

# Community Talks -Surrey, British Columbia

*Full Report on Session One: November 25th, 2023*

## Summary

This report summarizes the first community event hosted in Surrey, British Columbia by Iron & Earth, in partnership with the Sustainable Workforce Coalition. The conversation focused on community strengths, challenges, and needs regarding environmental changes, job availability, and sustainability.

Through this conversation, four common themes were identified as most important to the Surrey community. First, participants expressed strong awareness and concern regarding the mounting impacts of climate change in Surrey and around the world. Throughout the discussion, they highlighted extreme heat as the most concerning issue for Surrey residents, but frequently looked beyond their local context while discussing climate change, adopting a distinctly international perspective to the climate crisis.

Second, the cost of living was of particular concern throughout the conversation, as people identified the cost of food and housing as stressors in their daily lives. The challenges of young people and newcomers to break into the local job market while managing rising costs were of particular importance to the Surrey residents we spoke to.

Third, participants expressed a desire for the government to do more in addressing the dual crises of affordability and climate change, particularly in the aftermath of the 2021 heat dome. This conversation made clear that this event had a profound effect on the community, demonstrating the inadequacies of existing climate impact response policies in Surrey.

And fourth, the future of transportation was of utmost importance to the community members we engaged with. Participants conveyed a cautious attitude towards the cost of electric vehicles, while expressing enthusiasm about improving walkability and expanding public transportation in Surrey.

The feedback forms reflect high levels of satisfaction with the event, with 100% of respondents reporting that they had learned something new during the discussion.

## 1. Introduction

### About Iron & Earth

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

Iron & Earth believes community engagement is an effective way to influence sustainable participation in a Just Transition, and that community-driven solutions have a greater chance of becoming successful and sustainable in the long-term. Iron & Earth 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 and Earth's engagement initiative designed to spark conversations about how environmental, social, and economic changes impact people across Canada. It is committed to meeting communities where they are at, by supporting self-determined, community-driven solutions, and offering non-prescriptive support with programs that are designed by the community and for the community.

### About the Sustainable Workforce Coalition (SWC)

The Sustainable Workforce Coalition (SWC) is a regional initiative to help catalyze an equitable transition for workers in BC as part of the clean economy. It is part of the Zero Emissions Innovation Centre which is an independent non-profit and charitable organization and a committed member of the Low Carbon Cities Canada (LC3) network. ZEIC was established by an endowment from the Government of Canada, with support from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), and the vision and contributions of many regional and provincial champions.

The SWC is a 40+ cross-sector network of leading organizations from business, labour, Indigenous partners, education, community groups, and government working to ensure that a large number of diverse workers are ready and able to enter the clean economy.

The SWC provides coordination and strategic leadership to businesses and people as part of BC's energy transition.

The Coalition delivers its work by creating strategies and programs that focus on:

- Workforce attraction and retention
- Training gaps and opportunities
- Research and data
- Media and communications

### **Why this community was selected to have a conversation**

The Sustainable Workforce Coalition, with guidance from the Surrey Board of Trade, identified Surrey as a crucial city to focus on in the pursuit of securing an equitable transition for British Columbians. As one of the fastest growing and most culturally diverse cities in Canada, Surrey, British Columbia, is a prime location for fostering community discussions centered around the interconnected issues of climate change, income security, and sustainability.

The City of Surrey has undergone rapid growth, presenting an array of challenges and opportunities. Since 2016, Surrey has grown by over 51,000 people and it is on track to become the largest city in British Columbia by 2040.<sup>1</sup> In 2021, 45% of Surrey's population self-identified as immigrants to Canada.<sup>2</sup> This growth spurt compels deliberate considerations in sustainable development, housing and transportation infrastructure, and community-led planning in response to climate impacts.

While the city comprises a varied landscape ranging from urban precincts to agricultural lands, Surrey's coastal position is of particular concern in relation to climate change. 20% of the city (including significant amounts of farmland, 400 homes, transmission lines, valuable roads and highways, gas pipelines, public parks, beaches, and wildlife habitats) is located on a coastal floodplain, which is at significant risk for flooding due to rising water levels. In fact, it's estimated that Metro Vancouver will need to spend \$9.5 billion on flood protections by 2100.<sup>3</sup> The City of Surrey estimates that 2,500 people will be affected by flooding from storm surges/sea level rises, particularly in the neighbourhoods of

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<sup>1</sup> Surrey Local Immigration Partnership. n.d. "Surrey Demographics." Accessed November 2023.  
<https://www.surreylocalimmigrationpartnership.ca/research-resources/surrey-demographics/>

<sup>2</sup> Invest Surrey. n.d. "Economic Overview." Accessed November 2023.  
<https://investsurrey.ca/market-data-resources/economic-overview#:~:text=Key%20Sectors&text=Top%20Industries%3A%20Surrey's%20economy%20includes,manufacturing%20centre%20within%20Metro%20Vancouver.>

<sup>3</sup> Johnston, Jesse. 2018. "Farms, homes, roads, wildlife in Surrey, B.C., under threat from rising water levels." CBC, February 22, 2018.  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/surrey-climate-strange-strategy-1.4546395>

