a neutral tone (11% negative, 78% neutral, 11% mixed).

Nuclear: Nuclear was discussed 20 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (30% negative, 55% neutral, 15% positive).

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels were discussed 104 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (23% negative, 55% neutral, 8% mixed, 14% positive).

Solar: Solar was discussed 104 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a neutral tone (13% negative, 64% neutral, 10% mixed, 13% positive).

Wind: Wind was discussed 58 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (45% negative, 50% neutral, 2% mixed, 3% positive).

Citizen Requests for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Increased access to high-quality information on renewable projects. The Fort McMurray community members who attended this session were extremely enthusiastic about gaining more information about renewable energy and government planning for the energy transition. "I think we are all willing to adapt, if we have the right information to help us do such a thing, productively and responsibly," shared one individual. Another person reiterated this idea: "I think we're all on board to evolve with new energy…But for me, it's just information. We need information to put these plans and actions in place, and without real information, those plans will never get off the ground."

Participants emphasized that focusing on providing high quality information to Métis Citizens is particularly important due to the high levels of polarization and misinformation on energy: "Renewable energy, oil and gas, it [can] just be a very polarizing topic. So it's hard to find a trusted source that just gives the facts versus trying to influence you one way or another." Another person reiterated this idea: "There's a lot of misinformation regarding oil sands, regarding climate change. That's fine but we need real information." Participants also requested more regular positive updates and success stories from the Métis government: "I think promoting and sharing the good things that the nation does as well. If there's pockets of success somewhere, share that information so that people know."

Workforce supports for transitioning workers and youth. Given the high levels of career uncertainty expressed by the community members in attendance, participants were passionate about creating structures to support workers who may voluntarily or involuntarily be seeking employment in new sectors. "If they were to retrain, what are they going to retrain for? Focus on retraining." One participant also noted that there are some local programs designed to get kids involved in the trades as early as Grade 11, but parents are beginning to worry that these programs are misleading their children's career paths. A few people commented that youth of the community have a more open disposition towards renewable energy, making them prime candidates for new training opportunities: "I think as the generations behind us come up, they'll be more receptive to that stuff naturally anyways."

Strengthen advocacy and leadership. People were passionate about the power of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government as an intergovernmental advocate for the Métis peoples. As phrased by one person, "We're a little voice over here but we speak loud, and the Métis Nation can speak way [louder]. You just need to have the right people, in the right place, doing the right homework, making the right case." Another person reiterated this idea, "I think we've got to convince the government of the problems we have, because right now we're talking on deaf ears, they are not listening."

Calgary

Local context: Rapid Change, Affordable Housing, and Polarization

Participants in the Calgary community conversation portrayed their community as one in the midst of rapid change, both environmentally and economically. Many discussants commented upon how quickly the city has grown and the challenges of building sufficient housing infrastructure to keep up. "They're building houses in the craziest spots now in Calgary," remarked one person. Another commented upon growing pains in the development process: "We are still building out instead of up. They have taken up more and more land. " With regards to the climate, some individuals discussed potential upsides to a warming environment, including more plant life. However, other participants discussed negative impacts they've begun to see in their community related to climate change, including severe flooding and displacement of wildlife. Overall, many participants expressed a sense of fear of the rapid changes and population growth in their city, conveying uncertainty over how a high quality of life can be maintained for all Calgarians: "It's growing too fast. I feel like there's too many people being brought in, when there's people suffering here."

Calgary's status as global hub of energy production was emphasized throughout the discussion, as participants described varying levels of connectedness to the energy sector. When asked about their connection to the energy sector, several people described their relationship as primarily one of consumption. The sentiment that "I don't really have any connection other than my own utility bill" was common. However, others articulated having a very strong connection to energy production. As put by one individual, "because we live in Calgary we've always been affected the whole time we lived here. Probably more so than people that live in Edmonton." Several people had worked in oil and gas, had family members who were employed in it, or worked in adjacent industries supplying goods and services to the fossil fuel industry. One individual shared that this close proximity to the fossil fuel industry has brought with it some challenges, as fluctuations in oil and gas prices bring direct fluctuations in the local economy:

> It's always been a little tougher here because our economy is going up and down…Whatever the oil and gas companies do, it affects us… I don't work in it but I've seen when they do these big layoffs, and all of a sudden you see all these couriers that all got a degree in something because they were in the oil and gas. Now they're all working at Costco.

Overall, participants were knowledgeable, curious, and concerned about the future of Alberta's energy industry in the international context. They often discussed Canada's resources with pride and responsibility, as captured in the following quote: "Canada's energy is not just what we consume in our own backyard…When I think about energy, I think of it in terms of the demands of the planet."

In terms of key challenges facing the community, participants emphasized that affordability is the central issue defining their day-to-day lives. "You don't have time to save because everything's going up," stated one person. This concern with affordability drove some dissatisfaction with Canada's carbon pricing system, which was raised by a few participants, as captured in this quote: "When the

carbon tax is more than what the cost of your usage of the natural gas…how do we make sense of that?" Affordable housing and home ownership was of particular concern, with renters and homeowners alike expressing that the cost of finding an affordable place to live is becoming more difficult in Calgary.

Participants also expressed frustration with levels of negativity and polarization in conversations about energy. "I hear so many different sides and negative things," one person shared. Another person reiterated this idea: "We [need] common sense…we can't have extremism on either side, we need the middle ground." One individual pointed to the media as pushing narratives that create disagreement: "I think we're getting a very imbalanced media over these topics now. I think they go for the spin of what they think is going to be most sensational." Given the high level of stress associated with conversations on energy, some individuals are choosing to opt out entirely: "I try to avoid thinking about it because of all the politics and how extreme some people are."

Key Energy Priorities

Cost. Calgary participants expressed concern over the costs of their energy sources. Topics of concern included present day utility bills, the costs of potential retrofitting and microgeneration installation, and the costs of EVs. One individual shared that they had invested in residential solar panels and had seen financial benefits from doing so. However, overwhelmingly, fears over costs shaped resistance to accepting renewable energy: "As the average Joe, I know I can't do it."

Reliability. Fears about energy reliability were of high concern. Throughout each conversation, participants referred back to the example of grid alerts from the provincial government as a turning point in their thinking about the reliability of their energy: "I think a lot of people were shocked that it would get to the point where they were asking us to turn off our toasters." This concern translated into interest in how other forms of energy could support Alberta's existing energy systems, with participants expressing a particular interest in solar and nuclear energy.

Environment. Interest in reducing environmental impact was closely behind reliability in the top energy issues of Calgary participants. "We're steadily polluting Mother Earth," one concerned participant reflected. "You want to know how everything affects animals and the food and the soil," another person shared. Participants expressed concerns about the environmental impacts of many forms of technologies and forms of energy, including electric vehicles, geothermal energy, wind turbines, and oil and gas production.

Local weather. The fourth most frequent concern shared was around local weather and the suitability of various technologies. The following quote captures many participants' fears about transitioning away from fossil fuels: "When I think about Alberta's energy sources, I am all for renewables, develop the heck out of them. But they are not there when it's minus 40. When you flip your switch that power must be there." Specific technologies of concern included nuclear and solar energy, as well as electric vehicles.

Health and Safety. A few participants expressed that ensuring that energy is produced in a safe manner is their highest concern. While discussing the prospect of renewable energy in the province, one person raised questions about the safety of new developments: "Is that affecting just the environment, or ourselves [and] our bodies?" Speaking optimistically, one person shared a clear request for future energy development: "I think the moral of the story is just, you have to have consistent, reliable, safe energy so that you can feel safe about receiving it to your home."

Visions of Energy Transition

Regarding the energy transition, while a few people expressed that they could never imagine moving beyond oil and gas, participants overwhelmingly recognized the necessity of expanded renewable energy development. "I think if you can renew it, do it. If you can't, then figure out a way to do it," said one individual. In terms of what the shift should look like, participants were adamant that they do not want to be forced into any kind of shift: "I believe in continuous improvement…what's going on now – the government's are forcing us." Likewise, given the affordability crisis, they emphasized that any shift away from fossil fuels should not result in greater economic inequality: "If we keep going down this road, we're gonna end up with a fragmented society, we are gonna end up with elitism." Community members emphasized that the people who make up the energy sector must be considered over everything else, as one person empathetically shared: "At the end of the day, this is not a technology problem. It's a people problem." The following quote reiterate this idea:

> The industry is about people and it's filled with people that just want to look after their families and earn a living for themselves. I think whether you're tied to that industry, there are people within it that care about reducing the impact that it has. And I don't think they're married to fossil fuels.

Throughout the discussion, participants were candid about the need for the Métis government to be pragmatic and proactive in energy development, using all of the natural resources at their disposal for the benefit of their community, as captured in the following quote:

> Our priority needs to be making money. We need to invest in this and have the Métis people invest in it. Also getting back a share of it…because you're seeing all politicians get stuff for the Métis people. They use our name. Well, we're Métis people, but we don't ever see any of the benefits.

Energy Sentiment Analysis

CALGARY

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 8 times throughout the conversation, in a range of tones (13% negative, 38% neutral, 50% positive).

CCUS (Carbon Capture, Utilization, Storage): CCUS was discussed 1 time throughout the conversation, in a positive tone (100% positive).

EVs: EVs were discussed 24 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (79% negative, 8% neutral, 8% mixed, 4% positive).

Geothermal: Geothermal was discussed 2 times throughout the conversation, equally in positive and negative tones (50% negative, 50% positive).

Heat pumps: Heat pumps were discussed 3 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a positive tone (33% neutral, 67% positive).

Hydroelectric: Hydroelectric was discussed 3 times throughout the conversation, in a range of tones (33% negative, 33% mixed, 33% positive).

Nuclear: Nuclear was discussed 16 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (13% negative, 44% neutral, 19% mixed, 25% positive).

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels were discussed 40 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a positive tone (18% negative, 3% neutral, 20% mixed, 60% positive).

Solar: Solar was discussed 43 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (19% negative, 40% neutral, 21% mixed, 21% positive).

Wind: Wind was discussed 10 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (40% negative, 10% neutral, 2% mixed, 30% positive).

Citizen Requests for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Increased knowledge-sharing and education. Participants spoke about knowledge-sharing as a form of community building: "There's a few things that I think it comes down to… I think [education] is a building community piece. So you can share knowledge and create more connection and learn what other people are doing, what they think." Participants expressed a sense that they are not yet fully aware of the opportunities and risks associated with renewable energy development and want to know more, particularly given high levels of polarization and misinformation. "You can't make an informed decision. There's so much information out there. I don't know what is real and or is it just somebody's take on it." Beyond education on energy, participants expressed interest in more education on food cultivation and hunting in order to expand their ability to provide for their families and connect with their Métis identity. "Métis have always gone out — we've grown food, we've had trap lines, we still need to keep that." From cooking classes to composting lessons, participants were enthusiastic about education around food production.

