



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada



# WHAT WE HEARD

## FROM CANADIAN COAL POWER WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES

Task Force on Just Transition for Canadian Coal Power  
Workers and Communities

December 2018

Cat. No.: En4-362/2019E-PDF

ISBN: 978-0-660-29268-7

Unless otherwise specified, you may not reproduce materials in this publication, in whole or in part, for the purposes of commercial redistribution without prior written permission from Environment and Climate Change Canada's copyright administrator. To obtain permission to reproduce Government of Canada materials for commercial purposes, apply for Crown Copyright Clearance by contacting:

Environment and Climate Change Canada Public Inquiries Centre

12<sup>th</sup> Floor, Fontaine Building

200 Sacré-Coeur Boulevard

Gatineau QC K1A 0H3

Telephone: 819-938-3860

Toll Free: 1-800-668-6767 (in Canada only)

Email: [ec.enviroinfo.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.enviroinfo.ec@canada.ca)

Cover photo: © Getty Images

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, 2019

Aussi disponible en français





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT	2
PART ONE: Provincial Snapshots	
What we heard in ALBERTA	4
What we heard in SASKATCHEWAN	6
What we heard in NEW BRUNSWICK	8
What we heard in NOVA SCOTIA	10
PART TWO: Achieving a Just Transition	
Keep workers working – in their communities	13
Allow for early retirement	14
Make electricity secure and affordable	15
Reduce the stress of financial uncertainty	16
Help communities thrive	17
Communicate and collaborate openly and honestly	19
ANNEX	
List of who the Task Force engaged	21



# PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

On April 25, 2018, the Government of Canada launched the *Task Force on Just Transition for Canadian Coal Power Workers and Communities*. Our mandate was to provide the government with recommendations for how to support a just and fair transition for Canadian coal communities and workers, as Canada has committed to stop generating traditional coal-powered electricity by 2030.

To develop our advice, we met directly with coal workers; coal communities; relevant stakeholder groups; and, federal, provincial, and municipal government departments. Together, we:

- travelled to all four affected provinces,
- toured seven facilities,
- hosted eight public sessions,
- visited fifteen communities, and
- met with more than 80 stakeholder groups.

We received a wealth of information, heard real challenges, and learned about local ideas and solutions. While there are considerable differences across the country, community members and workers shared common concerns about impacts from the phase-out, including job losses, income security, re-training and re-employment, strained municipal budgets, and the social impacts of transition. We also heard hope for what a just transition could mean for the creation of decent work and sustainable communities.

We sincerely thank every single coal worker, community member, government official, employer, union representative, and other stakeholder who met with us. Your insights, experiences, concerns, and solutions guided our recommendations to the Government of Canada, which are detailed in our report: *A Just Transition Plan for Canadian Coal Power Workers and Communities*.

This report summarizes what we heard in May and June 2018 in two parts. In part one, the “Provincial Snapshots” provide a high-level summary of what we learned about each affected province, providing context and key messages. Part two, “Achieving a Just Transition,” gives a thematic summary of the ideas people shared regarding just transition. This document is not an exhaustive account of what we heard and should be read with our official report, which includes additional information.

More information about the Task Force, including our full mandate, as well as membership and biographies, is available online: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/task-force-just-transition.html>







# PART ONE PROVINCIAL SNAPSHOTS







## WHAT WE HEARD IN ALBERTA

### SHOWING LEADERSHIP ON JUST TRANSITION

#### PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW

Coal is a key part of Alberta's electricity grid where the sector has thrived for decades. Alberta also has the largest number of coal mines and generating stations in Canada, meaning impacts from the phase-out will extend across the province. Following the provincial and federal governments' decision to phase out coal, workers are facing layoffs, municipalities are losing their tax base, and community members are now experiencing the ripple effects. Recognizing these impacts, Alberta's labour movement successfully advocated for essential provincial programs and services for reemployment, retraining, relocation and early retirement. Communities likewise worked to secure a dedicated fund for transition. These supports from the provincial government will help, but they are only a start. Albertans are hopeful that the Government of Canada will do its part and help secure a prosperous future for Alberta beyond coal.