Crescent Beach, Panorama/Gray Creek, Cloverdale, Inter-River Area, Colebrook, Mud Bay, and Nico-Wynd/Crescent Road, as well as Semiahmoo First Nation.<sup>4</sup>

In response to these threats, the municipal government has been proactive in launching local sustainability projects and policies, most prominently the Climate Change Action Strategy, which was adopted by the city council on July 24, 2023.<sup>5</sup> The Climate Change Action Strategy aims for a zero carbon, climate resilient city by 2050. This includes lowering the City of Surrey corporate GHG emissions to absolute zero before 2050 and reducing community GHG emissions by 45% by 2030 compared to 2010 levels. There is strong evidence that Surrey residents are very concerned about climate change and interested in ambitious action to halt emissions and build climate-resilient communities. In fact, a city survey from 2021 found that eight of ten Surrey residents are worried about the changing climate.<sup>6</sup> With a large climate-conscious populace and a government that has indicated a commitment to improving local resilience, Surrey has the potential to lead the country in initiatives aimed at strengthening the community while addressing climate change.

## About the conversation participants

The goal of this conversation was to bring together people with diverse experiences, including members of various local organizations, industries, and government representatives of different demographic and educational backgrounds. To achieve this, we used multiple methods to reach out to potential participants, such as direct email and cold calling outreach, targeted social media posts, and physical advertisements. In addition to posting on I&E's social media pages, we also shared the social media posts on community Facebook pages that are frequently used by local residents and university students. As a result, 36 individuals registered for the session and 23 attended the session. The figures below are based on the answers of the 23 attendees.

For successful outreach methods, as illustrated in Figure 1.1 - Outreach Results below, attendees indicated that most individuals learned about the session through social media, followed by word of mouth, email from SWC, email from I&E, and print materials last.

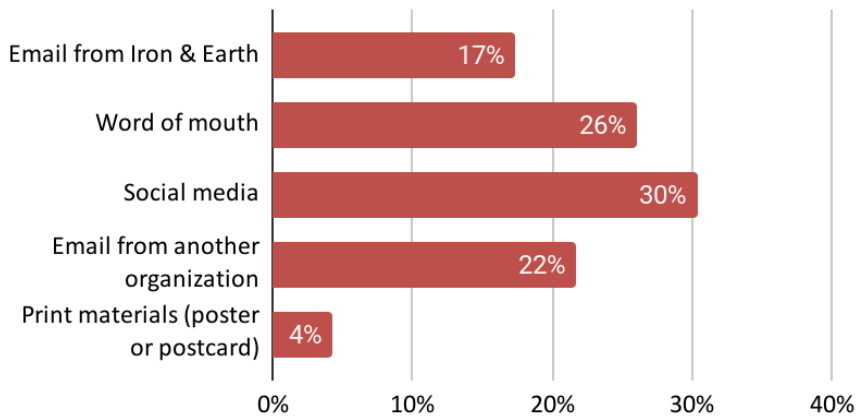
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<sup>4</sup> City of Surrey. n.d. "Coastal Flood Adaptation Strategy." Accessed November 2023. <https://www.surrey.ca/services-payments/water-drainage-sewer/flood-control/coastal-flood-adaptation-strategy>

<sup>5</sup> City of Surrey. n.d. "Climate Change Action Strategy." Accessed November 2023. <https://engage.surrey.ca/climate-action-now/widgets/91241/faqs#17021>

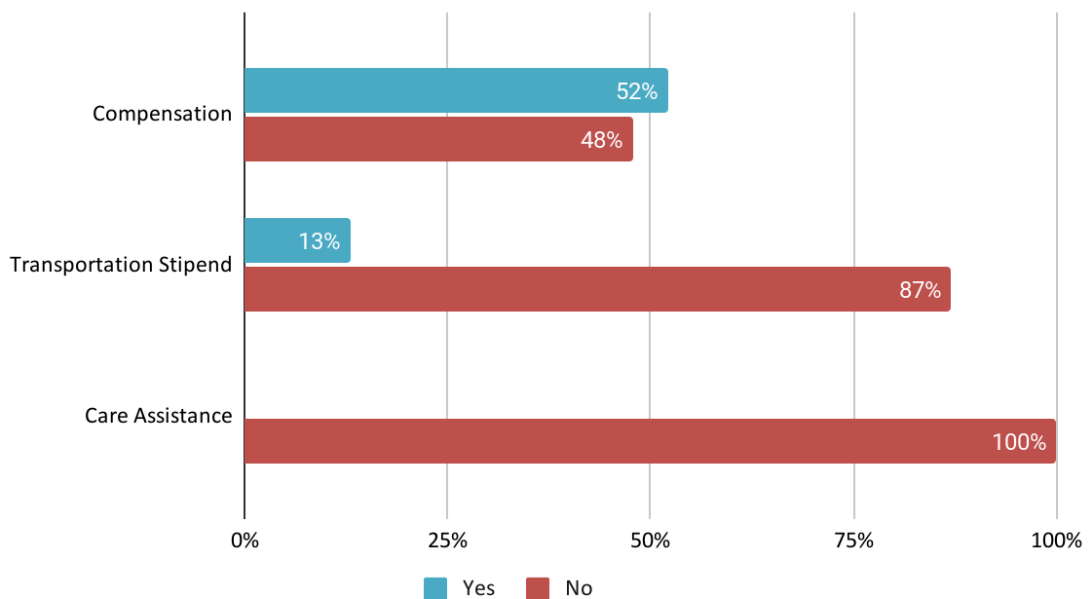
<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