Financial support for residential retrofits, such as window replacements, heat pumps, and solar panels. Many participants expressed that they want to implement changes to their personal energy consumption, particularly if it lowers the cost of their utilities bills. However, they do not feel financially stable enough to invest in those upgrades and are either overwhelmed by or unable to qualify for support programs. "Invest in your people and put solar panels on their house. Have your Citizens with renewable energy or recyclable energy…the stuff they might be putting up in Métis Crossing [is] great but also individuals [matter]," urged one person. Someone else pointed to the history of the Métis community in making the case for expanded access to retrofits:

> The Métis nation is very unique in comparison to other Indigenous nations…we're very dispersed. We all live in separate houses in different areas for communities. You know, we do have settlements and some communities that are more predominantly Métis, [but] we mostly have our own individual houses…I think it's really important that a piece of this is that we over time collectively decarbonize our residences and make them safer and more secure.

Continued community engagement on these topics. "Just [do] not move these projects through. Have a conversation before," stated one individual. Participants expressed a desire for both government and private industry to prioritize engagement and consultation in good faith, as phrased by one person: "It's really good when you come to an Indigenous community without a business agenda. Because, you know, you're just trying to build working relationships." Figuring out how to better engage youth was of particular concern, because as one person shared, the same community tends to attend most community events: "What I'm realizing is it's always the same people participating…we need to figure out different ways to get more people engaged."

Fort Vermilion

Local context: Connection to Energy, Industry Instability and Climate Impacts

The discussion revealed a strong connection between the Fort Vermilion community and the oil and gas industry, with many participants having family members working in the sector. They observed a decline in local oil and gas activities, stating, “It slowed down a lot. It used to be really busy.” Participants often expressed feelings of being overlooked in energy-related decision-making processes, appreciating the opportunity to share diverse viewpoints, and suggesting that larger urban centers should bear more responsibility for energy reduction. “I'm just pleased that your team came to Fort Vermilion to listen to us, because quite often that doesn't happen. Decisions that are made that affect us and we have no oversight,” shared one person.

During the discussion, participants expressed curiosity about existing renewable energy projects in their community. They described a growing interest in alternative forms of energy, with some participants sharing interest about utilizing small-scale solar projects to become more self-sufficient. “Someone is working on outfitting a campsite with a combo of solar and propane,” shared one participant. Another person reiterated this curiosity:

> I'd love to try solar. There is a lady that lives not too far from us that is [using] solar [for] her family…I wouldn't mind trying it as long as you have a backup…but I know they say that initially, it's like a big expense to get it set up and everything, but I would try it.

Some people conveyed having heard about negative experiences with geothermal energy in nearby areas. One participant recounted: "I haven't heard any cases of geothermal working, because they tried in Hinton…They scrapped that, [it] wasn't feasible.” Another added: "I know one in Edson and it's a personal residence, but they absolutely hate it… they absolutely hate it. It is so high maintenance to keep the system operating."

During the discussion, participants reflected on the instability of the oil and gas industry for workers, For example, one participant recounted how corporate consolidation often led to job losses, as recounted by: “I did all my life in the oil field…We got bought out and [they were] kind of dissolved, our positions. It was 2006. Our small company went to a company that bought like [several] different service rig companies.” The participants emphasized the difficulty of transitioning out of the oil and gas industry after spending most of their working lives in it. They also suggested a broader decline in the oil and gas industry in the area, resulting in job scarcity: “There's nothing like that around here. The closest place to work in the energy district is High Level and it's dying over there, like oil and gas is slowly dying.”

Participants emphasized a lack of comparable job opportunities in the local area, with lumber mills being mentioned as one of the few remaining industries sustaining the local economy. “The only thing around here that keeps things going is the [lumber] mills,” shared one person. Throughout the

discussion, participants conveyed a sense of fear and anxiety about their future prospects, underscoring the personal impact of these industry changes.

In addition to reflecting on local industries, participants shared their observations and concerns about the local climate impacts they had experienced. They described a region that had been grappling with significant environmental changes, particularly related to water issues. This scarcity of water had led to increased wildfire activity, even during winter months: “It's been really dry, and now this winter, like they were fighting fire all winter. No water in the bush.” They described unusual weather fluctuations, including intermittent rains, rapid snow melt, and alternating periods of flooding and drought. “Not for a lot of years… has it been this warm,” shared one participant. Several people had noticed significantly lower water levels in several bodies of water, including Great Slave Lake and Yellowknife. Some participants suggested that deforestation might have been contributing to water retention issues.

Key Energy Priorities

Cost. Fort Vermilion community members consistently expressed frustration with the high costs of their utility bills, sharing fears that shifting to renewable energy could make life even more unaffordable: “They [need to] find renewable energy that's going to be cost effective. Then probably that's a good thing. With the extra taxes, it's horrendous. My current bill is 600 plus for power. How can you afford it?” They shared concerns about the costs associated with residential solar installations, the drilling costs of geothermal energy, and the various expenses associated with electric vehicles. While discussing alternative energy sources, participants also noted dissatisfaction with current fossil fuel prices, mentioning the high costs of diesel and oil.

Reliability. During the discussion, participants frequently reflected on the challenge of securing reliable energy in rural Northern communities. They described harsh winter conditions, with temperatures dropping to -50 degrees and long periods of darkness creating high demands for heating and energy. Fort Vermilion community members recounted past energy supply challenges, including shortages of both natural gas and electricity. Some participants shared adaptive measures they had taken, such as installing wood-burning fireplaces to ensure warmth during outages, as stated by one participant: "We installed a wood burning fireplace in our house because a couple of winters ago, it was low on natural gas.” Participants often expressed confusion about the sources of their energy and the causes of shortages. Another participant questioned, "What was the actual cause for that alert? Like, what did something go down? Or was there something not running at the time?" Overall, participants shared frustration about rural communities being impacted by energy shortages, despite creating less demand on the grid than urban centers. "You go to a place like Edmonton… I mean it's not us, these little people here , it's the big guys that need to cut back," said one person.

Environment. Throughout the conversation, participants expressed deep concern for the local environment and frequently reflected on the environmental impacts of renewable energy. They shared concerns about the negative impacts of hydroelectric energy on water levels and river

ecosystems, potential waste created when disposing of solar panels, and the potential disruption of wind turbines to local birds. Geothermal energy was viewed positively, with participants affirming its minimal above-ground environmental impact. One participant noted: "So far the only thing I've ever seen that is practical and seems legit, is that geothermal... there's no real threat to the environment and all they do is just drill down." Nuclear energy prompted worries about waste disposal and its potential impact on rivers, with one participant mentioning community resistance to nuclear in Peace River: "I think a lot of the towns down the river from there boycotted it, because they didn't want that waste [to] go into the river."

Local weather. Participants consistently expressed worries about how the climate of Northern Alberta could limit the applicability of renewable energy. Reflecting on the applicability of wind energy, someone stated that the community "doesn't get [the] type of wind" to generate sufficient power, while others noted "we don't have a day where we don't have a wind." However, they agreed that the wind was still not comparable to other regions, with one participant stating, "we don't get the big winds like down south." Solar power was viewed skeptically due to the lack of sunlight during winter months. The practicality of electric vehicles (EVs) in extreme cold was a topic of significant doubt among the participants, particularly regarding battery performance. Oil and gas dependence was a recurring theme, with many participants viewing it as the best suited energy resource for a cold climate.

Health and safety. During the discussion, participants expressed concerns that forms of renewable energy may cause adverse health effects. They voiced worries about the impact of hydroelectric power, specifically mentioning potential increases in mercury levels in water: "I was told too that supposedly the mercury levels are supposed to go up by like four times in our water." Several safety concerns were raised regarding nuclear energy, with some participants perceiving it as "a little dangerous". Health risks associated with electromagnetic fields were a significant topic of discussion, with participants referencing stories about sheep developing tumors near power lines and extending this concern to solar panels.

Visions of Energy Transition

During the discussion, Fort Vermilion participants expressed a range of views on the transition to renewable energy. Some participants expressed optimism that technological advancements would make renewable sources more feasible over time: "Obviously it's important to work towards. It's no different than 100 years ago with horses transitioning to vehicles. It's terribly inconvenient, [but] as long as it's in slow progress…it eventually becomes extremely convenient."

However, there was significant skepticism and resistance among others. Many participants viewed oil and gas as irreplaceable, especially in harsh climates, stating: "There's nothing that's really more efficient and foolproof than oil and gas. Like nothing else is proven to work throughout all the harsh conditions that we live in." Some people perceived the push for change as primarily coming from the federal government, with little local support: "[It] just seems like that push is from the federal government? Like locally, no one's really trying to push it… that's more on the social media…in news and that type of stuff."

Cultural and community factors played a role too, with recognition that many communities, especially those reliant on oil and gas, were resistant to change: "A lot of the communities around here, they're old school. They want to see the work for oil and gas." Some participants argued that individual actions had limited impact compared to larger industrial sources of emissions:

> They're trying to make people live like all this, [use] all this renewable energy and stuff, but [there's] all these planes that fly all over the world… it's not all us little people, it's the factories, it's the planes, it's the ships, it's everything.

However, there was also discussion about the potential for adaptation, with suggestions that existing oil and gas infrastructure could be repurposed for alternative energy sources like geothermal: "Rainbow Lake, they have so many existing wells right now, from oil and gas… all you do is run pipes into that you can circulate if the holes are there already." Participants emphasized the importance of a localized approach, noting that different regions within the province had varying potentials for renewable energy sources, necessitating tailored solutions for each area. They reiterated the importance of collecting community-specific data to make informed decisions about renewable energy adoption. This data could include factors such as sunlight exposure, temperature variations, and local energy consumption patterns.

Energy Sentiment Analysis

FORT VERMILION

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 10 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a positive tone (40% neutral, 60% positive).

EVs: EVs were discussed 11 time throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (100% negative).

Geothermal: Geothermal was discussed 15 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (20% negative, 47% neutral, 7% mixed, 27% positive).

Heat pumps: Heat pumps were discussed 1 time throughout the conversation in a neutral tone (100% neutral).

Hydroelectric: Hydroelectric was discussed 5 times throughout the conversation in a negative tone (100% negative).

Nuclear: Nuclear was discussed 3 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (67% negative, 33% mixed).

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels were discussed 13 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a positive tone (15% negative, 15% neutral, 69% positive).

Solar: Solar was discussed 31 time throughout the conversation in range of diverse tones (29% negative, 32% neutral, 19% mixed, 19% positive).

Wind: Wind was discussed 8 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (75% negative, 25% positive).

Citizen Requests for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

More access to information. During the discussion, participants expressed a general lack of knowledge about energy transition and renewables, which made it difficult for them to envision the process. The participants recognized a need for community education about available options and technologies related to energy transition. They also emphasized a desire to understand how this transition would benefit them personally and their communities. Some participants mentioned confusion about utility bills, suggesting a need for more transparency or education in this area. The discussion also revealed a digital divide, with some people, particularly in the Métis community, lacking access to computers or internet reception. This highlighted an issue of unequal access to information about energy transition. Participants voiced concerns that an over-reliance on technology-based communication was leaving some people out of the loop, especially in more remote areas. These themes collectively pointed to a need for more inclusive, accessible, and tangible education and communication strategies around energy transition and renewables.