#### Alberta is taking steps

- Released Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan and announced the 2030 coal phase-out
- Launched Alberta's Advisory Panel on Coal Communities
- Created a \$5 million Coal Community Transition Fund for municipalities
- Created a \$40 million Coal Workforce Transition Fund for laid-off workers
- Provided \$1.1 billion in compensation to TransAlta, ATCO, and Capital Power

#### Workers are organized

- The Alberta Federation of Labour alongside with unions representing affected workers created the Coal Transition Coalition
- The first of its kind, the Coalition is "working to ensure that communities and workers have a voice as market forces, low electricity prices, and climate policies move the province away from coal-fired electricity generation"

#### Employers are planning for the transition

- Looking for ways to keep generating stations open through conversions
- Exploring opportunities at coal mines to reclaim lands and sell fly ash
- Partnering with communities to find cleaner energy solutions



## MINING

Almost all thermal coal mines in Alberta are expected to close from the phase-out because they supply coal to local generating stations. Only the Coal Valley Mine exports to international markets.

## AN INNOVATIVE WAY TO ADDRESS LABOUR ISSUES:

### The Employer Liaison Service Pilot Program in Alberta

The Governments of Canada and Alberta launched a two-year pilot program called the Employer Liaison Service on April 19, 2017. Its mandate is to connect Alberta employers with job-seeking Canadians and permanent residents by providing information, tools, and hands-on supports to eligible employers who are having difficulty recruiting workers. This program is intended to help diminish employer reliance on the use of temporary foreign workers and does not directly support the phase-out of coal.

## ALBERTAN WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES ARE ALREADY TAKING ACTION

### Forestburg and Communities in the Battle River Region

- Formed the Battle River Economic Opportunities Committee, made up of seven local communities in the greater region around Forestburg including the County of Paintearth, Flagstaff County, the Towns of Castor and Coronation, the Villages of Forestburg, Halkirk and Heisler, with mandate to establish a transition plan
- Created a single vision for the region and established a joint strategy, rather than focusing on individual projects
- Identified key development opportunities, including agriculture, tourism, and services for seniors

### Leduc County

- Formed the 39/20 Alliance with the Towns of Calmar and Thorsby, and Villages of Warburg and Breton to work together on municipal priorities through a collaborative partnership
- Improved local infrastructure, such as broadband internet, roads, and sewers, to capitalize on new economic opportunities
- Created Alberta Aerotropolis with the City of Leduc, to support local economic diversification, increased tourism, spur investments and job creation

### Parkland County

- Launched #KeepParklandGrowing social media campaign to develop grassroots support for infrastructure, giving residents an opportunity to engage in conversation
- Advocated for coal communities to benefit from dedicated access to the Government of Canada's Investing in Canada Plan
- Increased property taxes to maintain municipal budgets and keep service standards status quo
- Released a video on the coal phase-out: <https://vimeo.com/216738932>



### Hanna, Youngstown, and Special Area No 2.

- Built close working relationships and regularly collaborate through various initiatives
- Established a Community Action Team to manage the transition, reduce impacts of generating station closures, and strengthen local capacity
- Adapted the Hanna Learning Centre to meet community needs and to use as a resource hub during transition, where workers are increasingly accessing programs and services
- Launched a Climate Change Strategy Task Force with representation from local municipalities, and the Cactus Corridor Economic Development Corporation to work with industry partners to develop joint venture project





# WHAT WE HEARD IN SASKATCHEWAN



## PUTTING COMMUNITIES FIRST

### PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW

The two coal mines and three generating stations in Saskatchewan are closely intertwined with their regions along the southern border. Coal is part of the local culture—some communities attribute their entire history to the industry. Workers and communities are proud and passionate about their work, rural lifestyle, and efforts to reduce pollution. There were repeated calls for governments to acknowledge the real and unique challenges these communities face, act in their best interest, and support the vibrancy of rural Canada. The Government of Saskatchewan and SaskPower look to carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) technology and their ongoing negotiation of an equivalency agreement with the Government of Canada to sustain Saskatchewan's coal industry. There is widespread hope that by 2030 coal-fired electricity generation will be cleaner and the coal industry will still support workers, families, and communities in southern Saskatchewan.

