

Calgary



2022 Citizen Perspectives

Qualitative Research on Climate Change

DRAFT REPORT

December 2022

Prepared for The City of Calgary by:





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Objectives and Methodology





1. OBJECTIVES

Climate change has become an increasing concern in Calgary over the past few years.

Qualitative research was conducted to shed light on:

- Perceived urgency for addressing climate change and the underlying factors that shape impressions; this includes exploration of extreme weather events in shaping perceptions.
- Expectations on action on climate change; in addition to responsibility for the City, roles for individuals, the business community and other levels of government were explored.
- Reactions to elements of climate change programs offered by the City.

2. METHODOLOGY

Ipsos conducted eight 1.5-hour online focus groups via MS Teams with citizens aged 18 years and older between November 23rd and December 1st, 2022. The groups were segmented as follows:

- 2 group with Supporters, skew younger (44 and younger, minimum 2 who are 13-34)
- 1 group with Supporters, skew older (45 and older)
- 1 group with Conflicted, skew younger (44 and younger)
- 2 group with Conflicted, skew older (45 and older)
- 1 group with Disengaged, mix of ages
- 1 group with Opponents, mix of ages

Segments were defined and recruited as follows:

1. **Supporters** – strongly agree that they are concerned about climate change AND strongly agree that they are personally taking action
2. **Conflicted** – somewhat agree that they are concerned about climate change AND somewhat agree/neutral on personally taking action
3. **Disengaged** – neutral or disagree that they are concerned about climate change AND neutral or disagree on personally taking action (At least one attitudinal statement to be neutral)
4. **Opponents** – disagree or strongly disagree that they are concerned about climate change AND disagree or strongly disagree on personally taking action



2. METHODOLOGY (CONTINUED)

Six to eight individuals were recruited for each session and a total of 50 individuals participated in the eight groups. City representatives observed all sessions.

Ipsos designed a recruitment screening questionnaire to ensure a good mix of gender, age, education, income and attitudes to climate change issues.

Participants were recruited using a combination of random digit dialing, a list of participants from an earlier telephone survey who gave consent to be contacted again (Citizen Perspectives) and qualitative research panels.

The moderator's guide of discussion themes was developed by The City's Corporate Research Team in collaboration with Ipsos.

Each participant received a virtual Visa gift card for their time and participation.

3. INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The following findings are qualitative in nature. The work is exploratory and intended to gather participants' perspectives and opinions. As a result of the number of participants and the method by which the sample was drawn, the results should be regarded as directional and may not be projected to the larger population without further quantitative research.



Executive Summary





Summary | High Level Overview

1

Extreme weather in Calgary was a concern to some, but not all. Supporters and Conflicted segments see extreme weather as a consequence of climate change which needs to be planned for now and in the future. Disengaged and Opponents either do not notice extreme weather patterns, have not had it affect their lives directly, or believe extreme weather is simply part of natural cyclical weather patterns which are out of human control.

2

The global scope of climate change was recognized by all segments. Participants believe climate change is a global issue which must be dealt with on a global scale in terms of coordination and efforts. Large polluting countries such as China and India were called on to make substantial improvements. Canada's contribution alone was seen as a drop in the bucket (citizens quoted as being ~1%), and without significant effect without the cooperation of other countries.

3

There is pervasive skepticism about our ability to slow climate change – much of the damage to the earth is seen as irreversible and therefore we must adapt. Most believe impacts have gone so far that we can only mitigate, but not stop, climate change altogether. This view resulted in a lack of optimism related to climate change, distress for a few and sometimes apathy. Many felt that humans will simply need to adapt to their new environment.

4

Multiple causes of climate change were noted. 1) A culture of overconsumption, 2) big businesses practicing unsustainably, 3) human activity, and 4) natural cyclical changes to weather.

5

Supporters and Conflicted segments feel climate change should be a priority for governments to address. Disengaged and Opponents do not “buy in” to the propaganda of climate change. However, other issues such as affordability (housing, food), employment, general economic development, and public transit are greater priorities, and will remain so in order to guarantee Calgarians can continue to enjoy a basic standard of living.



Summary | High Level Overview

6

Climate change vs. Environmental issues. When we use the term “climate change” it is assumed that it encompasses all environmental issues and impact of same – such as waste, biodiversity, use and reduction of natural resources, water supply, etc. The Disengaged and Opponents view Climate Change as a change in and severe weather events, which are part of a natural cycle, and consequences of solar flares, etc., which are out of our control. This is in part why they do not believe there is a problem or “climate emergency” and yet are still concerned about other environmental issues.

7

Government plays a role in addressing climate change, including the City of Calgary. All levels of government need to align in order to find the most effective plan to combat climate change and avoid inefficiencies and redundancies.

8

Since industry plays a larger role in contributing to climate change, so too should be their responsibility to help with improvement efforts. Individuals alone cannot make a difference without the cooperation of business, industry and government.

9

Government, and City of Calgary specifically, can help address climate change in the following ways: 1) nudging industry to make more sustainable choices, 2) improving public transportation, 3) incentivizing citizens through subsidy programs, 4) improving city planning, and 5) improving waste management methods.

10

There was relatively low awareness of programs and initiatives from the City of Calgary to address climate change. Some wanted to know what the City is doing, (in terms of recycling impact, concern about landfills, protection of green spaces and urban forest, and other initiatives in City-owned buildings, spaces, and equipment, etc.) Actions and outcomes are not well communicated to citizens. A review of existing programs reveals the need for concrete details about how each program plans to achieve its goals, and more steps citizens can take to personally address climate change which do not include making substantial financial investments. The review also indicated the need for more communication to citizens raise awareness and engagement.



General Perspectives on Climate Change





Calgary in 25 Years | What Will the City Look Like?



CONTINUED GROWTH

The majority see Calgary continuing on its strong growth trajectory. Future growth was perceived in two ways, efficient growth supported by necessary infrastructure, services, and new industry, or poorly planned growth resulting in “urban sprawl”. Most see growth which would continue outwards rather than upwards, where City limits could come to include communities like Cochrane and Okotoks. A few believe a slow in growth could happen if the oil and gas industry contracts significantly, without a viable and equivalent replacement.



POPULATION GROWTH

Population growth was predicted from both local, national and international sources, making Calgary more global and ethnically diverse. The need for increased resources and services to support a growing population was noted, such as schools and capacity in healthcare. A few mentioned “climate refugees” as a potential future source of immigrants to the city. These participants described “climate refugees” as people whose home has become uninhabitable due to the effects of climate change.



DIVERSIFICATION

Diversification of industry away from oil and gas, and towards areas like tech was also predicted by many. Participants underscored the importance of moving away from these oil and gas while ensuring Calgary can still thrive economically. That said, several people said that we, as a society and as Albertans, will never move away from oil and gas entirely.