Regular community engagement initiatives. During the discussion, participants emphasized the importance of ongoing community engagement. They recognized that without consistent follow-up, "we'll go home and forget about it," and the impact of a single meeting could quickly fade. Participants highlighted that maintaining community engagement requires dedicated effort, with one individual noting that "somebody needs to keep it going." This underscored the need for a driving force or responsible party to ensure continuity. The discussion reflected an understanding that effective community engagement required sustained attention and dedicated resources to remain meaningful and impactful over time. Participants expressed a desire for more structured, ongoing community engagement efforts, stating that "it's going to be done on a regular basis," rather than isolated or sporadic initiatives.

Expanded financial support for residential retrofits. During the discussion, many participants voiced a strong desire for grants and financial assistance to offset the high initial costs of solar installation, which they identified as a significant barrier to adoption. As one participant noted: "I think if those programs come there'd be a lot of people — like to help to get that initial investment. But it's a big cost to get started." Participants also shared their experiences with past grant programs, noting that some, like the windows grant and the Métis housing grant, were difficult to access or had restrictive eligibility criteria. One participant shared: “Easy access would be nice, because when they did the grant for the windows with the houses, it was very difficult to be able to get it." Another added, "[The Métis housing grant] was very difficult, because I don't own the land that my house is on. I couldn't get it."

High Prairie

Local Context: Relationship to Energy, Environmental Concerns, and Affordability

When participants were asked about their connections to energy, the discussion highlighted strong ties to both industry and the land. As one speaker said, "I do have such a strong connection to the land… it's always on my mind, and I worked in oil and gas for a lot of years." There was a notable shift from working in oil and gas to focusing more on sustainable practices. Participants acknowledged the damage and destruction caused by current energy practices, especially to agricultural areas. Overall, participants showed concern for how energy production may impact the environment: "I did work in oil and gas for a lot of years…we see so much damage and destruction within our energy, like what we're doing right now. So I'd like to see something more proactive."

Environmental concerns featured prominently in the conversation. High Prairie community members expressed worry about climate change and ozone layer depletion, with one person making an urgent call to action about the changes in their community: "We need to stop this…pollution and climate change and drought and no snow." Participants specifically discussed concerns about fracking leading to earthquakes, and voiced apprehension about deforestation. Water scarcity was a significant concern affecting both human and ecological systems. The conversation highlighted the critical relationship between water and energy production, with fears that low water levels could severely impact industry. "We're going to collapse if we don't start taking care of our water, our forests and our earth. We just can't keep going at the same rate we're going," shared one person.

Affordability was also a prominent concern during the conversations. "Everybody's selling their houses and going bankrupt," shared one High Prairie citizen. Participants shared a range of perspectives on the current financial landscape, expressing frustration at the additional financial burden of the carbon tax, and making calls to focus on local community issues rather than on global issues. They emphasized how the cost of living crisis is impacting the middle class and vulnerable community members, as captured in the following quote:

> We have no money to spend and the rents are going high…it's all energy that is doing all this. The prices of gasoline and all this is connected…It's really, really sad. How can we change? By the time everything is renewable we won't have any money left. Lot of Elders, their rent is so high that they have to move out.

During the High Prairie discussions, a strong sentiment emerged that corporations, especially in the oil and gas industry, are making excessive profits while ordinary people struggle with high prices. One speaker highlighted this issue, saying, "Corporate greed bleeds into everything from crop prices to energy prices, fueling high prices." There were calls for subsidies and cooperative structures to help manage resource costs. However, skepticism arose about corporate partnerships, with fears they might be used for tax write-offs rather than genuine support.

Additionally, there was a strong emphasis on the need for corporations to compensate Indigenous communities for resource extraction on their traditional lands. The failure to honor treaty agreements was viewed as enabling corporations to exploit resources without adequate compensation to Indigenous peoples:

> The Métis homelands are all across Alberta. I think industry is making a big pile of money from extracting resources from our traditional territories. I think it's time to start holding these companies to task that they're pulling resources out of land that is homeland to the Métis. They should be helping our communities, helping our people in some way, instead of just getting that.

Key Energy Priorities

Environment. When discussing energy, participants expressed significant environmental concerns related to both traditional and renewable energy sources. Participants recognized that unsustainable practices in energy production contribute to global environmental degradation. Renewable energy discussions highlighted solar power as a promising solution, but participants expressed worries about the impacts of solar battery storage systems: "The batteries themselves are not renewable," one participant noted. Geothermal energy, on the other hand, was viewed positively as a long-term solution that can reduce carbon footprint and pollution, despite high initial costs.

Cost. High costs were identified as a significant barrier to the adoption of renewable energy sources. Many participants perceived the transition as prohibitively expensive, as one participant noted: "I think it's good to start to have new renewable energy, but…it's gonna be so expensive" This perception is compounded by skepticism about long-term savings, with concerns that high initial costs may outweigh future benefits. Worries extended beyond initial investments to ongoing expenses, such as frequent battery replacements for solar panel systems. Despite these concerns, some recognize the potential long-term benefits of renewable options like geothermal heating, both financially and environmentally. Participants expressed an underlying skepticism towards corporations, governments, and scientists promoting renewable energy, with some feeling that low-income consumers are being taken advantage of in the process.

Land use. Throughout the conversation, some participants emphasized the importance of installing solar panels in abandoned areas or on existing structures rather than using high-value land, with one participant emphasizing that we must not recreate monocultural farming practices. Rather than building large-scale solar farms, one participant suggested integrating solar panels with other land uses, such as placing them on top of chicken coops. Participants were enthusiastic about widespread residential solar installations to reduce dependence on traditional energy sources, allow homeowners to contribute to the power grid, and minimize land impact.

Reliability. During the discussion, participants reflected on how deeply technology had become embedded in daily routines and the vast changes that had taken place in terms of energy reliability over the course of the participant's lifetimes. The group also shared stories about how power failures

had affected essential services like cooking and heating, with one person recounting an instance where a family had to seek breakfast at a restaurant due to a blackout, and another discussing how younger members of their families experienced distress without easy technology access.

Health and Safety. During the discussion, participants shared concerns they had about the impacts of technology and energy production on human health. They highlighted a desire for more research and consideration of these issues in the development and implementation of new energy sources. For example, one person raised questions about whether computers emit radiation that could affect human health, extending this worry to renewable energy. "I worry about lack of research on the carcinogenic impacts of chemicals released from renewable energy sources," they said.

Visions for Energy Transition

During the discussion, participants expressed a range of views on the energy transition. They acknowledged that while immediate savings from renewable energy might be minimal, investing in research and development could benefit future generations:

> You're probably not saving much, but as time progresses [and] technology advances, I think that's [it's] probably a viable option to the country. [If] the government starts pouring more money into research and building better systems, I think it'll be beneficial to future generations.

Overall, participants expressed despite the push for renewable energy, fossil fuels would still be necessary for certain products and industries. They shared concern about potential economic disruptions from a rapid transition and conveyed distrust in the government's approach, viewing the push for renewable energy as generating fear and worsening economic inequality. "The rich [just] get richer," said one person. Concerns were raised about the pace of change, with some feeling it was too quick to phase out an entire industry that the economy relies upon:

> Uncertainty in [the] economy is what seems to cause fear. Usually when societies have a radical change, there are a lot of disruptions. Canada [is] still a very young country and it makes me worried about what that [disruption] will do on a national scale to the rest of the little people, like us.

The transition was seen as potentially devastating for long-time industry workers, with worries about job loss leading to social issues like drug use and suicide. Despite these concerns, participants recognized that all energy production methods have trade-offs, suggesting a need for a mixed approach rather than a complete shift away from non-renewables.

Energy Sentiment Analysis

HIGH PRAIRIE

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 4 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (75% negative, 25% neutral).

EVs: EVs were discussed 6 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (100% negative).

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels (including oil, gas, and coal) were discussed 7 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (14% negative, 29% neutral, 14% mixed, 43% positive).

Geothermal: Geothermal was discussed 2 times throughout the conversation, in equally mixed and positive tones (50% mixed, 50% positive).

Hydroelectric: Hydroelectric was discussed 3 times throughout the conversation in a range of diverse tones (33% negative, 33% mixed, 33% positive).

Nuclear: Nuclear was discussed 2 times throughout the conversation, in equally mixed and negative tones (50% negative, 50% mixed).

Solar: Solar was discussed 15 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (40% negative, 13% neutral, 13% mixed, 33% positive).

Wind: Wind was discussed 4 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (75% negative, 25% positive).

Citizen Requests for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Proactive advocacy on behalf of Métis Citizens. During the discussion, participants expressed a deep desire to be heard. They reflected on the frustration of not feeling listened to, despite their efforts to communicate. One participant poignantly noted, "we could talk and talk, but who was going to listen?" This sentiment resonated with others in the group. The conversation then shifted to a call for action, with another participant emphasizing the need to "drop the colonialism and start thinking for ourselves." In particular participants expressed concern about the lack of recognition and support for Métis workers in the oil and gas sector, suggesting that companies needed to acknowledge Métis employees and provide support through their nation. Participants also voiced a strong desire for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to take a more proactive stance in decision-making processes and negotiations with oil companies. They emphasized the importance of amplifying Métis voices, expressing frustration with not being heard and calling for independent thinking away from colonial mindsets. Additionally, participants proposed inter-Indigenous collaboration as a solution, suggesting that building alliances with other Indigenous nations could increase their collective influence and effectiveness.

Community-based financial support to offset energy costs. During the discussion, participants expressed several key concerns and ideas related to financial support and energy costs for the Métis nation. They voiced a strong desire for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to provide more subsidies for energy expenses. One person proposed that the government establish a co-op system to organize their own resources, reflecting a desire for more community-controlled economic structures. The discussion also touched on energy efficiency and sustainability, with participants expressing an interest in accessing solar panels to reduce energy costs. Some individuals even expressed a desire to have assistance gaining complete energy independence, as one participant shared: “Instead of getting on [the] grid with the rest of the world, I would love to be able to build [and] produce cleanly for my environment for my little space in this world.”

Creating a system of support for transitioning workers. During the discussion, participants raised several key issues related to supporting workers transitioning away from the oil and gas sector. They expressed a desire to shift towards traditional medicine in supporting transitioning workers, emphasizing that "mental support has to be in the mix” of the energy transition. Participants highlighted the need for educational support for long-term industry workers, many of whom had limited formal education or lacked GEDs. This was highlighted by the following participant: “[When] I worked in oil and gas, I worked a lot with like a lot of older men who were basically illiterate, but had been working their job for 30 years…[we need] to meet them where they're at.” The discussion also revealed challenges workers faced in advocating for themselves within companies, with particular emphasis on the perceived lack of support for Indigenous workers. Lastly, participants expressed frustration about the perceived lack of government responsiveness to these issues, indicating limited faith in current advocacy efforts.

Medicine Hat

Local context: Relationship to Energy, Affordability, Healthcare, and Job Stability

The Medicine Hat Citizens we spoke with expressed a strong connection to the energy industry, particularly with oil and gas. Many participants had experience working in energy or had family members who worked in the sector, ranging from pipeline inspection, to welding, to solar installation. This connection to the energy sector was portrayed as an integral part of their lives, with oil and gas being described as "just a part of life" in their community.