*The government needs to look at transition's impacts in Canada. The government should worry more about Canadian communities and less about its image internationally.*

— Resident, Coronach, SK

## ADAPTING TO A CHANGING ELECTRICITY LANDSCAPE

### CCS Technology

The Boundary Dam Generating Station Unit 3 in Estevan is fully equipped and functioning with CCS technology.

### Renewables

SaskPower is aiming to achieve 50% generating capacity from renewable energy sources by 2030.

### Regulations

The Government of Saskatchewan's coal-fired electricity regulations came into effect in January 2018 as a step towards finalizing an equivalency agreement with the federal government.



- Located in southeastern Saskatchewan along a major trade route to the United States
- While other industries help to support the area, including the oil and gas and agricultural sectors, coal is the largest single industry and employer
- There is already a high level of competition for jobs in other local industries
- Farmers also work in coal to keep their family farms viable
- Boundary Dam Generating Station Unit 3 has carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) technology, meaning it will not be included in the phase-out
- The community is a strong proponent of expanding the use of CCS to other coal-fired units



Over 100 people attended a meeting with the Task Force in Estevan, and over 200 people attended a meeting with the Task Force in Coronach. They **voiced their concerns** about the transition, including the **impacts** on children, families, home values, and the overall future of their communities.



*What will we do for work? Where will we live? What are our options?*

– Community member in Coronach



Coronach and surrounding area

- The coal industry indirectly or directly supports two-thirds of residents
- Single industry community; there are no other major industries that support the economy in Coronach
- Many residents initially moved to Coronach when the generating station opened decades ago, incentivized by SaskPower through a housing buy-back policy
- Small and dispersed population ( distances of up to 100 km between communities) share services and resources
- Residents travel long distances to receive healthcare, go to work or bus to school
- Does not have an active chamber of commerce or economic development organization

# WHAT WE HEARD IN NEW BRUNSWICK

## WORKING TOGETHER TO FIND AN ALTERNATIVE TO COAL

### PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW

The legacy of coal in New Brunswick dates back earlier than the province itself. Following decades of transition, New Brunswick has one coal-fired generating station still operating: the Belledune Generating Station. This generating station and the Port of Belledune, where coal is imported, are key employers and economic drivers for the community of Belledune and the Campbellton-Miramichi region. NB Power and workers are proud that the Belledune Generating Station has already shown environmental leadership and its success in reducing air pollution, including by installing scrubbers to lower sulphur dioxide emissions. NB Power is looking for an alternative fuel source, like hydrogen, biomass, or natural gas to keep the Belledune Generating Station open and its workers employed beyond 2030. Residents, workers, and municipalities are already putting their minds towards transition and are working to plan and find a solution to sustain the region.

### PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Workers, communities, and businesses are advocating for ways to grow, modernize, and diversify the region



The Port of Belledune is diversifying

Potential Maritime Iron project

Supporting training at community college

Calling for modern, high-speed internet

*Closures are not the answer.*

– Community member in Belledune





### STRENGTH IN THE REGION

While there is a long and respected history of coal mining and electricity generation in New Brunswick, affected workers and communities are looking towards the future. With open and transparent decision-making by NB Power, many are hopeful that the transition to cleaner electricity will bring jobs and economic renewal to Belledune and the surrounding the Campbellton-Miramichi region. This region is resilient, having survived the closure of major industries before, and is looking to build on its experiences and successes.



### LOCAL SUCCESS: Brunswick Mine Transition

When the Brunswick Mine closed in 2013 after nearly 50 years of operations, the provincial government, employer, and union collaboratively managed the transition for the estimated 700 to 800 affected workers. Based on the expected date when the minerals would be depleted, Xstrata Zinc provided years of advance notice before the closure.

In 2007, the provincial government and Xstrata Zinc funded the Brunswick Mine Labour Force Adjustment Committee. This Committee proactively helped miners find other jobs before the mine closed by assessing the workers' needs and arranging on-site job fairs.

The Committee established the Brunswick Mine Transition Centre in Bathurst, which provided services to workers, such as training, counselling, resume writing, and help applying for Employment Insurance. To ensure their skills acquired on the job were recognized, some miners received certification through the Canadian Mining Certification Program. The Transition Centre and partnerships formed through the Committee were essential in achieving positive outcomes through the transition.