Figure 1.1 - Outreach Results



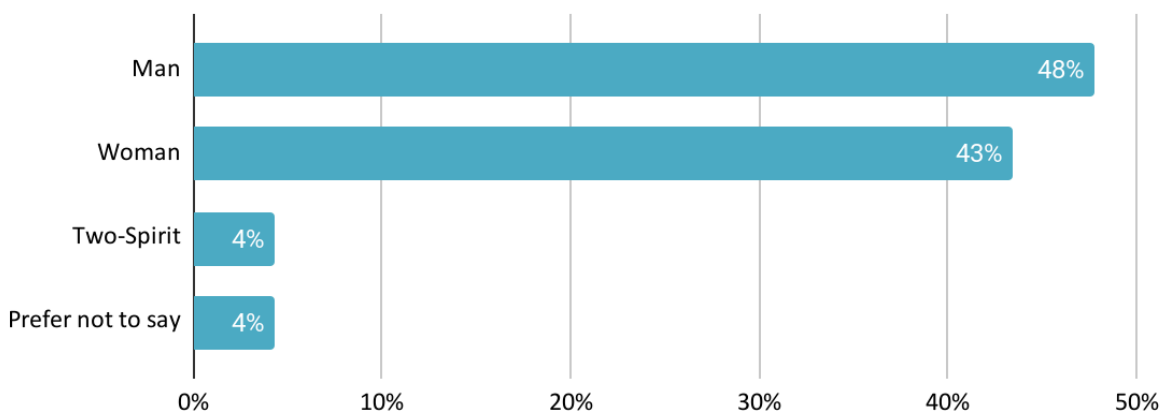
To reduce potential barriers for participants, the sign-up form included questions on accessibility information. The major accessibility supports identified during the planning phase were: compensation for their time, transportation stipends, and child or dependent care assistance. Participants also had the option to answer an open-ended accessibility request question, to list additional requests outside of the mentioned categories. The registration information shows that most participants received one or more kinds of accommodation offered by I&E. As outlined in Figure 1.2 - All Accommodations, 52% of participants received compensation for their participation, while 13% requested transportation reimbursement, and no attendees received care support for children or dependents.

Figure 1.2 - All Accommodations



A survey of the demographic characteristics of participants showed that 52% of participants were residents of Surrey, 39% were not, and 9% preferred not to answer. 17% of the participants identified as new immigrants. For first languages, 48% of participants only speak English at home, 39% speak English and another language, while 13% of participants speak other languages including Chinese (unspecified dialect), Farsi, and Nepali. Figure 1.3 - Gender indicated that most participants (48%) identified as men, followed by 43% who identified as women, 4% as two-spirit, and 4% as agender, genderqueer or non-binary.