Locals raised concerns about emissions from industrial sites creating air pollution and causing health issues. In addition, individuals were concerned about pollution affecting water quality as contaminants from industrial activities may collect in clouds and fall as rain, potentially impacting farmland and natural water sources. “I think all of our waters are being affected….The natural filters of the wetlands that don't exist anymore. They're polluted,” shared one individual. The Cypress Hills area was noted as an area of cultural and environmental significance, with one individual highlighting it as an area of importance to the Indigenous communities and as a site that warrants further protection: **“**When I talk to other Indigenous communities and and I [mention] Medicine Hat, the first thing out of people's mouths is Cypress Hills. So we have a very important not only historical, but environmental area right next to us…I think it's really important to protect that.”

Additionally, there was a focus on the responsibility to future generations, the importance of environmental stewardship, and the influence of individual actions. There was an emphasis on the duty to ensure a better future for grandchildren and future generations:

> I think that people will lose their jobs. and it'll be very hard on our communities, getting rid of gas products, and getting rid of things in our houses that… [as a] “Gen Z” I don't know, I'm here for a good time, not a long time. But I also want my children to have a good, sustainable, healthy Earth to live on. And I would rather not have our Earth die in the next 50 or 200 years.

A key issue for Medicine Hat community members was the rising cost of living. “Starting a small business now is impossible,” shared one person. “How would we honestly afford to pay for [electric] vehicles?” said another. There was skepticism about the allocation of the carbon tax revenues and how it impacts household bills, as phrased by one person: “The carbon tax is still half our bill.” The carbon tax was perceived as a significant portion of the energy expenses. Participants questioned its effectiveness and transparency. Participants also expressed concern about consumer habits and overconsumption. Overall, there was a call to reduce consumption, particularly of energy and large vehicles. “Every family has too many electrical things,” shared one individual. The discussion extended to the need to shift consumer habits, even if it means sacrificing certain comforts.

During the discussion, participants returned to healthcare as a critical issue in their community. Participants expressed strong criticism of the privatization trends within the healthcare sector, viewing this shift as inefficient and cost-ineffective, with increased logistical burdens. Medicine Hat

community members were particularly passionate about expanding access to culturally informed medicine and harm reduction treatment, with one person requesting that the town open "an Indigenous recovery center." Another person reiterated this idea, saying: "Let's heal. Heal from the trauma from seven generations, from residential school." They lamented the lack of integration of traditional Indigenous healing practices with Western medicine.

Participants also raised concerns about job stability in the oil and gas industry, voicing apprehension about the industry's volatile nature. While some participants spoke positively about the job creation that oil and gas has afforded the community, many spoke about instability, sharing personal anecdotes of being laid off, traveling long distances to find work, and leaving family for extended periods of time. "There's a certain sacrifice you make as a family. Like my dad worked a week on, week off. So he was gone half the year," one person shared. Another person discussed the mental health impacts of this uncertainty:

> It's hard to see the mental decline in people from the oilfield when the oilfield dropped. To see them being able to provide for their families and living in a certain way…and then all of a sudden, as a man, you no longer can provide for them, you can't give them Christmas presents…and that's all you know, you grew up in Alberta, that's all you know, is the oilfield. You don't know solar energy stuff. …it really takes a toll on them and their mental health.

Key Energy Priorities

Costs. Participants shared frustration about the high costs associated with adopting renewable energy technologies like heat pumps and solar panels. It was noted that these investments might not be financially viable in the long term, as installation and maintenance costs could outweigh potential savings. One participant stated, "I've been looking into different things from my place…I look at things like heat pumps, solar — you can't afford it, you will never get a payout. By the time it's paid for. You got to replace it." Participants mentioned how resources from the land generate significant profits, yet the benefits are not equitably distributed among those who should share this wealth: "The energy industry has had very little competition, especially in Alberta, and Saskatchewan," said one participant.

Environment. Throughout the conversation, participants shared fears about the recycling of EV vehicles, wind turbines, and solar panels, and their various impacts on the surrounding environment. "Some of the wind tower companies have guys that go around every couple of days and pick up dead birds so that it's not visible to the public," shared one person. Participants offered mixed perspectives on the impact that oil and gas has had on their local environment. Some people praised the industry's reclamation process, pointing to successful pipeline clean-ups. Others expressed distaste for the negative impacts fossil fuel extraction has had on the environment, with one person saying: "Just driving by that area and seeing the discarded lands — it looks like a war zone."

Health and Safety. Some participants expressed fears regarding the long-term health effects of living in close proximity to a methanol production plant. Several people shared worries about the safety of

nuclear power, and wind turbines. While some people shared fears about the safety of oil and gas production, others praised pipelines as "the safest way in the world" to move oil and gas. Speaking of the links between emissions and health issues, one person said: "As the people that have stewarded the land for time in memoriam, it's important for us to have a say in how we set these kinds of things up."

Land use. During the conversation, Medicine Hat community members raised concerns over large solar farms and wind turbines taking up valuable land, particularly farmland, which removes it from agricultural production. "I don't believe we should be putting more turbines out there and solar panels and all of the stuff that's taken up valuable land and has no way to dispose of it," said one person. However, other participants argued that oil and gas pipelines often cross Indigenous lands without their consent, calling for greater input from Indigenous people on land use issues: "When you think about things like pipelines…they're going across traditional lands. Those lands are owned by Indigenous peoples… there's an inequity there, in how things are done. It impacts Indigenous people."

Local weather. Participants frequently discussed climatic conditions throughout Alberta, considering the applicability of various technologies to their environment. There were some positive perceptions, such as job creation in areas like snow removal from solar panels. Participants also discussed geothermal energy, commenting on its limited prevalence in Alberta compared to areas with natural hot springs. Participants also expressed enthusiasm for nuclear energy, with one person commenting that the Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan would never happen in Alberta because, "we're not gonna get a tsunami here anytime soon."

Visions of Energy Transition

The discussion highlights mixed views on transitioning from oil and gas to renewable energy sources, revealing a tapestry of concerns, aspirations, and pragmatic considerations. Participants shared their anxieties about potential job losses that the transition might entail, fearing the economic repercussions of moving away from an industry that has been a cornerstone of their economic identity and prosperity for decades. However, participants also expressed remarkable optimism about the potential for renewable energy to create new employment opportunities and usher in a much-needed change to the status quo:

> I am all for it. I think the energy sector in Alberta has just been able to do things the way they want, how they want, with no accountability. I think that there are pros and cons to renewable energy, but there's also a lot of cons to oil and gas production… I've worked in that industry, so I know.

The participants highlighted the importance of knowledge-sharing in the energy transition, particularly from a Métis perspective. "Investing in indigenous knowledge in environmental and energy spaces, in the long term, it's a benefit to every taxpayer in Canada," shared one participant. Others emphasized the importance of exerting control over how Indigenous knowledge was shared and used in the context of energy transition:

> We need to remember that our Indigenous knowledge is one of the few things that we do have left and it is a commodity and where there is a commodity people will try to exploit it. So it's important that we're in control about how that's shared and how it's used as well.

Concerns about exploitation were raised, with participants worrying about external entities using Métis knowledge without proper acknowledgment or compensation. The historical context of colonialism and its impact on Métis experiences, including the erosion of land rights and economic power, was referenced as shaping the current perspective on energy transition. “Knowledge is to be shared in a good way. Not for profit — the transitions need to have that trust and respect base in order to go forward in a positive way. It has to it has to happen”

Energy Sentiment Analysis

MEDICINE HAT

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 1 time throughout the conversation, primarily in a neutral tone (100% neutral).

EVs: EVs were discussed 8 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (13% mixed, 88% positive).

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels (including oil, gas, and coal) were discussed 22 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (23% negative, 5% mixed, 50% positive).

Geothermal: Geothermal was discussed 3 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a neutral tone (67% neutral, 33% positive).

Heat pumps: Heat pumps were discussed 1 time throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (100% negative).

Hydroelectric: Hydroelectric was discussed 3 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (67% negative, 33% positive).

Nuclear: Nuclear was discussed 9 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (44% negative, 11% neutral, 11% mixed, 33% positive).

Solar: Solar was discussed 10 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (80% negative, 20% neutral).

Wind: Wind was discussed 13 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a negative tone (69% negative, 15% neutral, 8% mixed, 8% positive).

Citizen Requests for the Otipemisiwak Métis Government

Leadership and advocacy for Métis Citizens. Participants expressed that Indigenous people, particularly Métis, feel excluded from political processes and decision-making, desiring greater representation in matters affecting them. They emphasized the importance of incorporating Indigenous knowledge in environmental and climate planning, reiterating that their traditional understanding of the land was crucial for sustainable practices. "We have a voice. Instead of us just talking about it," said one person. "Something as important as environmental discussions – are [we] getting a seat at the table?" asked another. There was a call for improved collaboration between First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and the federal government. Participants referenced the historical context of treaty signings and how Indigenous people often misunderstood agreements, informing their current desire for clearer communication and active participation. They focused on long-term impacts of decisions on future generations, emphasizing sustainable policies. Criticism was directed at the government's approach to Indigenous issues, claiming it failed to effectively incorporate Indigenous voices. Participants highlighted growing international interest in Indigenous approaches to land management and climate issues, mentioning Métis participation in UN climate summits. They also discussed challenges in securing jobs and meaningful consultation with energy companies, emphasizing the need for stronger "duty to consult" practices.

Meaningful community engagement and consultation Participants expressed concerns about the erasure of Métis land rights, reporting frustration about being excluded from decision-making processes affecting their lands. The community emphasized the need for meaningful consultation beyond superficial engagement, calling for genuine involvement in policy implementation that considered real community impacts. There was a strong belief that Indigenous communities should be consulted and their consent obtained before any land development, recognizing their long-standing connection to the land: "I think that they should get consent from Indigenous communities and whether that means talking to chiefs in different areas and Elders in different areas." Community members voiced frustration with the lack of responsiveness from political leaders, highlighting a need for more accessible politicians: "Anytime you want an answer from a politician or anything, you can't get anybody on the line…what we need is more accessibility."

Employment support for transitioning workers. Participants highlighted several key themes related to workforce supports, particularly in the context of transitioning from traditional industries to more sustainable ones. For example, when one person was asked what they desire from the Métis government, they simply said: "I think employment opportunities, training and mental health." Participants frequently emphasized the important connection between employment opportunities and mental health support, especially for workers in oil and gas industries transitioning to sectors like renewable energy. One participant had a family member who had successfully transitioned into renewable energy installation; they reflected on the importance of providing training to forge a sense of confidence in the community: "Give our people employment opportunities, give them training opportunities. That way, their mental health isn't gonna decline."

Online

Local context: Relationship to Energy, Métis Identity, Affordability, and Climate Change

Many participants had extensive careers in the oil and gas industry, with roles and ranging from ownership and management to technical and operational positions. This involvement often spanned decades, highlighting a deep-rooted connection to the industry. Several participants reported having transitioned away from traditional oil and gas roles, moving into renewable energy sectors or different industries altogether. This shift reflects a broader trend of adapting to evolving energy landscapes and personal re-evaluation of career paths. A few individuals expressed a shift in perspective, engaging in environmental activism and advocating for change in energy practices. This was often motivated by personal experience with climate issues, experience in oil and gas, and a desire for a more sustainable future.