### Municipal Climate Leadership

Municipalities have the power to lead by example and take positive climate action. The City of Bathurst has considered climate change in its operations since 2012. In 2016, the city release its Climate Change Adaptation Plan, accounting for local impacts such as rising water levels, eroding coast lines, and flooding. It has also produced interactive maps on coastal flooding, inland flooding, and coastal erosion.





# WHAT WE HEARD IN NOVA SCOTIA

## MAKING ELECTRICITY CLEANER

### PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW

Coal is a source of pride and heritage for many in Nova Scotia, particularly in Cape Breton and the region around Pictou County. A significant amount of electricity in Nova Scotia is still generated from coal. Most of this coal is imported, as the one remaining thermal mine will close in 2019 at its end-of-life date and the Donkin Mine only recently reopened. Given the need to reduce GHG emissions, the Government of Nova Scotia has taken a broad-based approach to reduce emissions from the electricity sector, including coal-fired generating stations. As environmental progress has been made overall, many workers, community members, unions, and employers support using coal to generate some electricity after 2030. This would require that provincial and federal governments negotiate an equivalency agreement to allow for coal to be used. Negotiations on an equivalency agreement are already underway, giving many Nova Scotians hope for both a cleaner and secure future.

### NOVA SCOTIANS ARE SEEING RESULTS

Exceeded its 2015 renewables target by 2% and reports being on track to reach 40% by 2020

Highest installed wind generating capacity in Canada, as a percentage of total capacity

Efficiency Nova Scotia employs 1,400 workers in energy efficiency jobs

### In Nova Scotia...

#### Communities:

- Survived resource declines and closures
- Diversified, renewed, and thrived through hardship

#### Unions and Workers:

- Collaborate with employers
- Value honest communication and open decision-making
- Hold dual tickets

#### Employers:

- Strive to keep electricity rates low, reduce emissions and minimize job losses
- Offer secure and reliable jobs all year

#### Health and Environmental Organizations:

- Know the phase out is important
- Flag potential impacts on mental health and overall wellness



## Transition Lessons from the closure of Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Cornwallis in NS

The federal government established a \$30 million fund following the 1993 closures of several military bases in Atlantic Canada, including CFB Cornwallis in Nova Scotia.

A portion of these funds went to the Cornwallis Park Development Agency, a local non-profit, who took ownership of the military facilities. To create community economic development opportunities, the CPDA sold 246 military homes and repurposed existing infrastructure and leisure centres for new activities, including the establishment of an international peacekeeping organization and a camp for sea cadets. A “Net Zero Pricing Policy” and investments in new local businesses at the newly titled Cornwallis Park stimulated economic activity.

Most notably, Acadian Seaplants Ltd. received funding to expand its processing facility and establish a research and development centre at the Park. It is now the largest independent marine plant processing facility in North America, a global leader in developing marine plant products, and a significant employer in the region.

This transition spurred job creation that exceeded the previous number of employees at the base, and continues to be a key piece of regional infrastructure.

## NOVA SCOTIANS NEED TIME TO PLAN FOR TRANSITION



### Trenton and Pictou County

- Finding ways to increase collaboration between Trenton, the Town of Pictou, Stellarton, New Glasgow, Westville and Pictou County, specifically by revitalizing economic development
- Looking at solutions, such as a new industry for the Trenton Works factory or a partnership with the local college to run programs for new economy (e.g., senior care)
- The Stellarton Mine will close in 2019 when it reaches the end of its lifespan

### Port Hawkesbury and the Strait of Canso

- The Port Hawkesbury paper mill is a major employer in the area and affordable power is essential to its operations
- The local rail line relies on freight from the port, including imported coal
- There is hope to market the Strait of Canso for business development and find another major shipper
- Richmond County is looking to expand tourism

### Sydney and Cape Breton Island

- The amalgamation of the eight municipalities on the island has given the area a stronger voice
- The DevCo shutdown was a failed transition, as well-compensated, unionized coal jobs were replaced with minimum wage call centre jobs
- Has a higher poverty rate than the mainland, and 800 abandoned homes
- Looking at an immigration model as a way to grow the population and boost the economy





## PART TWO

# ACHIEVING A JUST TRANSITION





# Keep workers working—in their communities

Coal workers are widely respected for their skills, trades, and contributions to their communities. They made what they believed to be a responsible decision to work in the coal industry, yet now, through no fault of their own, they are facing an uncertain future. Governments, employers, unions, and workers all expressed hope to find ways to work together to avoid layoffs and closures in the affected communities. Many suggested concrete ways to have more collaborative decision-making processes and appropriate local services and supports.