Calgary in 25 Years | What Will the City Look Like?



TRANSIT

An updated and improved transit system was desired in order for citizens to move away from the driving culture to traverse the vast distances from one side of Calgary to another. The current system was considered poorly connected, inefficient, and sometimes unsafe. Many participants noted they would use public transit more frequently to address the environmental concerns of driving, however the system simply could not serve their needs.



ARTS AND CULTURE

Coupled with the general growth of the city, was growth in arts and culture. Furthermore, a new sports stadium was also noted by several participants.



RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGY

Development related to climate change was mentioned. Some participants envisioned further development into solar and wind energy, as well as electric cars. However, there was concern about the cost of the vehicle, charging stations and longevity of the batteries. More energy efficient homes were also predicted, through avenues like solar paneling.



Extreme Weather in Calgary | Those Concerned



When it comes to extreme weather events, participants were somewhat split on their level of concern. Some were quite concerned and see an uptick in extreme weather events affecting the city, such as (smoke from) wildfires, hailstorms, heatwaves and flooding. These participants are concerned about the practical, financial, and psychological impacts of extreme weather.

Most participants believe there is a correlation between climate change and an increase in these events. Several participants were personally affected by the hailstorms, flooding and air quality, and the long-term stresses of dealing with these events stayed with them.

- **Practical concerns:** dealing with damages to homes, cars and other personal items, potentially having to leave one's home and find other accommodations, and/or buying a home in an area less affected by issues like flooding. With regard to heatwaves, most homes do not have A/C.
- **Financial concerns:** the cost to fix or replace damaged items, and whether or not insurance will cover losses.
- **Psychological concerns:** potentially long-lasting trauma of losing one's home and/or belongings, having to "start over", and/or the fear of it happening again in the future.



After experiencing the hailstorm, its kind of just stuck with my family, the fact that it happened to us twice, and the consequences lasted so long. -Supporter

I always have a little bit of concern [regarding extreme weather] because I went through the wildfires in Slave Lake in 2011. I have been left with nothing before. Anytime it happens here, it does kind of freak me out. -Disengaged

I would definitely think about it when buying a home. I would look at the grading and the chances of flood more than I would have several years ago. -Supporter

It's always a question if insurance is going to cover it, or if they find a way out. -Conflicted



Extreme Weather in Calgary | Those Not Concerned



Meanwhile, other participants had two main reasons for not being concerned about extreme weather in Calgary. Most of these participants were Opponents or Disengaged.

Some were simply not personally affected by it, nor were their close friends or family, and thus it was not on their radar as an important issue facing them or the city.

Others, did not see a change in weather patterns in Calgary and believe what some define as “extreme” has always been the weather in Calgary. Still others believe extreme weather is part of normal cyclical weather patterns which are out of human control. A few pointed out that tracking weather data - patterns and cycles is relatively “new” and that we do not know what the patterns were over the centuries.



Among those concerned and those unconcerned about extreme weather, there was a shared feeling by many that Canada, and Calgary specifically, **is better off than many global cities in how much it will be affected by extreme weather in the future.** Places with rising oceans and extreme heat year-round were seen as being more at risk than Calgary.



I think in the big scheme of things, it's just the natural way of things. I'm sure 100 years ago, climate change wasn't the biggest topic, it was just cyclical weather patterns.

-Disengaged

I've never been affected [by extreme weather], nor has my family, even though we've lived in Calgary our whole life. I can see other people getting affected I know, but me personally it's not really a big issue for me since me nor my family or any of my other extended family have ever had anything.

-Disengaged

From what I've read, we had just as many weather events 30 years ago. -Opponent



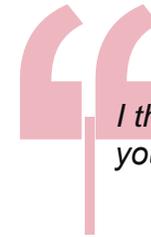
Climate Change | Top of Mind

We seldom use the term “global warming” and instead refer to it as “climate change” which, for many, encompasses all environmental issues and impact of same – such as waste, biodiversity, use and reduction of natural resources, water supply, etc.

The Disengaged and Opponents view Climate Change as a change in severe weather events, which are part of a natural cycle, and consequences of solar flares, etc., which are out of our control. They also spoke of the importance of carbon dioxide for plants to convert to oxygen, and therefore do not view carbon as a “bad” thing. This is in part why they do not believe there is a problem or “climate emergency” and yet are still concerned about other environmental issues, such as clean water, forestation, etc..

The topic of climate change is top of mind for many – especially Supporters and Conflicted. They cite thinking about it on a regular basis, which is often triggered by:

- Taking out garbage and recycling on a weekly basis, resulting in the visual cue of one’s own contributions to waste.
- Seeing the personal accumulation of single use plastic, as well as large quantities in stores.
- Having conversations with family and friends.
- Thinking about the future of their children



I think about it almost every time I take out recycling, and you’re thinking ‘where is this going?’ – Supporter



When I go into the Dollar Store, I am very disappointed. Where is all this waste going? There is so much plastic. It’s stuff that is so wasteful. – Conflicted



Climate Change | A Global Issue



Although perspectives on climate change varied by segment, there was one insight shared by the majority. Participants believe **climate change is a global issue** which must be dealt with on a global scale in terms of coordination and equal efforts.

Canada, and Calgary more specifically, are seen as being **very small contributors to international climate change**. Many participants were quick to cite Canada's overall international contribution at roughly 1-2%. Large polluting countries such as China and India were called on to make substantial improvements. Canada's contribution alone was seen as a drop in the bucket, and without significant effect without the cooperation of other countries.



Canada's footprint in greenhouse gases is something like 1% of the global, where China and India are over half. So, everything even Canada can do about so-called greenhouse gas emissions amounts to nothing more than virtue signaling and posturing. Until China and India get on board with this, we're all shooting ourselves in the foot." -Opponent



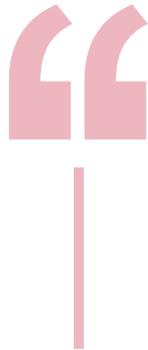
Our contribution as a country is small, even smaller for Calgary. I think it's like 2%. We have to see big polluters doing their part. I mean we should all do things to make a difference, but ultimately if it's just Canada and not big polluters, what's the point? -Conflicted



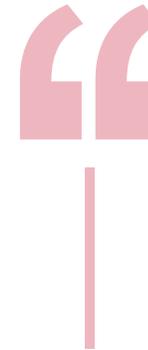
Climate Change I What's the Deal with Recycling?