During the conversation participants explored how their Métis identity has impacted their experiences within professional and community contexts. They discussed a preference for working within a Métis business, with one person sharing that working at a Métis-owned energy company " was quite different from working with other oil and gas companies," offering a more community-oriented, informal approach compared to standard corporate environments. Some individuals described the challenge of balancing traditional Métis values, like stewardship of the land, with technological progress, suggesting an ongoing negotiation of identity and responsibilities in a changing world:

> Going back to the traditional again, it's one of these catch twenty-twos…we are keepers of the land and how do we go back to that, while still being able to move forward? I think a big part of what we are doing…participating in sessions like this, [is] to be educated, so that we can make the decisions on how to move forward while protecting Mother Earth, and not going hungry.

Though participants were located all over the province, affordability was a connective issue discussed during the online events. Participants described financial pressures, from homeowners who struggled to afford their homes, to people struggling with affording gas for vehicles, groceries, and high rental rates. They described watching their expenses rise due to inflation over the past few years:

> There's a lot of uncertainty and fear that comes with the current economic climate in the country, and I would want to see policies that maybe just address that. People like me want to have a future here. We want to be able to maybe have a house one day.

Participants also expressed deep concern about environmental changes throughout their province, with participants expressing anxiety over extreme heat, forest fires, air quality from smoke, deforestation, and the construction of resource roads which affect food and wildlife. There was also acknowledgment of the balancing act between benefiting from the oil and gas industry and the need for environmental conservation. However, despite this uncertainty, some individuals expressed hope for a better future, if action is taken:

> I'm hopeful that we'll have an even better world and that it doesn't involve sacrifice. [There] might be changes, but it's going to be a better place, it'll have cleaner air, we won't be worrying about smoke days or drought, or where some of our food comes from. Things I think will need to change. But I'm hopeful it will be better.

Key Energy Concerns:

Environment. Participants expressed general concerns about the impacts of energy production on the environment, with particular concern over wind turbines. "[I] definitely would like to see some more renewable energies, but I also have concerns about it, — you hear things about the windmills and stuff like that." People pointed to concern about noise pollution, disruptions to birds, and uncertainty about the turbine recycling process as key fears. Beyond wind, participants also expressed concern over the environmental impacts of hydroelectric energy on river systems, geothermal drilling, solar panel, and oil spills. "I guess we only hear the horror stories, but it seems like there's not a lot of policy to make these companies stay and clean up," said one person.

Cost. Throughout the online groups, participants frequently discussed a sense that present-day utility bills are too expensive, but existing financial pressure makes it challenging for people to consider investing in renewable energy. Remarking on residential retrofits, one person shared: "I'd have thought that in the past… [but] I know for us, we don't have the extra cash flow to put in solar panels or to upgrade our appliances. We just don't. So it's like, we can't make a difference." While it's generally understood that these technologies can save money in the long term, people often described the initial investment as not feasible for many households.

Efficiency. Some participants expressed interest in improving the efficiency of existing energy systems, such as cogeneration systems, to optimize energy use without an immediate and complete transition away from fossil fuels. There was interest in a gradual approach into integrating more sustainable practices while enhancing current systems. There was a strong emphasis on reducing overall energy consumption as a priority. People also shared skepticism about investing in renewable energy systems that require large amounts of materials and energy to start operating, stating that technology like wind turbines are inefficient: "I'm not big on wind…there's a huge amount of material and resources to make these wind turbines and once again, you have to have them running for many years to gain anything from it."

Reliability. Participants often shared worries about energy reliability, including grid failures and the need for more robust systems to ensure a consistent energy supply. As phrased by one participant: "People [are] afraid that things are going to be taken away from them, and won't be able to drive their cars anymore, or they won't be able to heat their homes." They reflected negatively on receiving grid alerts from the provincial government: "We don't want to get those alerts in January…I think that's crazy, in such a rich country…that shouldn't happen."

Local weather. Closely related to reliability, participants reiterated their concern about the suitability of various energy sources to different local and weather conditions. For example, they shared fears about the efficacy of solar in areas with limited sunlight and the impacts of hailstorms on solar panels. "I question how many people would have survived if we had to go into a lengthy period of where we had to monitor the energy that we were drawing from the grid," shared one person. This highlights the importance of adaptive solutions that work for individual areas and communities, considering their available natural resources and weather conditions.

Vision of Energy Transition

Across the online events, Métis Citizens offered a generally positive outlook on the prospect of an energy transition. " I wish more people were on board with it here in Alberta," said one person. "I am pro-developing renewable energy sources, as long as they are effective…I feel like Canada could be a world leader in renewable energy," said another. They shared a clear desire for more proactive government involvement and expressed a sense that current efforts are lagging behind technological advancements and industry needs. There was an emphasis on the need for quicker adaptation and acceptance of new ideas to keep up with the fast-evolving renewable energy sector:

> In my experience, the government is nearly always two to five years behind the curve. Now we have to run faster, we have to change faster, we have to grab ideas…and that's more risky. I always feel that the government is following behind nowadays on industry development.

The participants stressed the importance of transparency in the Otipemisiwak Métis Government's processes and goals. There is a need for clear communication and realistic planning to achieve long-term goals, such as those set for 2030 or 2050: "I think that there needs to be more conversation, and more transparency. I think that we have all these goals. But what kind of solution [is there] to start working towards them?"

Some participants shared concerns about Alberta's reliance on the oil and gas industry and highlighted the need for economic diversification. As phrased by one individual: "When you look at the amount of energy that we've managed to produce, and the amount of oil and gas that we've managed to produce, I think we should have been able to diversify a lot more than we have." The pandemic was noted as a catalyst for this realization, prompting a broader acknowledgment that dependency on a single industry is unsustainable.

Overall, participants were most comfortable with the idea of a localized approach to energy transition focused on improving self-sufficiency, utilizing the mix of technologies available to the community to adapt to Alberta's unique geographic and resource conditions. "I think our communities would benefit from maybe a combination of solar, nuclear and…the heat pumps," said one person. " [I want[renewables going into a community to have it [be] self-sufficient," shared another individual. Another person emphasized the importance of self-sufficient energy production: "I think that we should all be self sustainable. I think every one of our homes — that's the way we should be. Our ancestors were to begin with, that's how we grew up."

Energy Sentiment Analysis

ONLINE

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 5 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a positive tone (20% mixed, 80% positive).

EVs: E Vs were discussed 5 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (40% negative, 20% mixed, 40% positive).

Geothermal: Geothermal was discussed 12 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (8% negative, 8% neutral, 25% mixed, 58% positive).

Heat pumps: Heat pumps were discussed 3 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a mixed tone (67% mixed, 33% positive).

Hydroelectric: Hydroelectric was discussed 10 times throughout the conversation, in a diverse range of tones (30% negative, 10% neutral, 30% mixed, 30% positive).

Nuclear: Nuclear was discussed 10 times throughout the conversation, primarily in a positive tone (20% mixed, 80% positive).

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels were discussed 14 times throughout the conversation, in a range of diverse tones (57% negative, 7% neutral, 21% mixed, 14% positive).

Solar: Solar was discussed 20 times throughout the conversation, in a diverse range of tones (25% negative, 10% neutral, 20% mixed, 45% positive).

Wind: Wind was discussed 12 times throughout the conversation, in a diverse range of tones (42% negative, 8% neutral, 25% mixed, 25% positive).

Citizen Requests

Expanded access to information on renewable energy, from trusted spokespeople. Online Métis participants were passionate about expanding access to information on renewable energy to help fill the knowledge gap. They identified a discrepancy in knowledge about renewable energy compared to traditional oil and gas, especially in Alberta. Participants expressed interest in more reliable information and information sessions. "If we don't educate our folks, how can we make the informed decisions that we need to be making?" said one participant. Indigenous expertise played a significant role in disseminating information, with participants putting a strong emphasis on having experts from within the community address issues and provide guidance.

> I think it's important that we have our own experts. I don't want to hear from other people. I want to hear from my own people that are going to tell me through their own experiences and education, what we need to hear, they're gonna tell it in a way that we can understand as well, right? Not even just me, but we have an older generation that needs to have our own people tell it to us.

This holistic perspective instills a feeling of inclusion and acceptance of the community's experiences and interests, strengthening trust in these spokespersons. Intergenerational knowledge transfer and the value of knowledge keepers and family members in passing down information are key points highlighted by participants.

Financial support to reduce barriers in accessing retrofits. Participants frequently shared a desire for financial support from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to help individuals reduce their environmental impact and lower their costs, by accessing residential retrofits: "It'd be nice if there were more grants available for us, just individual homeowners to…help you navigate what that looks like." Participants expressed frustration with what they view as overly limiting requirements to access grants: "They had some program offering — either it was energy efficient appliances, or it was solar panels — but it was only open to Edmonton or Calgary. And, I'm in Red Deer [so] that's useless."

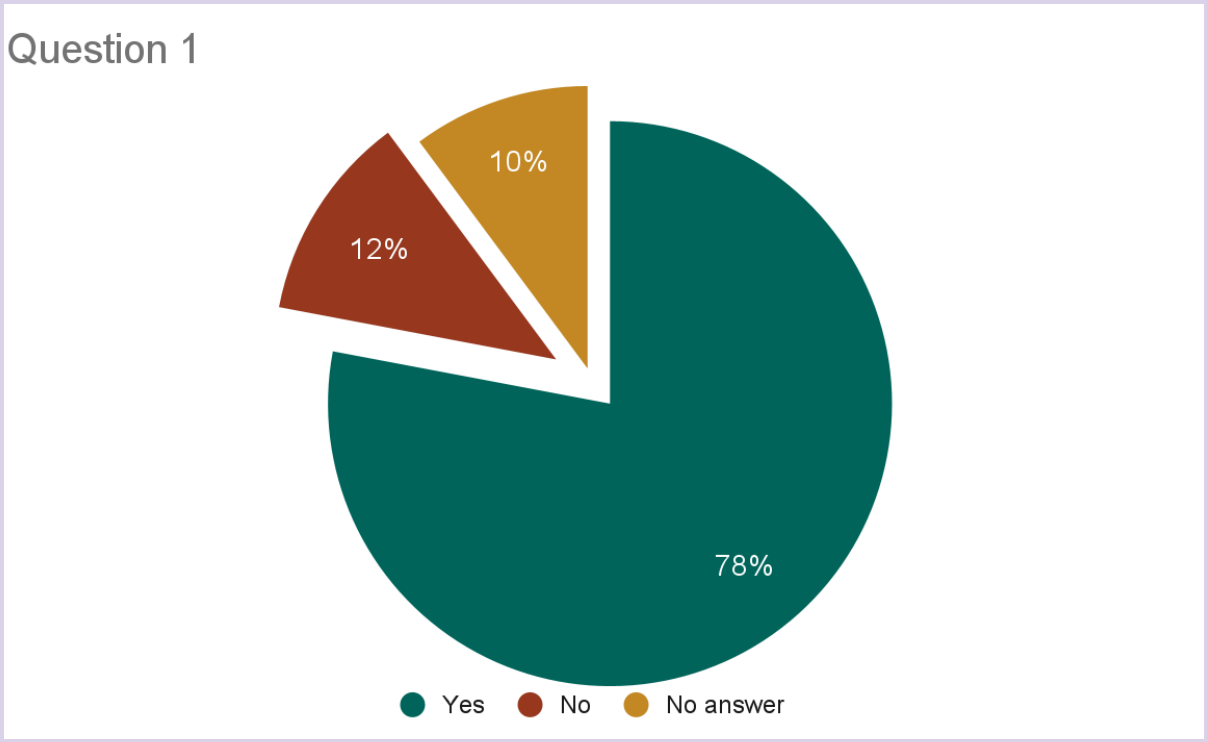
Create support systems for workers in transition. Individuals who attended the online sessions reiterated that the Otipemisiwak Métis Government must offer support for workers transitioning out of oil and gas. They emphasized the importance of training programs, clear guidance, and support systems in ensuring that transitions are beneficial for both individuals and the community. "It's gonna come back to providing real retraining, and providing incentives for companies to retrain their staff starting earlier, rather than, than later. [Not] waiting, and trying to be proactive on it," stated one person. Another person reiterated the importance of creating a resilient community and workforce:

> The essence of it is creating people who are resilient to job change and people who are able to jump ship.I feel like creating workers who are able to be adaptable to the changing market is also extremely important in terms of switching from oil and gas to renewable energy systems.