## COMMON CONCERNS

- Local jobs are limited and moving or commuting long distances should be a last resort
- New jobs are not always the same quality as lost jobs
- Leaving families to retrain or get additional education is emotionally and financially draining
- Not clear about what skills are transferable, and which need to be upgraded or gained
- Not sure what jobs to retrain for
- Employers rarely hire workers close to retirement

*Our community college provides opportunities to retrain workers and gain transferable skills, but we need an active industry here for that to be possible.*

- Community member, Bathurst, NB



## FREQUENTLY MENTIONED SOLUTIONS

### Continuing to work for the same employer

Provide jobs for workers, using their existing skills and trades, or retraining for new areas, such as mine remediation

### Using preferred contracts and labour pools

Ensure affected workers have priority access to jobs and are “pre-screened” for opportunities that meet their skillsets

### Retraining, apprenticeships, and skills upgrading

Connect workers to local retraining, including through offering on-site classes, sabbaticals, and partnerships with community colleges

### Supporting those interested in entrepreneurship

Provide services and supports to those who want to start a local small business

### Helping navigate the job market to find a new job

Provide labour market information and direct employment counselling so workers can make informed decisions and identify career paths

## Project ideas we heard in communities

### Trenton Works Factory

*Trenton and Pictou County, NS*

Attract new industries to the Trenton Works Factory to create jobs and promote economic diversification

### Business incubator

*Belledune and Greater Bathurst Region, NB*

Create a local hub for entrepreneurs and start-ups to encourage growth and diversification in the area

### Westwind Centre

*Spruce Grove, AB*

Develop a new area that would include office buildings, retailers, a hotel, restaurants, an entertainment centre, transit park and ride, and a residential development

### Agriculture

*Warburg, AB; Thorsby, AB*

Support new agricultural businesses to access new markets and create jobs, such as the cannabis industry, and expand agricultural businesses through Farm Credit Canada

## Allow for early retirement

*I retire in less than 10 years and now I have to look at another job to get my pension. I'm too old to go into the job market. I need this job to retire.*

*- Community member, Coronach, SK*

Many workers close to retirement have dedicated their entire lives to the coal industry. Due to the phase-out, they may lose their jobs before they are eligible to retire with full pensions. These workers identified two key concerns when looking for a new job: they do not want to take an opportunity away from a worker just starting out and employers do not want to hire them with only a few years left to work. It is essential that workers' lifelong contributions are respected and that they have a bridge to retirement.





# Make electricity secure and affordable



The transition away from coal to other fuels will not be fair and just if electricity becomes unreliable and expensive. Many workers believe that using coal is essential to keep the lights on and the costs to consumers low. As a result, there is strong support to use technology to make coal cleaner and keep using it past 2030. At the same time, the alternatives are becoming more affordable and technological improvements are making them more reliable. Employers are looking for ways to reduce emissions and keep rates reasonable.

*How can we extend the life of coal? How can you help improve CCS?*

*- Meeting participant, Estevan, SK*

## COMMON CONCERNS

- Electricity rates may increase
- Renewables are sometimes unpopular and might not be feasible in some locations
- Energy alternatives are difficult to integrate with the electricity grid
- Renewable energy can be unreliable and unable to supply the base load

*The sun doesn't always shine. The wind doesn't always blow.*

*- Meeting participant, Cape Breton, NS*

## FREQUENTLY MENTIONED SOLUTIONS

- Install CCS technology—worth the cost
- Invest in other ways to reduce GHG emissions and air pollution from coal, including R&D
- Prolong the use of coal through a flexible fleet and/or seasonal operations
- Continue expanding and piloting renewables where possible
- Negotiate an agreement with the federal government to extend the life of coal
- Explore employment opportunities from co-firing other fuels

## Project ideas we heard in communities

### Belledune Generating Station

*Belledune and Greater Bathurst Region, NB*

Secure a new fuel source and undertake the retrofits necessary to keep the Belledune Generating station open