There was widespread concern and sometimes skepticism about how the waste of Calgarians is managed. Participants were concerned about **single-use plastic** (why is there so much of it, how can their use be mitigated?), what **percentage of recyclables are actually recycled**, and whether **recycling and waste are shipped internationally** for disposal – which adds to the problem in transportation emissions.



I have grown skeptical of recycling. Where is all this stuff going? You hear that a lot of what's recycled doesn't even get recycled because it's contaminated or something. -Conflicted



We are shipping these boatloads of plastic to Asia and other countries in big ships that are creating all these emissions. That doesn't even make any sense. -Supporter



Climate Change | Two Distinct Views

Supporters and Conflicted:

- Supporters and some Conflicted were more likely to see the earth and its' resources as having limitations. The oceans, air and soil can only have so much taken from it. Increased development and human activity result in further infringement on these resources, creating climate change. These same participants felt steps could be taken by people to mitigate these changes.

Conflicted, Disengaged and Opponents:

- Meanwhile, some participants in the Conflicted segment as well as most Disengaged and Opponents believe climate change is part of normal cyclical and changing weather patterns, we cannot affect the climate as much as we think, and/or that climate change is a theory pushed by governments and media with a specific agenda.



I look at the earth, and it can't support the desires and the expectations of individuals. There's limitations. There's only so much you can take from the ocean, the soil, the air, from the earth element. And when you take too much, there's going to be an imbalance and there's going to be trouble. -Supporter



Who can control Mother Nature? No one. Mother Nature will do what she does. We can't be that naive to think that we can control it. -Opponent

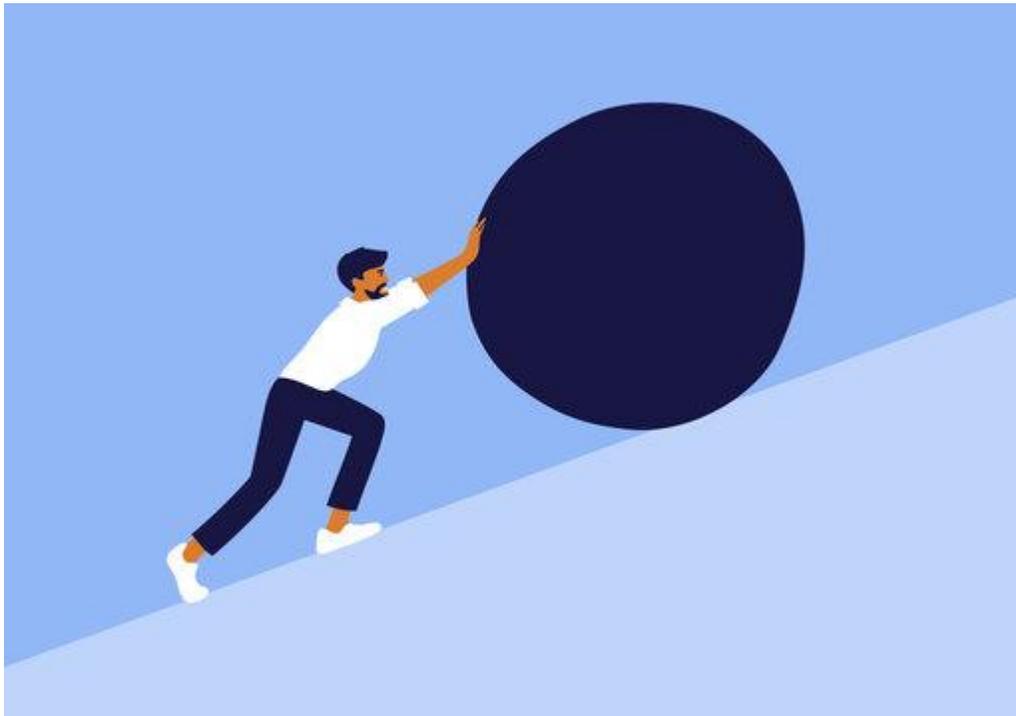


Who Makes a Difference in Climate Change?

Some supporters and Conflicted feel every small change to address climate change on a personal level does make a difference, while others feel putting pressure on individuals to make changes is misplaced when big companies/industry and large polluting countries are not doing their share.



Climate Change | An Uphill Battle



Many participants are skeptical that we can make the needed changes quickly enough to slow climate change. The damage to the earth is often seen as irreversible. Most believe **impacts have gone so far that we can only mitigate but not stop climate change altogether.**

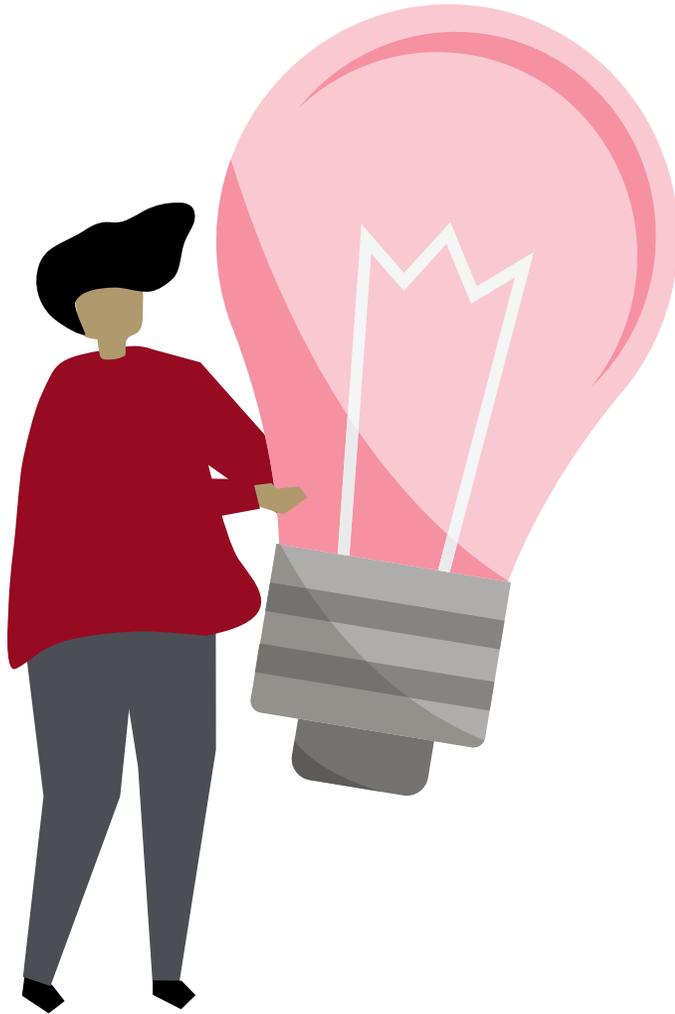
This attitude makes it **hard to feel optimistic about the future, and for some it can even drive apathy.** Some simply believe we will have to adapt to the inevitable changes ahead caused by climate change.