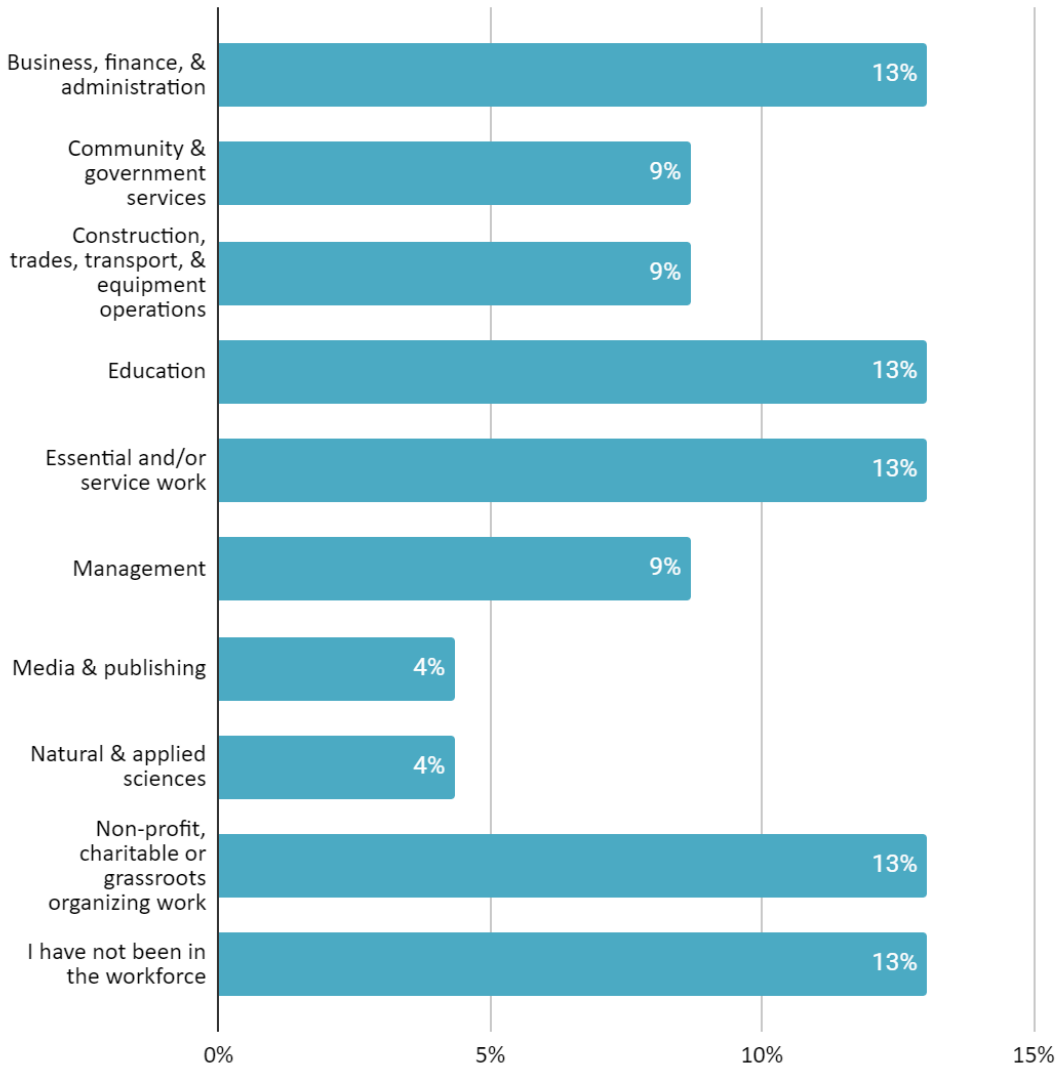
**Figure 1.3 - Gender**



The social demographics questions revealed that none of the attendees identified as Indigenous. In addition, 9% identified as 2SLGBTQ+, 13% identified as people of colour, and 9% identified as persons with disabilities. Most of the participants belonged in the 15-30 age group (26%), followed by 31-54 (35%), and 55+ (39%).

In the socioeconomic demographics section, 57% of participants were of low income status (below \$53,413 per year), 22% of middle income status (\$53,413 - \$106,827), and 22% preferred not to say. In the job sector category, as outlined in Figure 1.4 - Job Sector, the participants are equally spread out in Business, finance, & administration; Education; Essential and/or service work; Non-profit, charitable or grassroots organizing work; or had not been in the workforce.

Figure 1.4 - Job Sectors



In comparison to the 2021 Census of Population of Surrey from Statistics Canada<sup>7</sup>, the participants’ demographics are more representative of the general population in some demographic areas. The census data shows that Surrey’s population is made up of 50.3% men and 49.6% women, while the gender distribution of the attendees had slightly higher representation of men. Additionally, the census data shows that 15-29 years old are 21.5%, 30-54 are 34.4%, and 55 and above are 27.6%. In comparison, the age groups of the attendees are overly representative of the 55+ age group. For job sectors data, the

<sup>7</sup>

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTIClist=1,4&HEADERlist=0&DGUIDlist=2021A00055915004&SearchText=Surrey>

attendees' population lack the high representation of the top 2 highest job populations in Edmonton: healthcare and retail.

The census data also shows 2.4% Indigenous population, which was not represented in our participants' demographics, while the new immigrant population (defined as having immigrated in the last 5 years) that makes up 7.1% of Edmonton's population is overrepresented in our attendees' group.

## **The Community Conversation**

A key aspect of our planning process is refining the language we use in order to tailor the conversation to the community (see our script in Appendix A). The goal of the event is to foster a warm, non-polarizing environment to discuss local community issues. To achieve this, we trained our facilitators to avoid introducing potentially alienating topics and references to particular political parties or politicians. In general, the conversation was guided to focus on the local Surrey context with no reference to any provincial, federal, or global associations in the script. Pre-session research indicated that the community was not particularly resistant to language such as "climate change." However, we avoided using this kind of language in the event that it may be polarizing, allowing participants to organically introduce this language into the conversation as they felt comfortable. For the first session the questions were focused on community dynamics in the face of change, with each question addressing a different facet of change in the community: environmental, economic, and social (through the concept of sustainability).

The event took place at the Bombay Banquet Hall located in Surrey, B.C. on November 25th 2023. There were three tables allowing for a capacity of eight each. Three trained facilitators from the Greater Vancouver Area guided the conversation, in addition to one Community Engagement Officer who oversaw logistics and fielded questions regarding Iron and Earth. Participants were provided complimentary lunch and refreshments. We used recording equipment to capture the conversation rather than written notes, to ensure accuracy of the transcription. To respect each participant's consent and data preservation preferences, all participants' names were anonymized and assigned numbers.