What We Heard In The Survey

Survey Breakdown

Question 1: *Do you think about where your energy comes from? And/or how are you connected to the energy industry?*



78% of survey respondents conveyed that they actively think about the sources of their energy. Across this group, most reported having some form of relationship to the energy sector, ranging from direct ties as consumers and workers, to connections formed through their relationship with the environment and their proximity to the industry as Alberta residents.

Consumer relationship. The most common relationship to the energy industry expressed by respondents was that of a consumer. Put simply by one person, "we are all connected to the energy industry in Alberta, because we are all energy consumers." Several individuals expressed thinking about the sources of their energy when paying their utility bills. Participants were cognizant of the ways that energy provides a particular quality of life: "[Energy] is important to our culture and way of life. Most of our purchasable goods are made out of oil and it heats our homes and allows travel."

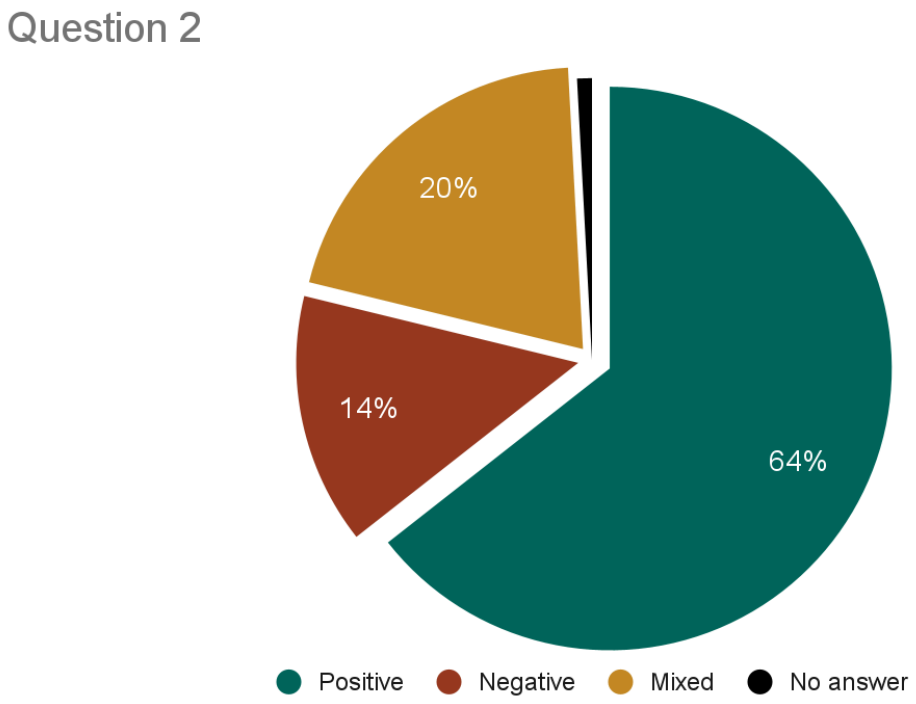
From this perspective, sources of energy are sometimes made more tangible during moments of unstable reliability, as one person shared: “I didn't think about where my energy came from until the grid alert.”

Employment relationship. The second most frequent form of connection to energy expressed by participants was an employment relationship to Alberta’s energy sector. Many participants had previously been, or presently are, employed directly in the oil and gas industry as geologists, engineers, boilermakers, maintenance staff, and other roles. Others were indirectly tied through working in adjacent industries that engage with the oil and gas industry, such as trucking and impact assessment, or even as healthcare professionals treating oil and gas workers. Many others had loved ones who are employed in the industry. All of these individuals expressed that they often or always think about the source of their energy. One person shared that, “I work in the oil and gas sector so it's on my mind. I understand it mainly comes from nonrenewable sources. Though I do wish it were more based on renewables, I understand that will take more time.”

Environmental relationship. Many respondents articulated that they primarily think about their energy usage in relation to their concern for the earth and a desire to live in a more sustainable manner as stewards: “As an Indigenous person I feel it is our responsibility to also be good stewards for the earth and make sure the energy industry is fulfilling its obligations to a clean and sustainable environment.” People who spoke of their connection to the energy industry in this manner expressed a sense of worry that they may be causing harm to the environment, as one person wrote: “I am worried that my connection to energy is not sustainable and could be causing non-reversible damage to our land.” Another person echoed this sentiment: “I think about where all my energy comes from and I get concerned with how we are treating the earth as a disposable product. “

Cultural relationship. Beyond relationships of consumption, employment, and concern, several respondents articulated being connected to the energy industry due to how pervasive the oil and gas industry is in Alberta. Participants discussed frequently hearing about energy in the media, online, and in political debates. As one person stated this clearly, sharing that “I think about where my energy comes from in the sense of how the reliance and monopoly of the oil and gas industry in Alberta has created extreme wealth in certain populations and a disparity in others.” Others described that they thought of energy when passing by physical infrastructure associated with energy production: “I do think about it a bit as I drive past the large wind turbines or past a derrick.” A few people indicated that they primarily think about their usage when stories about energy are central to a political fight or a media story, as captured in the following quote: “Not on a day to day basis, only when something occurring in the energy field makes it to social media.”

Question 2: *How do you feel about more development of renewable energy sources?*



64% of survey respondents shared that they feel positively about the development of renewable energy sources. Participants pointed to several benefits to expanded renewable energy development.

Positive environmental impacts. The most common reason for supporting renewable energy development shared by respondents was excitement about the potential environmental benefits of drawing from renewable sources. One person put it frankly: "Mother Earth is hurting and we know how to do better." Another person agreed: "I think it's necessary, because I believe that climate change is real and that fossil fuels are the main cause of global warming." One respondent offered a similar future-oriented sentiment: "We need to do our best with the research that is current, while watching the future, so we can implement the correct needs, resources, and technology for a greener future, keeping the triple bottom line in mind. We have to move forward and do our part for the future of Earth."

Economic stability. Many respondents expressed enthusiasm for the potential economic benefits of expanding renewable energy production, including increasing energy independence, fostering job growth, and becoming global leaders in a burgeoning industry. "Less booms and busts, more jobs for the community," shared one person. Another person echoed this idea, saying, "I think that there's a

real opportunity in Alberta with our labor market and the people we have that we could really be for thinkers and develop a lot of these technologies, particularly with the infrastructure and our tax space we have." Someone else reiterated this opportunity: "The more renewables we have the more energy independent we can become. Less intense boom and bust cycles can only be good."

Affordability. Some participants stated that expanded access to renewable energy would help meet their desire for affordable energy sources as individual consumers. "Using more renewable energy can lower the prices of and demand for natural gas and coal by increasing competition and diversifying our energy," shared one individual. Another person echoed this sentiment: "Renewable energy sources and a change in our grid to support them will allow people to have access to affordable energy in an economy that is already crippling many."

In addition to highlighting these positive benefits, respondents highlighted concerns they have about expanding renewable energy development. A few people outright rejected the idea of renewable energy development, such as one person who shared that "it's a waste of time, money and resources," and another who stated that "it's an unachievable pipe dream." However, many individuals shared specific concerns about shifting towards renewable sources of energy:

Financial costs. Those who supported renewable energy development and those who opposed it both shared many concerns about the costs associated with switching to renewable energy sources. Stated plainly by one respondent: "They need to find a way to make renewable energy way more affordable." Another person reiterated this sentiment: "Renewable energy sources need to be developed and improved for the future without bankrupting the Citizens it's supposed to helping," Another individual extended this idea beyond individual consumers: "I want to use renewable energy sources, but not if our economy suffers in order to do so."

Negative environmental impact. Many of those who opposed renewable energy development did so on the basis of potential negative consequences that things like wind turbines, hydro dams, and solar panels may have on the environment. "Some renewable energy have a larger unintended carbon footprint than just relying on oil, gas or coal," shared one individual. Another person emphasized this idea: "Most of the 'renewable' energy forms that have been developed are just as damaging to the environment as traditional forms and are not sustainable"

Reliability concerns. As consumers of energy, several people expressed concern that renewable resources are not capable of reliably meeting energy demands of their communities. One person shared feeling conflicted about expanding access to newer forms of energy: "I'm excited for renewable energy projects, although I feel that the transition from carbon energy is too quick, leaving us vulnerable to rotating power outages." Others reiterated that fossil fuels are the only way to ensure reliable energy production, as captured by this contribution: "It has been proven time and again that our power grid is lacking because we are not embracing the oil and gas industry."

Land use issues. Some people shared support for renewables, but disliked the idea of utilizing farmlands for large energy sites: "A great concern is taking away our agricultural land to make room for solar and wind farms." One person specifically stated that "[I'm] okay with it, as long as they don't try to put wind turbines on our land or near us." Another person reiterated this perspective: "I do not feel the need for development of mass renewable energy sites. If individual farms and towns could afford a private grid plan, I think that would be a step in the right direction."

Workforce impacts. Several people highlighted potential disruptions to the labour market that could occur with the shift away from oil and gas. "I am strongly in favour of developing renewable energy sources…however, one of the outcomes that is of consideration is the workforce shift that would need to happen," shared one person. Another person agreed: "[It's an] okay idea, but I don't want it to affect our economy and increase job loss."

Question 3: *What should the Métis Nation be prioritizing in this energy transition?*

Participants offered many specific suggestions as to what Métis Nation should prioritize as leaders in the energy transition.

Lowering costs. Respondents requested that the nation provide financial support to Métis Citizens to offset the costs of renewable energy. The financial burden of building and installing renewable energy infrastructure was the number one barrier to accelerating the energy transition identified by respondents. Specific suggestions for affordability supports included:

- Creating and expanding access to grants, subsidies, and rebates for Citizens to transition to more sustainable options, whether it be accessing residential solar panels or hybrid/electric vehicles.
- Increasing support for residents who rent their homes in high-density, urban environments, who may lack power over their utilities.
- Providing subsidies for rural communities and harvesters who may have been impacted by the carbon tax

Reducing environmental impacts. Survey participants were enthusiastic about being responsible stewards of the earth and reducing the environmental impact of their energy consumption. Whether it be by reducing the use of fossil fuels or avoiding renewable energy sources that have high environmental impact, the Métis Citizens that were surveyed expressed a strong concern for protecting the water, land, and air.