In my mind, mitigation is the answer. We could do everything here, and I mean look what happened in Pakistan this year [flooding], that's going to continue happening. It's going to happen every year, probably for the rest of humanity's existence. It means being able to mitigate the effects that we have. -Conflicted



For me, we can mitigate but not eliminate climate change. We can make some changes ourselves, we can do some things, but we cannot change it completely. -Supporter



Participants pointed to various causes of climate change:

- A culture of over-consumption which drives mass manufacturing, shipping and disposal. The constant need for new “stuff”, clothing, electronics, household good, etc.
- Big companies and mass polluting countries who act in the interest of profit and greed rather than sustainability, including planned obsolescence, low sustainability manufacturing, mass agriculture, deforestation, polluting bodies of water, etc.
- Human activity, including greenhouse gas emissions, waste, and overuse of natural resources.
- Regular and cyclical changes in nature (mostly Opponents and Disengaged).



Consumerism is huge. It starts with manufacturing goods, and the need for new all the time. – Conflicted



Human activity. We take oil from the ground, and we derive energy from it, as well as manufacturing. But that comes at a cost of the chemical reaction, putting more carbon in the atmosphere and changing our climate. – Supporter



In history the weather has always changed. We may not have the best records from before but it's always up and down. – Opponent



Climate Change | No Change in Perspectives Through Pandemic

Most participants did not experience a significant shift in attitudes towards climate change over the last several years, or over the span of the pandemic.

- A few participants noted traveling less and carrying this through to current habits. These same participants noted less travel does mitigate their overall environmental footprint.
- Although not a driver to shift perspectives, many participants noticed the rejuvenation of nature and wildlife during the pandemic, specifically how nature and animals seemed to thrive with less human contact and intervention.



Seeing how nature just came back, the trees, the animals. When we were all locked up, nature did much better. It sort of gave me hope. -Supporter



Before I would think of a vacation differently. Now we don't have to take a flight or a long car ride. I can go for a walk; I can go into our area here and that feels like a vacation after Covid. Flying and gas from driving, they contribute [to climate change]. -Conflicted



Taking Action to Address Climate Change





Taking Action I Extensive Distrust in Climate Change Information

There is extensive doubt and distrust among all segments when seeking reliable sources of information on climate change.

Participants do not have one go-to source on the topic, and all completely shy away from social media stating it contains widespread misinformation.



Some rely on experts in the field such as scientists. Some also rely on the wisdom of well-informed friends and family and Indigenous peoples.

Some are suspicious of news outlets and government bodies, stating they are biased and often push a particular agenda related to climate change and/or create unneeded fear.

When reading on the topic, most seek out multiple sources from different sides of the news/political spectrum in order to understand all angles, then use that diversity to build their own opinions.



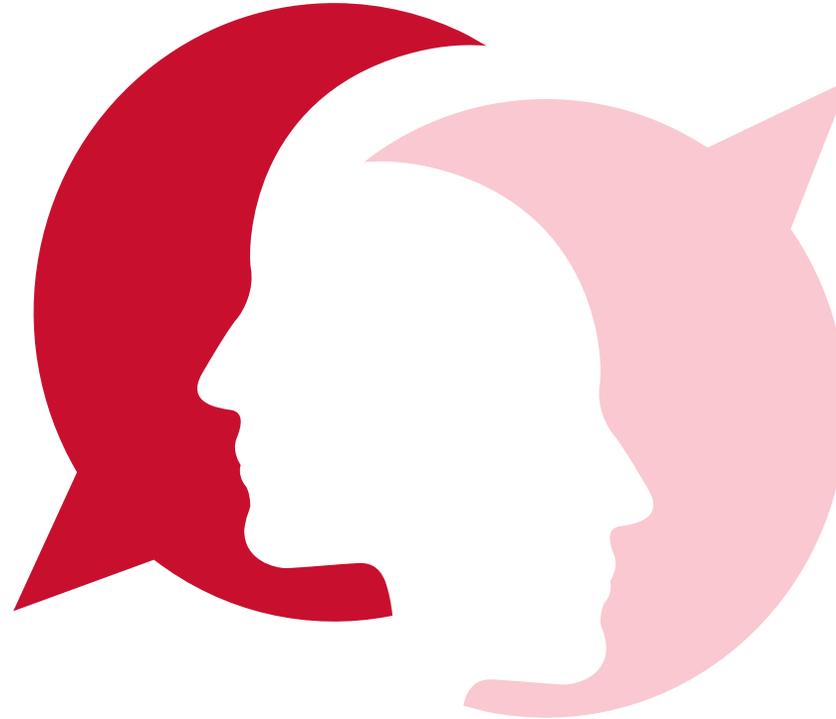
Taking Action | In Their Own Words...



None of the sources on the Internet, social media, news network, governing body, none of them. They take their own spin on the topic and present it their way. The truth always falls somewhere in between. I'd take the news from someone I know and trust. – Supporter

I look at several sources. I take the best of three and balance it out. I don't trust just one resource. It's good to look at more than one. -Conflicted

The media is creating a ton of fear [about climate change]. -Conflicted



Most members of the group seemed challenged to accept anyone. This is not true for me. I am deeply accepting of the wisdom of Indigenous people. From some of the current books by Indigenous authors to the humble voices of Indigenous scientists speaking on this subject of climate change, I have developed a deeper understanding of how this earth has come to its current state. They are the mentors we so desperately need. - Supporter

I don't support mainstream media. I see a lot of partial truths. That's what we're going through right now. A lot of one-sided journalism. You don't hear the debate. It's left up to the individual how they'll perceive it. And so, I try to seek out both sides and come to my own conclusion. -Conflicted





Taking Action | Personal Steps to Address Climate Change

Almost all participants are recycling and composting as part of their daily life to address climate change. Other practices undertaken, predominantly by Supporters and Conflicted, include:

Transportation

- Working from home to minimize driving
- Carpooling
- Using public transportation
- Walking or biking rather than driving
- Reducing long distance travel via car and airplane
- Switching to hybrid vehicle

Energy Conservation

- Switching off appliances when not in use
- Purchasing more energy efficient furnace, roofing, water heater, etc. when old ones need replacement
- Cooling the home without air conditioning
- LED lighting in the home

Food & Water

- Wasting less food
- Shopping for local food when possible
- Eating plant-based
- Planting vegetable garden
- Rainwater barrel in garden
- Showering less frequently to conserve water
- Limiting use of plastic straws