## 2. What We Heard

We structured Surrey's first community conversation around three open-ended questions, creating space for people to guide the conversation to topics of importance to them and their community. This exploratory approach produced a wide-ranging conversation, allowing us to gauge the key topics of importance for community members, on their own terms. The questions we selected were aimed at generating conversation about the environmental and economic concerns of Surrey citizens as follows:

- *What environmental changes have you seen in your community?*
- *How have economic or industry changes affected income security and job availability in your community?*
- *What does sustainability mean in your community?*

From this conversation four primary themes emerged:

- **Climate impacts:** A keen awareness of the mounting impacts of climate change in Surrey and around the world.
- **Cost of living:** Concern over the rising cost of food and housing, as well as a difficult job market for young people and newcomers to the community.
- **Government:** A desire for the government to do more in addressing the dual crises of affordability and climate change.
- **Transportation:** Aspirations for a more accessible Surrey, with concerns over the limits of clean transportation.

### Climate Impacts

Throughout all three questions, participants referenced a range of environmental events that are increasingly disrupting their everyday lives. Community members discussed extreme heat the most, frequently referencing the 2021 heat dome<sup>8</sup> which took the lives of 74 Surrey residents and 619 people across British Columbia. They discussed how extreme heat has harmed elderly and underhoused community members, killed local salmon, and changed the topography of the community; for example, one person remarked upon how some previously snow-capped mountains are now bare. In addition to extreme heat, participants also frequently referenced flooding, droughts, and wildfires as environmental events that are shaping their daily lives.

These events are impacting Surrey residents in many ways. From a financial perspective, people talked about having to make expensive new purchases in order to cope with their new reality:

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<sup>8</sup><https://www.surreynowleader.com/news/vigil-in-surrey-remembers-the-deadliest-heat-dome-day-of-june-29-two-years-later-3002891>

“Our family had to purchase an air conditioner for the first time ever. You know, I was born and raised in Vancouver, I'm second generation and having an air conditioner at home was just not something we really needed or thought about.” One person expressed worry over the longer-term financial impacts of climate change in Surrey: “This is going to be a pattern that we're gonna see in Surrey...where more of your tax dollars, unfortunately, are going to be going just to cleaning up the mess. You know, rebuilding the power lines that you talked about, or rebuilding the infrastructure on the Coquihalla highway.”

The community members we spoke to often referenced the international context of climate change: “When events like that [happen] just next to you, you realize and open your eyes that again, air and pollution is not something that is within the borders. Global problems touch you, even if you're conscious.” This internationally-informed view of the climate crisis is reflected in how community members viewed the responsibility to address these changes: “I think [the] environment is not just one's responsibility or one country's responsibility. Because one area — let's say Surrey — is doing the best to save one environment, but the other cities are not doing well, then...the air pollution will come into this area...I believe it's a global thing.”

Emotionally, people expressed a sense of grief and fear for the future of their community:

“I'm one of those people that kind of is like, ‘I'm not anxious everyday, [I'm] cool with how it is.’ But for me having kids, like when I see my kids getting pregnant, the first question that shows up in my head is why would you do it to the next generation. It's going to be so hot, or they're going to be flooded.” Another participant echoed this sentiment: “The older generation, we're grieving for the happiness and health and security of our grandchildren.”

### Cost of Living

As is reflected in the excerpts about mounting climate impacts, participants consistently described the rising costs of everyday life. Concerns about affordability shaped much of the conversation — people articulated that they were worried about climate change and are experiencing how it is making their lives more expensive, as one person stated:

“The government should increase the wages so that people focus more — right now, people are more focused about earning their bread and butter rather than [the] environment, right? They don't even think about [the] environment when it comes to just survival. So, I think if the, if there is enough raise, or maybe enough salary, if they are mentally stable, about not running everyday for bread and

butter, then they can at least use some of their time and mind towards [the] environment.”

The rising cost of food was an area of particular concern. One newcomer to the community describes the shift they’ve witnessed since arriving in Surrey: “I came here in September 2021. When I started buying the groceries, for one week, for me and my cousin, this costed just a little shy of \$100. And now more every week. We have to spend more than \$150. For the same amount of goods, for the same amount of things.” Several people expressed a desire to support local farms in the area, rather than consuming produce from thousands of kilometers away: “All these groceries are coming from Mexico or in California. And they travel more than you. Your food travels more than you.”

Concerns over housing accessibility and affordability was another area of concern, as people described a sharp rise in housing prices over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic: “[There was] a major rise during the pandemic. I thought when people were working at home and so forth, the prices would have dropped and instead they skyrocketed.” The participants were particularly sensitive to how this trend affects young people in the community: “Our children can't grow up. This is why they can't have a home, wherever they grew up, right? They can't afford to live there, so it's breaking up families.” People pointed to a rise in unhoused people in the lower mainland due to rising rent prices: “Last year, I was volunteering at a warming shelter in downtown Vancouver...They were just homeless just because they cannot afford the rent.”

In response to the second question about job availability in Surrey, participants spoke at length about how the cost of living crisis is affecting young people and newcomers in the community who struggle to break into the local job market. They described a lack of availability of entry-level jobs, which has driven the rise of newcomers, international students, and other young people taking on precarious gig-work jobs to make ends meet:

“People say unemployment is low, but the jobs that are available are not for skilled workers. And they're usually like gig jobs and things like that. They pay, you know, \$200, \$300, but they're not really like stable jobs, and you don't have benefits.”

