

# CANADIAN CLIMATE CHALLENGE MURAL LAUNCH & ENGAGEMENT EVENT



## Project Overview

Canadian Climate Challenge (CCC) aims to creatively empower communities to control their narratives – past, present, and future. On July 23, 2024, they partnered with Malvern Family Resource Centre (MFRC) to show the ways that had been working with the Malvern community over 2023–2024 to answer questions about what role art can play in shaping community change, including whether it can foster connection, inclusion, equity, healing, inspiration, local business development, and more. This event included dinner, musical performances, speeches, and a reveal of a mural inside of MFRC that was informed by what they learned through this project, visually representing community narratives of Malvern and its strengths.



## Research methods and activities

Just Transitions in Action (JTIA) collaborated with Canadian Climate Challenge on their July 2024 Mural Launch Event. Given our shared interest in working with Scarborough community members to understand what it takes for the community to flourish, JTIA hosted an interactive booth at the event with the aim of facilitating discussions around priorities for the neighbourhood. We shared back preliminary results from the Malvern Farmers' Market Listening Project to spark discussions around this topic and observed community reflections about the mural and CCC engagement and mural development project. Approximately 30 people attended the event, with around 10 people participating more directly in the community engagement portion of the evening. Over 2/3 of attendees were adults 30 and up, with a significant number of families with young children. There was a fairly even distribution of genders and ethnicities, including Black, South Asian, East Asian, White, and multi-racial folks. Data collected includes ethnographic notes documenting conversations and observations at the event, and photographs.

## Findings

Community members at the event shared that there's a need to counter false, negative narratives about Malvern. They'd like to see more efforts to showcase and celebrate the good things about the neighbourhood, including through art that represents these positive aspects. There was also significant discussion around priorities related to community engagement and visioning. They wanted to see more ways for people who are often left out to participate in building visions for their community; strong supports and guidance for folks who are "climate champions" or working on neighbourhood-based projects; community engagement that is caring, long-term, and accountable; and for community visioning to apply an intergenerational lens to pursue better futures for our children.

People also shared that they value the welcoming and friendly nature of the community, particularly towards diversity. They believe it's important to have intergenerational connections in the neighbourhood and build more community. This includes finding ways for people to get to know their immediate neighbours, which they perceive as particularly important in times where climate adaptation and disaster response are needed. Other key priorities for the neighbourhood that community members emphasized were a strong public transportation system, affordability – particularly for housing, and job opportunities.



The table below provides some examples of the connections between each community priority and just climate action, based on findings from scholarly and grey literature.

<b>Positive Neighbourhood Narratives</b>	Climate action could advance positive neighbourhood narratives through highlighting local businesses, community events, and residents' achievements – and the ways they link to and advance climate action. Additionally, climate action planning that brings people together and fosters a sense of belonging could be an empowering means for pushing back against negative narratives.
<b>Community Engagement and Visioning</b>	Climate action policies and plans can emerge from community engagement and visioning efforts that are inclusive of diverse community members, demonstrate genuine care for community members through long-term and accountable relationships, and prioritize an intergenerational lens.
<b>Community Connection</b>	Meaningful social connections can strengthen efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, as people are moved to take action by their sense of connection and attachment to their neighbourhood and those who are a part of it. Climate actions, when carried out collectively, can also foster community bonds. Examples include community gardens, farmers' markets, educational activities, and social and environmental activism.
<b>Public Transportation</b>	Improving supply of, and access to, low-carbon, climate friendly options such as bicycle-lanes, buses, and light-rail, as well as electrification of public transport, will strengthen public transportation systems, reduce reliance on cars, lessen traffic, and improve transportation experiences for residents.
<b>Affordability</b>	Initiatives such as local clothing swaps, community gardens, and repair cafes enable people to access and maintain goods at a lower cost, reduce material and energy use, and foster alternative economic and community relations that enable low-carbon living and equitable sharing of resources. Climate actions can also be designed to create more affordable housing.
<b>Employment</b>	Climate action can be designed to stimulate local employment through investments in the decarbonization and climate-proofing of the built environment, the social procurement of goods and services in low-carbon initiatives and hiring and workforce training programs for low-carbon industries.