Offering workforce supports. People expressed enthusiasm for investing in the long-term wellbeing of Métis Citizens employed in the energy sector. They emphasized that investments in renewable energy must be matched with training, education, and employment opportunities for Métis energy workers.

Providing community engagement and education. Participants emphasized that Métis Citizens would benefit from education about the benefits and limitations of all forms of energy, as well as guidance on how to access various government programs aimed to expand renewable energy access.

Building green. Respondents shared a desire for renewable energy to be integrated in all nation-owned building and housing projects, including investments in energy efficiency, and small-scale solar and wind projects.

Conducting advocacy. Participants expressed that the Métis government should be advocating for Citizens on the regional, national, and international stage by asserting the right of free, prior, and informed consent. They emphasized that Métis voices must be heard in decision-making that affects their future.

Beyond these themes, participants offered many other suggestions for how the Métis nation should approach the energy transition, including improving the reliability of the electrical grid, protecting the harvesting and hunting rights of Métis Citizens, conducting research on the health and safety implications of renewable energy, and taking an noninterference approach by allowing the market to determine the kinds of energy that is developed.

Despite a wide range of perspectives, participants were mostly supportive of the Métis Nation taking on a leadership role in renewable energy development, while acknowledging the continued role of the oil and gas industry. As phrased by one individual, “I want a sustainable and reliable source of energy. This can be provided by fossil and/or renewable energy sources.” While some expressed a desire to fully transition away from nonrenewables, others shared a rejection of all renewable energy, the sentiment that “fossil fuels are needed and supplementing with renewable energy sources is good” was common. Several people shared that a localized, community-based approach to energy transition is required: “It's crucial that renewable energy projects align with the local environment and bring tangible benefits to the community…the chosen energy solutions [should be] well-suited to their surroundings and serve the needs of the community effectively.”

Energy Sentiment Analysis

SURVEY

Bioenergy: Bioenergy (including crops and biomass) was discussed 7 times throughout the conversation, primarily in the positive tone (14% negative, 86% positive)

CCUS (Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage): CCUS was discussed 1 time throughout the conversation, in the positive tone (100% positive)

EVs: EVs were discussed 6 times throughout the conversation, primarily in the negative tone (83% negative, 17% positive)

Geothermal: Geothermal was discussed 14 times throughout the conversation, primarily in the positive tone (14% negative, 86% positive)

Hydro: Hydro was discussed 13 times throughout the conversation, in equally positive and negative tone (46% negative, 54% positive)

Nuclear: Nuclear was discussed 8 times throughout the conversation, in the positive tone (100% positive)

Fossil fuels: Fossil fuels were discussed 33 times throughout the conversation, primarily in the positive tone (36% negative, 6% mixed, 58% positive)

Solar: Solar was discussed 34 times throughout the conversation, primarily in the positive tone (24% negative, 6% neutral, 9% mixed, 62% positive)

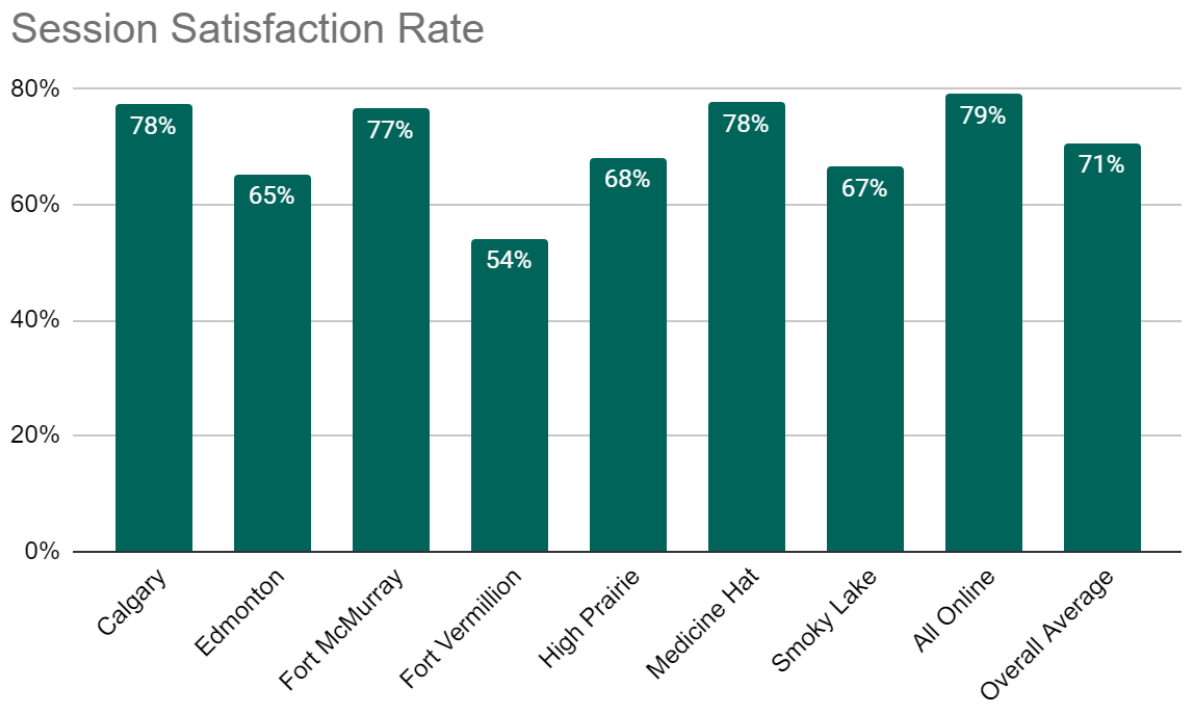
Wind: Wind was discussed 19 times throughout the conversation, primarily in the negative tone (58% negative, 5% neutral, 37% positive)

What We Learned

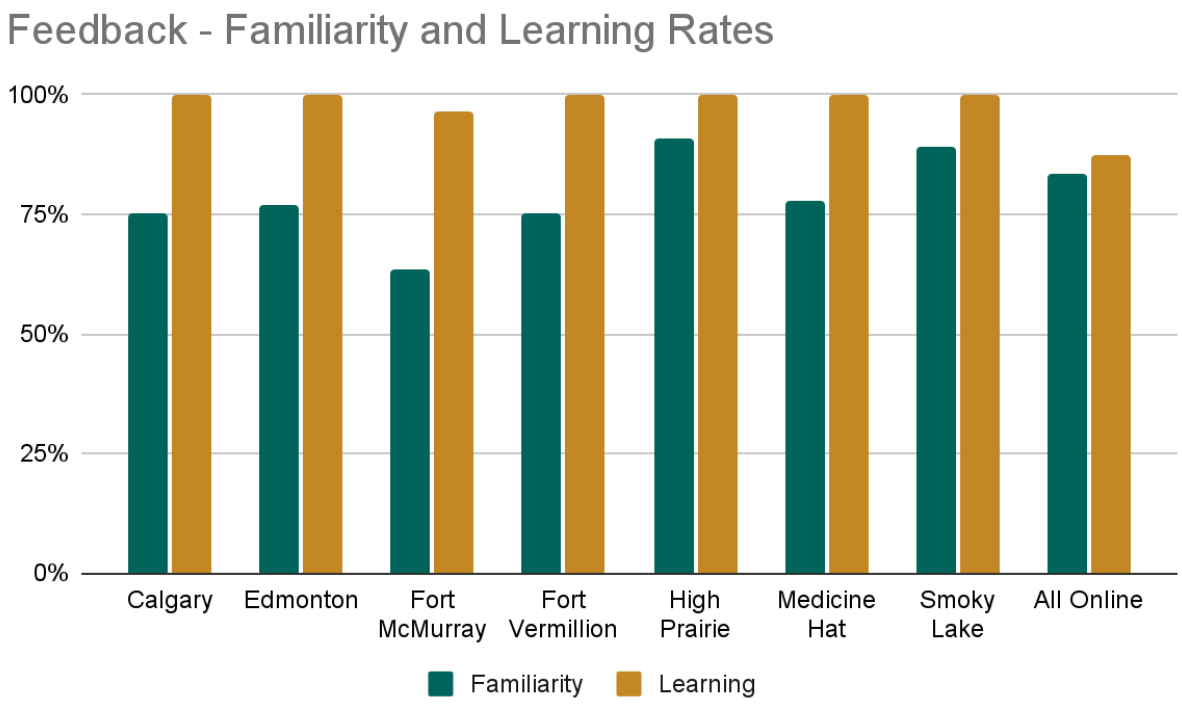
Feedback

To get an overview of participants' experience at the in-person discussions, they had the opportunity to fill out feedback forms. The topics included questions on participants' knowledge level of the topics prior to the conversation and experience during the conversation, questions on missing groups and topics, and consent for future contacts. Participants' feedback was collected to gauge participants' experience during the discussions, and included in this report as points of learning for facilitators and organizers who would like to hold similar sessions. *Survey respondents did not receive feedback forms; thus the results below are only based on in-person participants' replies.*

The average fill out rate for feedback forms from 7 locations and 1 online session is 85%. The highest percentage is Calgary session at 91%, and the lowest is High Prairie session at 69%. The rest of the feedback forms analysis is based on the submitted feedback forms, discounting participants who did not submit feedback forms.



Satisfaction levels are rated as a spectrum between -1 to 1, with "Very Unsatisfied" as -1, "Unsatisfied" as -0.5, "Neutral" as 0, "Satisfied" as 0.5, and "Very Satisfied" as 1, before converted to percentages. *On average, participants from all locations and online sessions rate their satisfaction levels as 71%, with "Very satisfied" as the option most commonly selected.* Satisfaction levels are quantified and summarized for I&E community sessions to measure the overall effectiveness of the sessions, and presented in public reports for transparency purposes.



On average, *79% of feedback answered 'Yes' to the question "Prior to the conversation, were you familiar with some or all of the topics discussed during this event?"* (abbreviated as 'Familiarity' on the chart), and on average, *98% of feedback answered 'Yes' to the question "Do you feel that you learned something about the topics discussed during the conversation?"* ('Learning').

Data analysis of the following questions involved removing responses that indicate lack of answer such as 'No' and 'N/A' or answers that only contain unrelated content such as positive remarks about the sessions, and reshuffling answers that better fit other categories. The analysis below is provided by averaging the results of all locations and online sessions. Analysis of these questions are presented to provide an overview of participant learning levels and improvements for future sessions such as potential topics of interest to explore, session logistics, and advertising for inclusive target audience.

On the question "Is there anything we didn't talk about today that you wish we had?" ('Missing Topics'), *25% of feedback forms identified missing topics.* Examples of provided answers included what the government is doing (Calgary), the importance of Indigenous land-based learning and Indigenous

assessments (High Prairie), and what the Otipemisiwak Métis Government is currently doing to support the transition to a low carbon energy transition (Online).