One recent graduate stated that “in my circle of friends who all have their degrees, it's still completely difficult to find a job, a minimum wage paying job, as someone who spent so much money on trying to get their degree.” Another person echoed this sentiment: “You see like international students... they've come here with this hope of, like, you know, getting a job here... it is a scam.”

Participants spoke at length about the challenges that newcomers face in having their qualifications be recognised by Canadian employers:

“My friends, they studied accounting in India. They have bachelor's degree in accounting, and they have many years of experience in India. They come here, they study the postgrad diploma in accounting here to learn Canadian practices. And now they're working at Safeway, Walmart, Costco. They're just stacking on the shelves. For what? Time, effort, energy, money, just gone.”

### Government

Overall, people expressed a feeling of being abandoned by the government on the issues of climate and cost of living. People frequently referred to the troubling experience of watching the government fail to take significant action after elderly people lost their lives during the 2021 heat dome:

“The organization that I work with actually tried to retrofit an old building where there [were] about 10 people that have passed away in the last heat dome. And it was extremely difficult to get through to the government. Like, we put an application and we haven't heard back from them and it's been like a couple of years.”

Someone else echoed this sentiment, stating that it was community-based solidarity that saved lives, not government support:

“No one came to their aid, except for local organizations that were trained in doing welfare service. But it wasn't the government. The government took a very long time. And they had to rely on each other to get out of that situation.”

Another participant expressed frustration at how inaccessible some government-led climate adaptation initiatives have been. Remarking on the provincial publicly funded portable air conditioner program<sup>9</sup> they said: “It's a very complex process, even for anyone to obtain. The income has to be like non-existent. So anybody in the middle class never qualifies for them. I bought mine at Costco for three hundred dollars.” Another person agreed: “It's really a political statement to make the government look good...the people that really need it aren't able to access the air conditioners.”

Overall, participants described a desire for more ambitious, proactive approaches to issues like climate and energy transition: “What is emerging, is absolutely [a] huge

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<sup>9</sup> <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023HLTH0095-001044>

opportunity. And this is what Surrey, this is what British Columbia has to grab a hold [of]. We're not doing that." Someone else echoed this sense of inevitability. Discussants talked about the limitations of short-term thinking, at a moment when long-term solutions are needed:

"Political leaders are just looking two years out [on] how to get reelected. I live by... planning for seven generations out. But we're not prepared for the next decade, let alone, like my grandchildren right? We have to change what's acceptable for our leaders."

Remarking on the need for the shift from fossil fuel to low-carbon energy systems, several participants agreed: "Right now, British Columbia is basically focused on training their citizens to participate in a sunset industry" – "It feels like it's the last critical run. Let's make the most of it while we can." – "It's a short-term thing." Looking towards the future, one person shared a desire for better coordination between different levels of government: "From a community perspective, I don't think there's really a common vision for all of the municipalities, the provinces, or even Canada wide."

### Transportation

In addition to climate impacts, cost of living, and the government's lack of response to these issues, the Surrey residents we spoke to were particularly concerned and excited about the future of transportation in their community. The topic of electric vehicles (EVs) came up in each conversation group, with many people expressing concern and caution about how EVs fit into their vision of a sustainable future. Specific concerns included the costs of buying a new vehicle, waste in the production and disposal process, and lack of infrastructure for charging outside of major urban centers.

However, participants were particularly enthusiastic about expanding walkability and public transportation in Surrey:

"I think a walkable, transmittable place is so important because it really also fosters more community you're like walking on the street, you're actually seeing human beings, you're also on the bus with people as opposed to being isolated in your car, solo on the highway next to everybody else who's also solo on their car."

As phrased by another person, "I think we need to focus on pushing the government to supply us with better transportation, more buses, more reliable buses, sky trains, and just building like a walkable city, you know." Someone else echoed the desire for expanded public transit: "One thing that I find quite striking about Surrey, in particular, having