### Carbon Capture Sequestration (CCS)

*Estevan, Bienfait, Coronach, SK; Cape Breton, NS*

Retrofit units at generating stations with CCS to meet emissions standards under the proposed regulations to keep them operating past 2030



## Reduce the stress of financial uncertainty

Transition comes with financial uncertainty. Many workers reported being unsure how to plan their finances without knowing when and if they would be affected. Workers who lose their jobs could face additional stress from the added cost of relocating for work, taking a lower paying job, or unemployment. New and available supports should be clearly communicated, easy to access and have a low qualification threshold. Similarly, communities will require supports to supplement impacted tax bases and ensure community members maintain an affordable living standard now and beyond 2030.

*I don't know what we will do if tax revenues are gone. Surrounding communities rely on them too.*

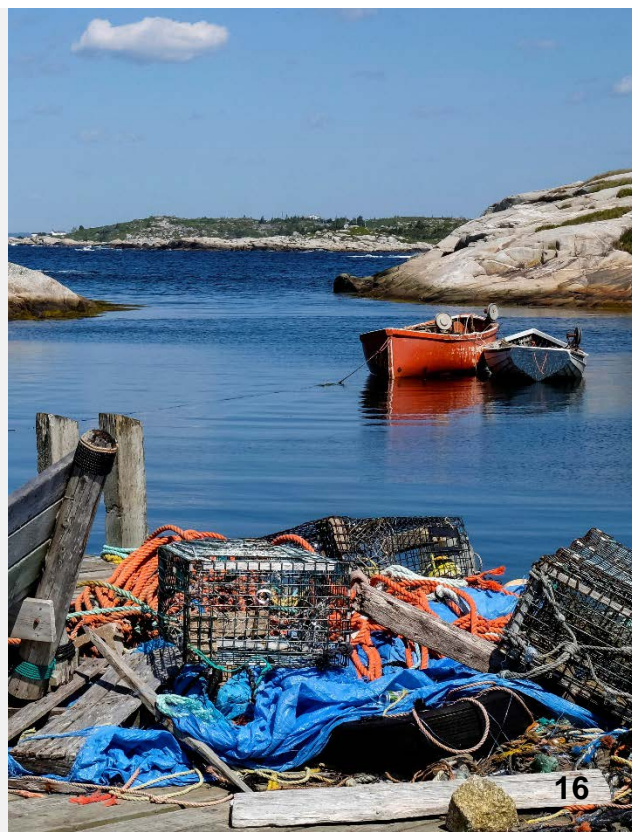
*- Meeting participant, Estevan, SK*

### COMMON CONCERNS

- Employment Insurance (EI) and other programs may be incompatible with severance and supplemental income, resulting in penalties and clawbacks
- Regional differences in EI mean inconsistent benefits
- Increased taxes means increased cost of living
- Value of homes are decreasing
- Application processes for existing funding and financial supports are burdensome
- Fees associated with relocation and retraining are unaffordable

### FREQUENTLY MENTIONED SOLUTIONS

- Address shortcomings in EI and prevent penalties
- Recover losses on real estate investments
- Provide funds for workers facing financial losses on the sales of their homes when they have to move for a new job
- Supplement impacted tax bases by providing funds for affected municipalities to maintain service delivery standards
- Streamline application processes to funding programs





# Help communities thrive

Communities are more than cities, towns and villages—they are the places where children grow up, workers earn a living, and people call home. When a community undergoes a transition it can have lasting impacts on the well-being of those who reside there. Municipalities and economic development officers face immense pressure to find solutions with limited resources, while population decline puts the viability of communities at risk and makes living more expensive. Many communities have demonstrated their resiliency through previous market downturns; however, they need help to sustain the quality of life that people rely on.