On the question "Is there any part of the discussion and/or facilitation you wish we'd done differently?" ('Different Parts'), *16% identified parts of the discussion/facilitation they would like to be done differently*, such as more time to answer questions (High Prairie), including prayer before meal (Edmonton), and to discuss the main point from each group (Smoky Lake).

On the question "Are there any groups or in your community that you think should have been at this conversation, but weren't?" (Missing Groups), *43% identified missing groups*, including more labours [*sic]* and contractors of the industry (Online), Any or all native band (Fort Vermillion), and Indigenous businesses local working in oil/gas industry (Fort McMurray).

Finally, *92% of feedback forms indicate 'Yes' on the question "Would you like information about future Community Pathways events, findings from these sessions, and other related topics?"* (Future Info), and 84% indicate 'Yes' on the question "Iron & Earth has a number of projects, including mentorship and training opportunities. Would you like to sign up to our newsletter to periodically hear from us? You can opt out at any time." ('I&E Contact).

Conclusions

This engagement series confirms that Métis Citizens across Alberta actively think about the sources of their energy and want the Otipemisiwak Métis Government to adopt a proactive role in supporting Citizens through the energy transition. Participants were enthusiastic about the need for continued community engagement on these topics and 98% of people expressed that they learned something from participating in a community conversation.

Though participants spoke about a range of concerns they have regarding energy consumption and production, they frequently discussed lowering energy costs, reducing environmental impact, and ensuring reliable energy access as their top priorities. Participants often articulated a vision of energy transition that includes both fossil fuels and renewable energy, advocating for a diversified energy sector that meets the needs of consumers and workers alike. They want their leaders to act proactively in charting a path through the energy transition by expanding access to information on energy, providing financial support directly to Citizens to offset costs of residential retrofits and utility bills, encouraging frequent community engagement and consultation initiatives, creating support systems for transitioning workers, and acting as an strong advocate for Citizens in meetings with other governments and private industry.

Appendix A

The following appendix contains the script that was used as a general guide by the facilitators for the community Conversation conducted by the Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government and Iron & Earth. During sessions, the introductions may have varied slightly to align with the specific community and situation at each event. Nonetheless, the overall structure, questions, and general timeline followed the script.

Facilitating Script

CONVERSATION TIME BREAKDOWN:
Session Introduction: 20 minutes
Breakout Group Setup: 5 minutes
Breakout Conversations: 60 minutes
Break: 10 minutes
Reporting Back: 5 minutes
Session Conclusion: 20 minutes

SETUP PERSON:
Set up presentation slides/theater screen
Setup microphone(s) and lighting
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

[Elder Prayer to begin session]

Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government Staff Introduction:

Greetings everyone and welcome to the first Community Conversation hosted in partnership with Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government and Iron & Earth. This series of discussions is taking place throughout Alberta with a focus on livelihoods, climate change, and opportunities and developments related to achieving a net-zero economy with the Métis community in Alberta

Iron & Earth Facilitator Introduction:

Hello there, from all of us at Iron & Earth! We strive to meet communities where they are. Iron & Earth's facilitators, who are Métis Citizens, look forward to engaging with you during this session, in collaboration with the Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government Staff. We believe it's

crucial for our facilitators to originate from the communities we serve. This approach helps us avoid external narratives and maintain a community-centered focus. We value your participation and look forward to this session.

[Facilitators 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

Funding for this event is generously provided by ESDC in partnership with the Iron & Earth and by Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government

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.

After our discussion, we'll create and share a report on the findings of these sessions. This will be distributed to our network, stakeholders, decision-makers, and posted on our website.

In this session, we'll discuss the local Métis community and its challenges. Your group will answer three questions about the community and its future. Feel free to use pen and paper to write your ideas and responses.

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.

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 and the Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government project team. After this process ends, the anonymous notes will stay with the Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government project team.These notes will be used to produce our reports. However, your participation will remain anonymous. As per your consent form, information shared will be deleted after the project unless otherwise indicated.

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.

BREAKOUT CONVERSATIONS: 60 Minutes

[Facilitators remember to turn on recorder in the breakout group]
[Participants should do a 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]

Question 1: (20 min)
Do you think about where your energy comes from? And/or How are you connected to the energy industry?
Prompt (if needed): Do you work in the oil and gas, coal, an associated trade or know someone who does? Do you live close to some kind of extractive industry or renewable energy development? Do you pay utility bills for your home?

Question 2: (20 Min)
How do you feel about more development of renewable energy sources?
Prompt (if needed): renewable energy sources including geothermal, solar, wind, hydro

Questions 3: (20 Min)
What should the Métis Nation be prioritizing in this energy transition?
Prompt (if needed): As a reminder the energy transition refers to the Federal Government's commitment to decarbonize- and push towards greener sources of energy. If you for instance work in oil and gas- what kind of supports/programs/policy would ensure you are ok?
-

BREAK: 10 MINUTES
Reporting back to the room: 5 minutes

CONCLUSION: 20 MINUTES

Desired outcomes and impacts of this project
Throughout March, we will hold 10 sessions with the Métis community across Alberta. A final report on these sessions will be available in the upcoming months. These reports will summarize the community's needs and preferences and will be shared with our outreach network, key stakeholders, and decision-makers. It will also be published on our websites.
If you are interested in learning more about the work of Iron & Earth and the Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government, please contact communities@ironandearth.org for Iron & Earth and climate@metis.org for the Otipemisiwak (Oh-teh-pim-swak) Métis Government. A member of our team will be glad to provide you with further information.
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.

Thankyou for joining us today!

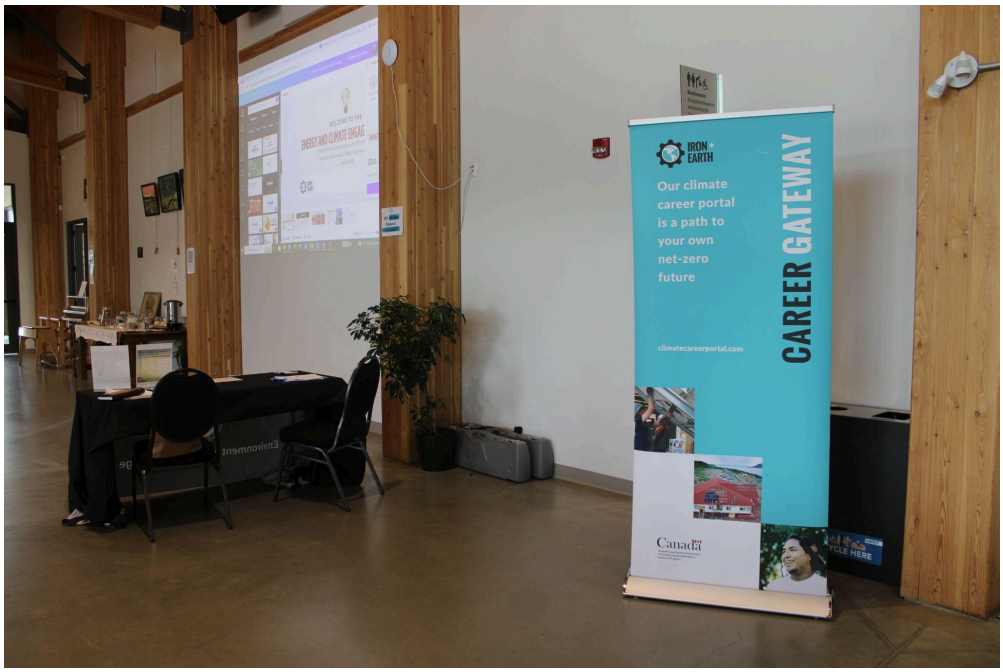
[SESSION END]

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

Appendix B

The following appendix presents a compilation of photos from the sessions, showcasing the layout, registration, presentations, venues and more. Please note that no participants were photographed during the sessions to ensure their privacy. These photos are provided purely for visual context. Since most sessions followed the same layout, only a few representative locations are included in the following photo sets.

Métis Crossing, Smoky Lake, March 12, 2024. Dining Layout



Métis Crossing, Smoky Lake, March 12, 2024. Registration Table

Métis Crossing, Smoky Lake, March 12, 2024. Opening presentation

Ralph Klein Park (Dragonfly Room), Calgary, March 3, 2024. Information Table

Appendix C

The following appendix presents a compilation of demographic data and feedback from session registration and evaluation forms. This comprehensive dataset provides a valuable breakdown for the charts in the report and includes additional data.

Demographics - General Overview		
Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizenship	Number of Participants	Percentage
Citizen	248	94%
Métis - not Otipemisiwak Métis Government citizen	2	1%
Not Métis	5	2%
Settlement member*	1	0%
Otipemisiwak Métis Government Elected official	3	1%
Prefer not to answer	4	2%
Gender	Number of Participants	Percentage
Woman	158	60%
Man	95	36%
Gender Variant - Nonconforming	3	1%
Prefer not to answer	7	3%
Age	Number of Participants	Percentage
Under 18	4	2%
18-24	13	5%
25-34	44	17%
35-44	42	16%
45-54	49	19%
55-64	54	21%
65+	56	21%
Prefer not to answer*	1	0%
District	**Number of Participants**	**Percentage**
Calgary Elbow	16	6%
Calgary Nose Hill	27	10%

Edmonton Whitemud	26	10%
Foothills	5	2%
Fort Edmonton	27	10%
Fort McMurray	34	13%
Fort Vermilion	13	5%
Grande Prairie	4	2%
Jasper House	3	3%
Lac La Biche	3	1%
Lac Ste. Anne	8	3%
Lesser Slave Lake	16	6%
Medicine Hat	6	2%
Peace River	5	2%
Red Deer	16	6%
Rocky View	7	3%
St. Albert	24	9%
St. Paul-Cold Lake	20	8%
Wabasca-Desmarais	1	1%
*Prefer not to answer	2	1%
Athabasca Landing	0	0%
Conklin	0	0%
Fort Chipewyan	0	0%

Sessions Feedback

	Calgary		Edmonton		Fort McMurray		Fort Vermillion		High Prairie		Medicine Hat		Smoky Lake		All Online	
Categories	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Familiarity	15	75%	20	77%	19	63%	9	75%	10	91%	7	78%	8	89%	20	83%
Learning	20	100%	26	100%	29	97%	12	100%	11	100%	9	100%	9	100%	21	88%
Missing Topics	7	35%	7	27%	11	37%	1	8%	2	18%	3	33%	0	0%	4	17%
Different Parts	3	15%	12	46%	5	17%	1	8%	0	0%	1	11%	2	22%	4	17%
Missing Groups	14	70%	9	35%	10	33%	4	33%	2	18%	6	67%	5	56%	7	29%

Further Contact

	Calgary		Edmonton		Fort McMurray		Fort Vermillion		High Prairie		Medicine Hat		Smoky Lake		All Online	
Categories	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Future Info	20	100%	25	96%	28	93%	12	100%	8	73%	9	100%	8	89%	21	88%
I&E Contact	18	90%	25	96%	24	80%	10	83%	7	64%	8	89%	8	89%	19	79%