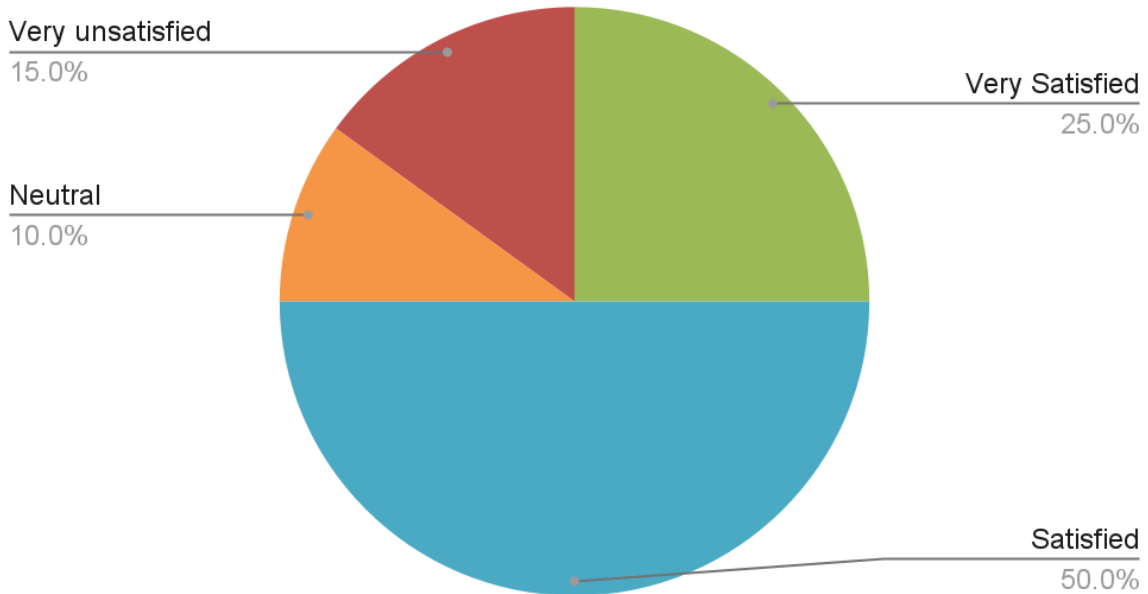
moved here only three months ago, was really the lack of transit options.” Another person agreed:

“We’ve been built up around the automobile, like so many other North American cities. And now we were trying to.. break that model and...introduce some more public transit. We know we have to do that but we’re still shackled to the automobile to a large extent unfortunately.”

### 3. What We Learned

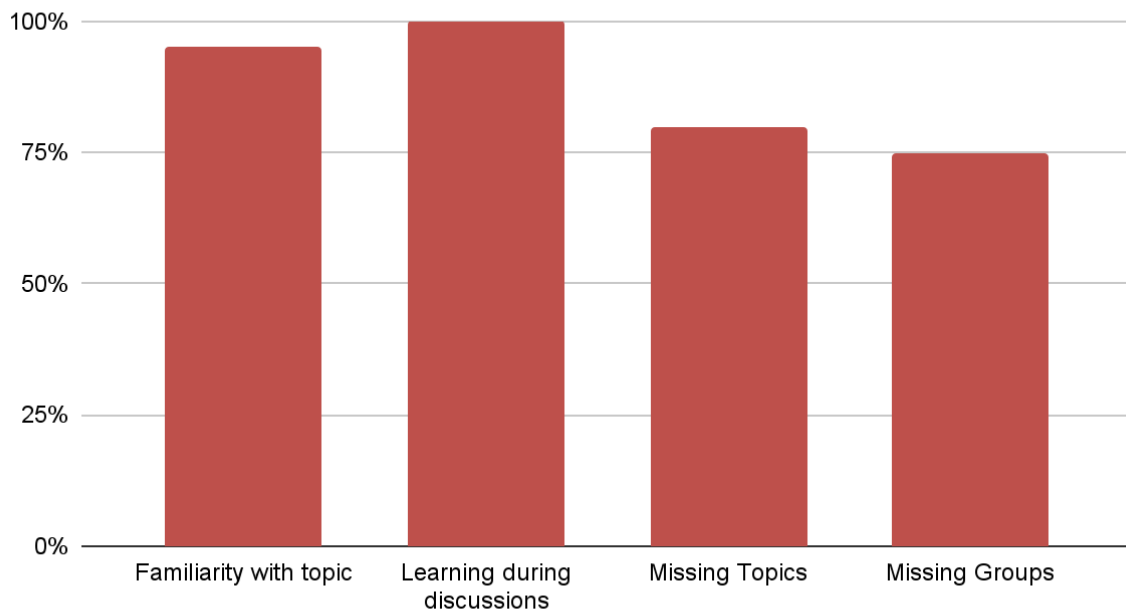
#### Feedback

Figure 3.1 - Discussion Satisfaction Levels



We shared a Google feedback form at the end of our session which was completed by all of our participants. From the provided options: “Very Unsatisfied”, “Unsatisfied”, “Neutral”, “Satisfied”, and “Very Satisfied,” most participants rated their level of satisfaction as Satisfied at 50%, followed by Very Satisfied at 25%, Very Unsatisfied at 15%, and Neutral at 10%.

**Figure 3.2 - Discussion Topics Feedback**



In Figure 3.2 - Discussion Topics Feedback, 95% of participants were familiar with the topics prior to the discussion, and all participants learned something new about the conversation topics during the discussion. 80% of respondents identified missing topics in the conversation, such as talking about renewable resources, next steps for the future, and practical ways to do sustainability. Meanwhile, 75% felt that there were some groups absent, such as Indigenous groups, representatives from organizations such as trade boards, artists, and community leaders. Feedback on the discussion includes: preparing a slide for English as a second language group, a less disruptive refreshment management, and adding written options for those who did not get to participate verbally.

Finally, all attendees would like to continue the conversation, and would like to be contacted for future projects or activities relating to these topics.

## Conclusions

Overall, the first Surrey community conversation confirmed previous engagement executed by the city, finding that Surrey residents highly are concerned about climate change and desire ambitious, proactive action to address it.