Extend / Reuse / Upcycle

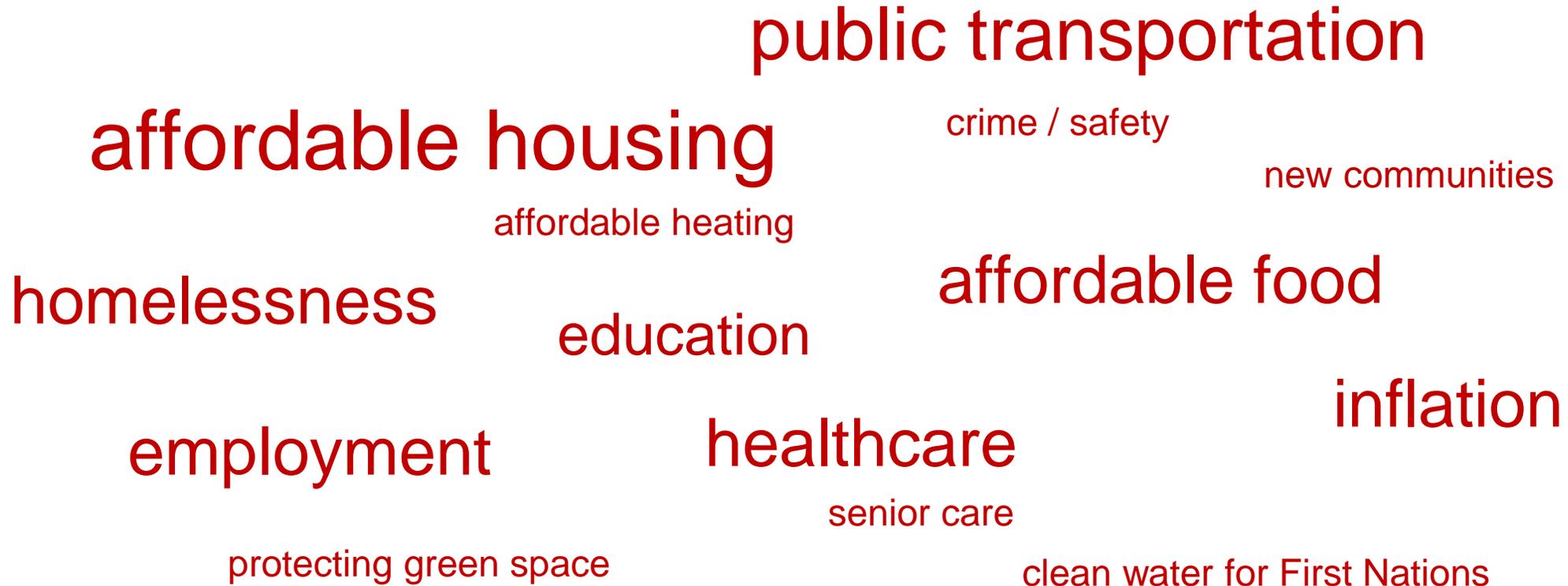
- Using personal items for as long as possible
- Purchasing from consignment, vintage clothing stores or Facebook Marketplace
- Reallocating old items rather than disposing
- Mending items rather than disposing
- Purchasing items with longer lifespan
- Reusable bags for grocery shopping
- Reusable containers versus plastic bags
- Borrowing books from the library rather than purchasing

Topic Engagement

- Engaging in conversation on the topic with family and friends
- Read / research the topic



Taking Action | Climate Change v. Other Priorities



For most participants, climate change was important for governments to address, however **not always in the top 3-5 priorities.** There was a shared sentiment that there are more pressing issues at hand which will always need to come before climate change, specifically affordability, employment and general economic development. Supporters tend to put climate change higher up on the list of priorities, while Opponents and Disengaged rank it much lower.



Taking Action | Who is Responsible?

Almost all Supporters, Conflicted and some Disengaged participants feel addressing climate change should be a priority for cities, provinces and countries.

- Participants want to see **all levels of government align** on how to address climate change, with one level taking the lead in order to ensure efforts are coordinated and effective.
- Many participants believe the **onus is more so on governments and industry** than individuals to lead on changes to improve the climate since they play a larger role in the cause than individual citizens.
- Most participants believe the **City of Calgary** should be involved in this effort and have a responsibility in taking action, but also emphasize climate change to be a global problem thus limiting how much the City can ultimately do. Some questioned what the City is currently doing, beyond green bins, as many are not aware of the initiatives outlined on the website. Rebates offered by the City were mentioned by a few, and another cited an Energy Efficiency Program. Some were skeptical about what actually happens with recycling collected by the City and that the landfill is problematic. And although some improvements to transit have been implemented, most feel more needs to be done to offset carbon emissions from commuting. They also feel the City is responsible for protecting green spaces, protecting them from development.
- Participants envision government specifically responsible for the following:
 - Nudging **industry to make more sustainable choices**
 - **Improving public transportation** to mitigate the environmental effects of car travel
 - **Incentivizing citizens through subsidy programs** to make their lives more climate friendly
 - **Improving city planning** to drive sustainable behaviours by citizens, for example having amenities less spread out so residents can walk or cycle rather than drive
 - **Improving waste management** practices, such as having a sustainable plan for recyclables
- Although most see some role for government in addressing climate change, participants note steps taken should never be punitive towards citizens.
- Furthermore, Disengaged and Opponents were opposed to the federal carbon tax, questioning where the money made from the tax goes and how effective it is at addressing climate change.

Opponents and some Disengaged participants feel government, and the City of Calgary specifically, should stay away from becoming involved in climate change initiatives, and focus on traditional roles of municipal government such as infrastructure, transit, waste management, and public safety.