## COMMON CONCERNS

- Economic development officers are strained and overworked
- Coordinated economic development networks are in flux or nonexistent
- Not enough resources to support business development and expansion
- Transition creates an unattractive investment climate
- Mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence have noticeably increased
- Essential services workers and volunteers are leaving the community
- Young families are difficult to retain and attract to the community
- Existing funding opportunities from the province and federal government are hard to access
- Rural and remote communities face unique challenges and have fewer amenities and services than urban centres

## FREQUENTLY MENTIONED SOLUTIONS

### Increase economic development capacity

Identify funding opportunities through existing programs, conduct strengths and impacts assessments, and combat negative perceptions of coal communities

### Implement transition plans

Provide funds and resources for transition planning and implementation

### Leverage regional strengths

Work collaboratively with other local municipalities to capitalize on best practices, undertake joint economic development work, and share service delivery

### Support economic diversification

Provide training, loans, and resources to help startups and small businesses modernize and expand to create local jobs and reduce reliance on large industries

### Develop infrastructure

Complete the necessary infrastructure projects and upgrades that will provide employment opportunities

### Support community vitality and livability

Help make communities more attractive to new businesses, industries, and residents

### Increase availability of social services

Ensure the adequate social and mental health supports exist in the community to address the needs of workers and families experiencing increased levels of stress

### Create hubs for workers and businesses

Provide centralized spaces and resources, such as incubators for businesses looking to grow and transition centres for workers and families in need of support



*People are beginning to think of coal towns as dead. We need to change that perception and show them that there is a future.*

- Resident, Forestburg, AB

*I come from a small community outside Estevan and if the mining industry is removed, I would have to travel to Regina or Saskatoon to get basic services.*

- Resident, Estevan area, SK

*Our population keeps getting old and we can't afford to lose any more families. Young families don't want to stay in our community anymore because there are fewer jobs.*

- Resident, Trenton, NS

*I have been trying to get my Red Seal, but my employer has not been cooperative.... I am now out of time. I will be an unemployed millwright without a ticket.*

- Written submission, AB (summarized)

*Planning is required to ensure that the low-carbon transition's many benefits for health... are not offset by abrupt decreases in the social determinants of health.*

- Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment



# Communicate and collaborate openly and honestly

Uncertainty about transition, including when it will happen locally and who exactly will be affected, is causing significant levels of stress. Some workers felt their employers and provincial governments have been more open and transparent about the future of coal. Many however expressed concerns over closed decision-making processes and a lack of communication. These workers and communities felt like they were left in the dark. There were resounding calls for more inclusive processes, particularly when the Government of Canada makes such an impactful decision, as in this case, regulating away an entire industry. Workers and communities want to know they will be treated fairly and have time to make the right decisions.



## COMMON CONCERNS

Coordinating within regions or with other communities in transition can be challenging without defined partnerships or networks

Workers, unions, and residents are not involved in making important decisions

Governments and employers are not always directly communicating early, often, or openly with those impacted

Timelines for job losses are unclear or unknown

Employers have undefined and inconsistent approaches to transition

## FREQUENTLY MENTIONED SOLUTIONS

Hold governments and employers accountable

Make decision-making process more inclusive and transparent

Communicate frequently and plainly with workers, even if to say "no decisions yet"

Create formal partnerships for just transition, including between communities, municipalities, and regions

Establish committees to facilitate direct involvement of unions, business managers, and workers in decision making and planning

Renew shared economic development and diversification efforts

Develop local networks and communication campaigns

Create space for affected municipalities to meet, work together, and learn from each other



## More project ideas we heard in communities

### Broadband internet

*Warburg, AB; Leduc, AB; Forestburg and area, AB; Belledune and Greater Bathurst Region, NB*

Install reliable broadband internet to improve businesses' ability to establish an online presence, advertise and market effectively, and reach broader markets

### Aerotropolis implementation

*Leduc County, AB*

Expand the industrial hub near the Edmonton International Airport, and provide better transportation, including public transit

### Cape Breton rail line

*Cape Breton, NS*

Reopen the Cape Breton portion of the Cape Breton and Central Nova Scotia railway to ship goods throughout the Maritimes and revive the industry

### Ports

*Strait of Canso, Cape Breton, NS; Belledune and region, NB*

Expand and diversify existing port infrastructure to drive regional economic activity

### Roads

*Coronach and area, SK*

Repair and upgrade roads to improve access to communities in the Coronach area for businesses and commuters

### Highway 60 (Acheson Industrial Area) and Whitemud West Extension

*Parkland County, AB*

Complete projects critical to the trade corridors that would enable the movement of important goods

### Tourism and supporting infrastructure

*Richmond County, NS*

Create a long-term plan to support increased tourism in the county, including improving infrastructure such as roads, airport, and docks