The 2021 heat dome was an activating event for the local community, causing immense grief about the social and economic costs of climate change for the people who endured it. In addition to fears of future environmental changes in their community, concerns



around affordability were top of mind, as people identified the rising cost of food and housing in their community as severely impacting their quality of life. Participants identified climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic as accelerating events in the rising cost of living in Surrey. Young people and international students emerged as primary groups affected by these events, with both groups struggling to break into the local job market and instead, often resorting to gig work. Throughout the event, the discussion frequently returned to a desire for the government to provide greater support for the community, with Surrey residents pointing to the inaccessibility of many climate initiatives. Transportation in particular emerged as an important area for government to act upon. Locals described the car-centric nature of Surrey, expressing enthusiasm for improved walkability and expanded public transportation options.

#### **4. Next Steps**

Iron and Earth proceeded with using these findings to inform the second and third installments of the Surrey community conversations. The knowledge gleaned from this initial event was used to determine key themes for future conversations, the second of which was held in January 2024. Once all three events conclude, the community interests, challenges, and policy proposals will be mobilized through a local advocacy campaign, to bring these findings to the attention of local decision makers. Iron and Earth will return the findings to community participants to continue the dialogue. Eventually, our team will begin to verify the findings with the broader Surrey community to ensure that the voices present at our engagement events reflect the perspectives of the general rest of the community. If you would like to learn more about the program's progress and the work that takes place after the sessions, please contact us at [communities@ironandearth.org](mailto:communities@ironandearth.org).

## Appendix A

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

Script for Facilitating an Iron and Earth Session - First Surrey Session

### 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

TOTAL TIME: 120 minutes

DOORS CLOSE TIME: 1:15 pm/when max capacity is reached

START TIME: 1:00 pm

END TIME: 3:00 pm

SETUP START TIME: 12:00 pm

### SETUP PERSON:

Set up presentation slides/theater screen

Setup microphone(s) and lighting

Have a facilitator in front doing headcount checking registered names and hand out registration forms if they haven't filled them, for those unregistered, provide registration form and letter of consent. Once we cap our numbers lead folks to fill up our sign up sheet

SESSION INTRODUCTION: 20 Minutes

Session Overview Introduction:

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

[primary facilitator introduce themselves]  
name

pronouns (if desired)

association with Iron & Earth

Why are you facilitating today? / provide goals for session

We would like to acknowledge the unceded Indigenous land where we are today in so-called Surrey. The home of many Indigenous Peoples including Semiahmoo, Katzie, Kwikwetlem (kwee-kwet-lum) , Kwantlen, Qayqayt (key-kite)and Tsawwassen First Nations.

Funding for this event is generously provided by ESDC and in partnership with the Sustainable Workforce Coalition

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

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

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

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

Finally, we'll come back together for a quick wrap-up and aim to be done by 3:00pm.

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

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

#### Privacy Policy:

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

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

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

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

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

#### Facilitator Introductions:

We have 2 other local facilitators with us today.

[Secondary Facilitators please introduce yourselves]

name

pronouns (if desired)

association with Iron & Earth

Why are you facilitating today? / provide goals for session

Conversation Introduction:

What is this conversation about?

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

Climate Change: Human driven extreme weather events and increasing global temperatures, are having significant impacts and posing major challenges for communities

Energy Transition Opportunities: The shift from an energy mix based on fossil fuels to one based on renewable energy sources.

What's going on in Surrey?

Surrey is experiencing a moment of profound change. As one of the fastest growing cities in Canada, it's on track to overtake Vancouver as the largest city in British Columbia by 2040.

The city has been subject to a variety of extreme weather events like the heat dome of 2021, more frequent cold snaps, disruptive flooding events, and wildfire smoke in the summertime. According to a City survey, 8/10 people in the community are concerned about climate change.

Surrey residents are also concerned about the rising cost of living, as housing prices become increasingly unaffordable. Median rents in Surrey went up 65% from October 2013 to October 2022.

BREAKOUT CONVERSATIONS: 60 Minutes

Setting-up Breakout Groups: 5 minutes

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

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

Sustainability Definition: "Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (UN 1987)

Question 1 20 Minutes

What environmental changes have you seen in your community?

Question 2 20 Minutes

How have economic or industry changes affected income security and job availability in your community?

Question 3 20 Minutes

What does sustainability mean in your community?

BREAK: 10 MINUTES

Reporting back to the room: 5 minutes

## CONCLUSION: 20 MINUTES

Desired outcomes and impacts of this project

We conduct three sessions within each community, this being the First for Surrey, we will be conducting a minimum of two more community sessions, and each will have their own session reports. These reports will summarize the needs and desires of Surrey's residents and will be shared with our outreach network, key stakeholders and decision-makers, and published on our website for everyone's benefit.

If you're interested in learning more about the program's progress and post-session work, please reach out to [communities@ironandearth.org](mailto:communities@ironandearth.org) and one of our team members will be happy to provide an update. We are planning to host more sessions in other areas of Surrey in the coming months, so stay tuned!

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.

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

[SESSION END]

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