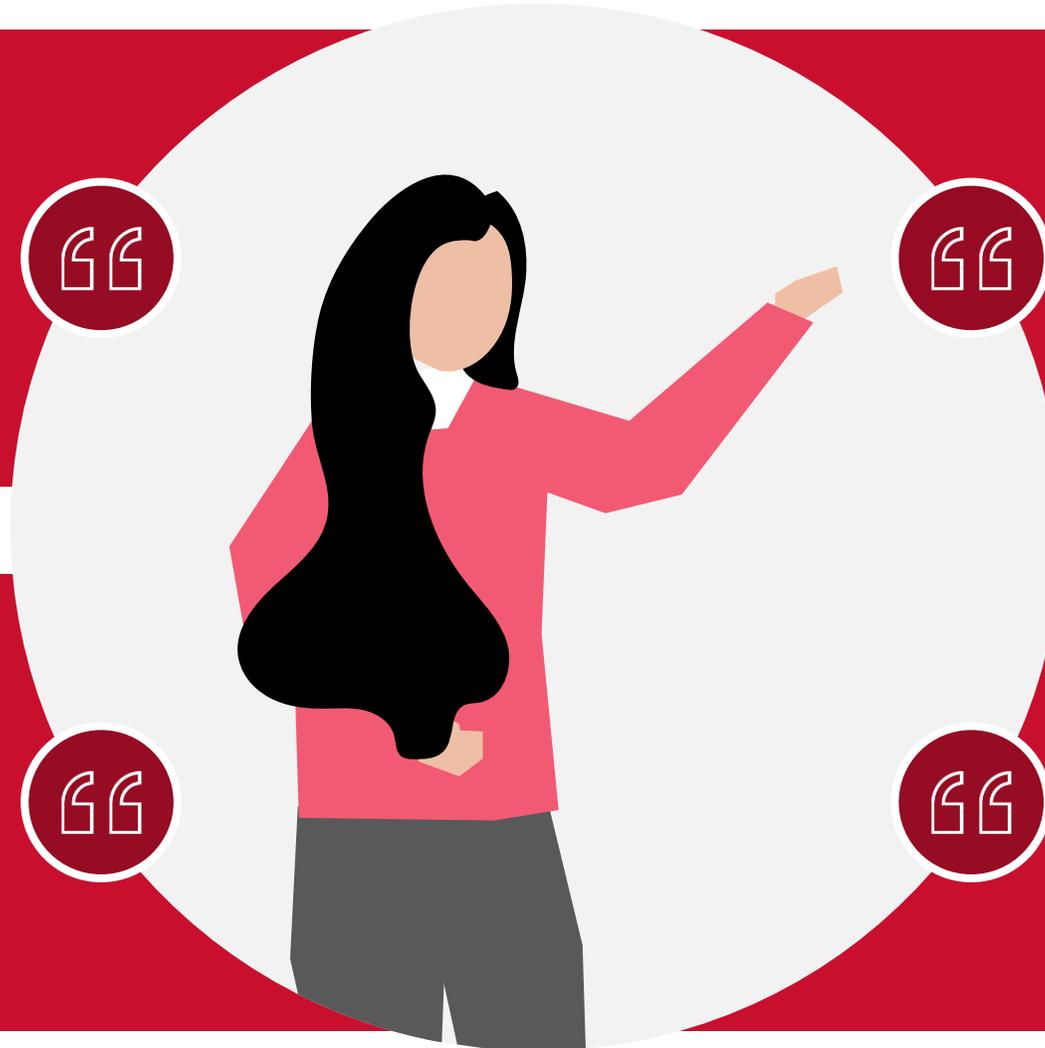
Taking Action | In Their Own Words...

I don't think our public transit is safe. There's a lot of ugliness on it and around it. We are pretty much a commuter city. There's a lot of emissions backs and forth, and so I think transit needs to be improved.
– Supporter

It goes back to the homelessness, the crime, looking after things like roads and things that the City was supposed to be traditionally doing before dabbling in another facet of our lives.
– Disengaged

It has to be a worldwide priority. Aligning the priorities and the working of cities, provinces, and federal government, aligning it all together and agreeing on which direction to go in, has to be a start. Otherwise, it's just spinning wheels in different directions.
– Supporter

These big companies that make these single-use plastics. It's corporations putting that burden on the individual, which isn't necessarily fair. Obviously, we do have a part, because we can't absolve ourselves from the responsibility, but looking at the bigger picture, and looking at who actually has power and control in that. – Conflicted



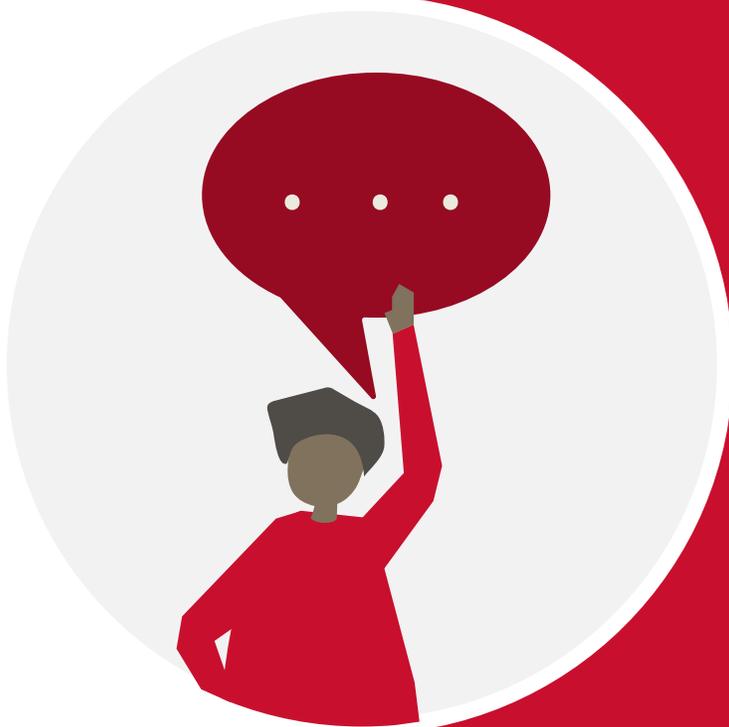


City Initiatives and Programs





Initiatives and Programs | **Low Awareness and Mixed Reactions**



There was relatively low awareness of current programs, initiatives and goals related to climate change from the City of Calgary, as well as any planned for the future.

A handful of participants were aware of incentive programs to help subsidize the cost of energy efficient improvements in the home, a few had even taken advantage. However, they were not certain which level of government they were sponsored by. The climate emergency declaration was also raised unaided as a climate announcement made by the new mayor upon entering office.

There were mixed reactions to the climate programs and initiatives presented. Supporters and Conflicted tended to support their existence as proof the municipal government is recognizing and trying to take strides towards addressing climate change, while the Disengaged and Opponents tended to see these programs as one-sided “propaganda” and simply wasted tax dollars.



There was the emergency action the new mayor talked about when she started. Haven't heard of much else. – Conflicted



Initiatives and Programs | Reactions to Climate Strategy



Calgary Climate Strategy -
Pathways to 2050

Our strategy

The Climate Strategy is our roadmap on how we achieve net zero and climate-resilient Calgary. Approved by Council July 5, 2022, it builds on the previous strategy to align with the [Council Climate Emergency declaration](#) to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and adapt to our changing climate at an accelerated pace and scale.

What do we mean by net zero emissions?



Net zero means cutting greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible. This includes:

- upgrading homes
- switching to zero emissions vehicles
- removing emissions through planting trees or other forms of carbon capture

Net-Zero by 2050 a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050 - net zero means cutting greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible by upgrading homes, switching to zero emissions vehicles, removing emissions through planting trees or other forms of carbon capture

Roadmap to achieve net-zero and a climate resistant Calgary



The Calgary Climate Strategy received mixed reviews.