# Annex – List of who the Task Force engaged

## ALBERTA

### *Communities*

City of Spruce Grove  
County of Paintearth  
Flagstaff County  
Leduc County  
Parkland County  
Paul First Nation  
Special Areas Board  
Town of Castor  
Town of Hanna  
Town of Stony Plain  
Town of Thorsby  
Village of Forestburg  
Village of Heisler  
Village of Wabamun  
Village of Warburg  
Village of Youngstown

### *Labour*

Coal Transition Coalition  
Building Trades of Alberta  
Canadian Energy Worker Association  
IBEW 1007  
IBEW 254  
International Union of Operating Engineers Local 955  
United Steel Workers Local 1595  
United Utility Workers Association

### *Industry*

ATCO Power  
Capital Power  
TransAlta

### *Academics and Non-Governmental Organizations*

Hanna Learning Centre  
Pembina Institute  
Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Urban Systems

### *Economic Development Groups*

Battle River Economic Opportunities Committee  
Cactus Corridor Economic Development Corporation  
Community Futures Capital Region  
Community Futures East Central  
Community Futures Meridian Region  
Edmonton International Airport Corporation  
Greengate Power Corporation  
Hanna Chamber of Commerce  
Hanna Climate Change Strategy Task Force  
Leduc-Nisku Economic Development Corporation  
Pallister Economic Partnership

### *Provincial Ministries*

Ministry of Economic Development and Trade  
Ministry of Energy  
Ministry of Indigenous Relations  
Ministry of Labour

## SASKATCHEWAN

### *Communities*

City of Estevan  
RM of Coalfields No. 4  
Town of Bienfait  
Town of Coronach and surrounding communities (including the Assiniboia, Rockglen, Willow Bunch)

### *Labour*

IBEW 2067  
Saskatchewan Federation of Labour  
Saskatchewan Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council  
Unifor 649  
United Mine Workers of America Local 7606

### *Industry*

First Nation Power Authority  
SaskPower  
Westmoreland Coal Company

### *Academics and Non-Governmental Organizations*

Southeast College  
Economic Development Groups  
Estevan Chamber of Commerce  
Estevan Economic Development

### *Provincial Ministries*

Ministry of Energy and Resources  
Ministry of Environment  
Ministry of Immigration and Career Training  
Ministry of Trade and Export Development

# Annex – List of who the Task Force engaged

## NEW BRUNSWICK

### *Communities*

City of Bathurst  
Village of Belledune  
Village of Pointe-Verte

### *Labour*

IBEW Local 37  
New Brunswick Federation of Labour

### *Industry*

NB Power  
Belledune Port Authority

### *Economic Development Groups*

Greater Bathurst Chamber of Commerce

### *Provincial Ministries*

Department of Energy & Resource Development  
Department of Environment & Local Government  
Department of Intergovernmental Affairs  
Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour  
Executive Council Office  
Opportunities New Brunswick  
Regional Development Corporation

## NOVA SCOTIA

### *Communities*

Cape Breton Regional Municipality  
County of Richmond  
Municipality of Pictou County  
Town of New Glasgow  
Town of Pictou  
Town of Port Hawkesbury  
Town of Stellarton  
Town of Trenton

### *Labour*

IBEW International  
IBEW Local 1928  
Mainland Nova Scotia Building Trades  
Nova Scotia Federation of Labour  
United Mine Workers of America

### *Industry*

Cape Breton and Central Nova Scotia Railway  
Nova Scotia Power  
Port Hawkesbury Paper

### *Academics and Non-Governmental Organizations*

Ecology Action Centre  
New Dawn  
Verschuren Centre for Sustainability in Energy and the Environment

### *Economic Development Groups*

Cape Breton Partnership  
Eastern Strait Regional Enterprise Network  
Pictou County Chamber of Commerce  
Strait Area Chamber of Commerce

### *Provincial Ministries*

Nova Scotia Department of Business  
Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education  
Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs  
Nova Scotia Energy  
Nova Scotia Environment  
Office of Aboriginal Affairs

## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Service Canada  
Employment and Social Development Canada  
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency  
Western Economic Diversification  
Environment and Climate Change Canada

## ONLINE SUBMISSIONS

We received input from over two dozen individuals and organizations that informed the deliberations of the Task Force.