- Several participants, specifically Supporters and Conflicted, were glad to see this as a priority for the City, while Disengaged and Opponents mostly believe the Strategy is a government talking point.
- Many had questions about the specifics of how the City aims to achieve these ambitious goals.
- Additionally, several participants saw the goal of reaching these targets by 2050 as being too lofty, given the short period of time.



I don't know how achievable that is, and is there more to this? I'm curious to know more, but my initial reaction just is kind of skeptical. -Supporter



It's not communicated very well. -Disengaged



2050 seems unrealistic at our current pace. The Strategy, it's cool it's in place, but no one has heard about it. Zero emission cars and upgraded homes, how will this happen? You can just say these things, but unless we have tangible ways forward, it's just something to clap for. -Conflicted



I've heard very little of it. It would be nice to have timeframes on housing updates and who's paying for it? City taxpayers? Federal taxpayers? How do we incentivize people to do what they want? -Opponent



Good to see this being out there, but we need more details. -Supporter

Initiatives and Programs | Reactions to Clean Energy Improvement Program



Buildings account for almost 65 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in Calgary. A significant portion of the buildings that will exist in Calgary in 2050 have already been built today, making it necessary to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements as we move to a low carbon future.

The goal of low carbon financing programs is to provide accessible, flexible, and attractive financing to property owners to make building performance improvements.

The first program The City is exploring is the Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP). CEIP is designed to make energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades accessible to all homeowners.

Additional program offerings will also be explored for commercial and residential buildings.

Program to make energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades more attainable for property owners



The Clean Energy Improvement Program received mixed reviews – good in theory, but not inclusive.

- Some participants, mostly Supporters and Conflicted, see this program as a positive step to addressing climate change.
- A couple of participants noted taking advantage of rebate programs to make their homes more energy efficient, specifically through solar panels, and energy efficient furnaces and water heaters.
- However, participants from all segments noted the limited nature of the Clean Energy Improvement Program because it was only targeted to homeowners rather than renters, making the program limited in scope and relevance.
- The program was also seen as being very cost prohibitive, where homeowners are required to make a substantial financial investment in order to make use of the subsidy.
- These program limitations underscored the belief that energy efficient programs and practices were reserved for affluent citizens.



Unfortunately, because I live in a condo complex, a lot of times things can't be applied to me. -Supporter



As much as I would like them to help subsidize solar panels on my house. If they want to say they're doing something is taking that same kind of funding they would do for individuals and put it towards making schools, and community centres, and rec centres zero emissions through putting solar panels on those large rooftops. . -Disengaged



I think that's one of the biggest challenges for most people. When the incentive comes out, you may not have the money for it. -Supporter



This is geared toward people who have a lot more money than the average Calgarian. Because they have the disposable income to look at purchasing these things and waiting for the return. Sometimes it's 20 years to get return on your solar panels. Most people can't wait that long -Opponent



They need to tell us more things that anyone can do. You need capital to own a home, have all these upgrades. Even an electric car, it's so expensive. You need to have capital for this stuff. -Conflicted



Initiatives and Programs | Reactions to Climate Ready Home Guide



Alberta is a hot spot for extreme weather. Lightning, hailstorms, strong wind, floods and fires – they all happen here, and they happen more often, and more severely than anywhere else in Canada.

Climate change projections tell us that the risk associated with many of these extreme weather events and long-term climate trends, such as drought and changes in seasonality, is increasing.

This Guide informs choices you can make during a renovation or construction project, or to your home maintenance regime to make your home more resilient to hazards that are becoming worse because of climate change.



Page feedback <<

Climate Ready Home Guide

Download Website feedback <<

Information guide on making your home more resilient to hazards



The Climate Ready Home Guide received mixed reviews – cost-prohibitive and limited to homeowners.

- Some participants, mostly Supporters and Conflicted, see this program as a positive step to addressing climate change.
- A few participants noted possibly seeing this home guide on the City of Calgary website.
- Participants from all segments noted the limited nature of the Climate Ready Home Guide because it was only targeted to homeowners rather than renters, or those living in multi-residential buildings (apartments, condos, co-ops) making the program limited in scope and relevance.
- Like the Clean Energy Improvement Program, the Home Guide was also seen as being very cost prohibitive, where homeowners are required to make a substantial financial investment in order to make use of any subsidies and/or make their homes more prepared for extreme weather.
- This program's limitations underscored the belief that energy efficient programs and practices were reserved for affluent citizens.



So many people you talk to don't know what to do [about climate change]. This program, at least it's a start. I applaud the City for doing this. -Supporter



It reminds me of what happened to Florida, is that the hurricane homes that are built out of concrete survived, but then these other homes were decimated. You're going to have the same problem where people that can afford it are the ones who are protected, and then most people who are vulnerable are just going to get decimated ... we already have so much of that already. -Disengaged



It's spending money to save money, unfortunately. -Disengaged



It's only through renovation, construction or home maintenance, something that's really worn out. There's no talking about trying to get people online through some sort of incentive to be proactive. If you're not doing a renovation, why would you do it? -Opponent



The primary benefit is to homeowners, and I've got to be able to own a home. -Conflicted



Initiatives and Programs | Reactions to Climate Emergency Declaration



climate emergency declaration

On November 15, 2021, Calgary City Council declared a climate emergency (Appendix 1) in support of accelerated action to respond to climate change and to recognize the pace and scale of the action needed to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change. More than 2,000 jurisdictions and local governments around the world have declared a climate emergency, including most major cities in Canada.

Addressing climate change is a strategic priority for The City of Calgary, and City Council has committed to accelerating the timelines necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, updating City-wide and corporate greenhouse gas reduction targets to be net zero emissions by 2050, to help limit global warming to 1.5 °C. The City of Calgary is also committed to helping prepare our city and citizens for the impacts associated with climate change through adaptation.

Resolution putting the local government on record in support of emergency action to respond to climate change and recognizing the pace and scale of action needed



The Climate Emergency Declaration received mixed reviews with pushback on “emergency”.

- Several participants from a mix of segments heard about the declaration, many through the Mayor of Calgary.
- Participants wanted more specific details to understand what the Declaration entails, what steps are being made to address climate change, etc.
- On its own, the Declaration sounded hollow to participants, without understanding what is being done about it.
- There were mixed reactions to the strong language behind this initiative; whether this was helpful to the cause or simply a government talking point.



It's nothing really. Like an emergency declaration in and of itself, I don't really think it has a direct impact [on climate change]. It declares their intention to make it a priority going forward. -Supporter



I heard it as a blip on the news, and it became one of those nebulous statements where you're not quite sure what it means. . -Disengaged



I don't think it's appropriate for them to announce another emergency in the middle of Covid. They announced in November 2021. We had enough going on. -Conflicted



The term “emergency” should never have been used. It should have been a “climate action declaration”. “Emergency” means “top priority”. I think she followed BC and Ontario and Quebec on this. “Climate action”, yes, we should be doing something. But not emergency. -Opponent



Does it tell us what criteria makes it an emergency? What the hell is the emergency? -Opponent



Initiatives and Programs | Reactions to Climate Symposium

Calgary Climate Symposium

The time is now: building a low carbon, climate resilient and equitable future for all Calgarians.

October 24-28

The time is now: building a low carbon, climate resilient & equitable future for all Calgarians.

The Calgary Climate Symposium continues the conversation about climate change, shares how it affects Calgarians, what we can do together, and why we need to talk about it.

The Calgary Climate Symposium explores:

- how Calgary can position itself for a low carbon future and leverage economic opportunities
- how Calgary can strengthen communities to be resilient to climate change impacts and hazards
- how we ensure no one is left behind as we look to the future

Sessions are offered each day, with a total of 14 sessions open for registration.

[Learn more and register](#)

Annual event to learn about climate change, how it effects Calgarians, and what we can do together



There was some interest in the Calgary Climate Symposium.

- A few participants had attended similar events in the past, with an end to learning more about climate change from credible sources.
- Participants mostly had questions about what would be discussed, who would be featured, and the logistics of the event (timing, free parking, shuttles, accessible location, etc.)
- Opponents want to be assured that it will be “balanced” in terms of perspectives presented and include discussion.
- A few participants noted they would be more likely to attend some component of the conference if they could do so virtually.



It has to be convenient, then I would consider it. -Conflicted



Is this a discussion that's gonna be a two-way street? This is assuming “climate change is a problem”. I'm not hearing anything about what we're doing right. We have such low emissions in Alberta and Canada. This is just more propaganda rather than figuring out what problems we've got and how to work with them. And it goes back to helping our own - we're not doing that.. - Disengaged



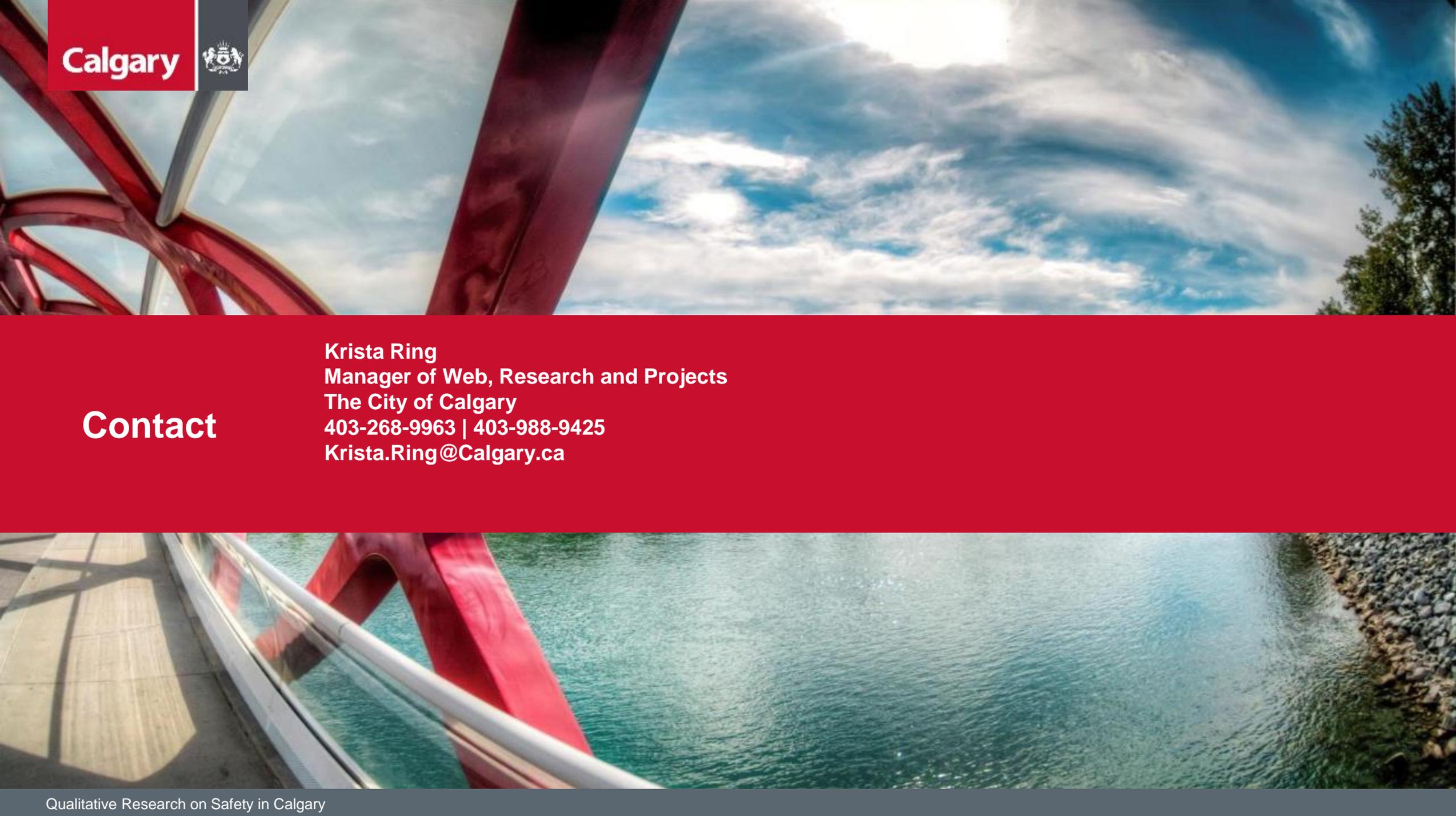
If it's a Zoom or Microsoft Teams, I'd like to attend. I think that's more accessible for a student and other people who have a lot on their plate. -Supporter



This could be good if the City is looking for feedback from attendees on these issues. Otherwise, I don't know it would be helpful. Because they can present it that way, but it's not feasible for everyone to have solar panels or have renovations. If it's an open discussion or where they're seeking feedback, then sure [would attend]. -Opponent



If it's downtown I want to see free parking, or a shuttle, or something. They have to make it easy for me to attend, especially if it's downtown. -Supporter



Calgary



Contact

Krista Ring
Manager of Web, Research and Projects
The City of Calgary
403-268-9963 | 403-988-9425
Krista.Ring@Calgary.ca