



**Edmonton
Elections**

What We Heard Report Voter Engagement Initiative

2024

Project Overview

Every four years, Edmontonians elect a Mayor, City Councillors and Trustees for the Edmonton School Division (Edmonton Public School Board) and Edmonton Catholic Separate School Division.

Edmonton Elections is the non-partisan organization within the City of Edmonton responsible for planning and executing the Edmonton Election in compliance with the [Municipal Governance Act](#), [Local Authorities Election Act](#), [Education Act](#) and the City of Edmonton [Elections Bylaw](#)

Edmonton Elections seeks to administer an **Accessible, Inclusive, Equitable, Ethical** and **Safe** election. It has conducted multiple public engagement initiatives over the past decade to better understand the needs of Edmonton voters and reduce barriers to participation in the election process.

This report summarizes feedback from Edmonton Elections' January-July 2024 public engagement.

Research Methodology






Public engagement was conducted using an Online Survey, Community Stakeholder Survey, the Engaged Edmonton webpage and a Facilitated Conversation. Participation was voluntary.

The **General Online Survey** was emailed to Edmonton Insight Community members (17,000+) and posted on the **Engaged Edmonton webpage**. It included quantitative and open-ended questions, providing an opportunity for respondents to share their personal opinions and experiences. A total of 4,349 Edmontonians completed the survey between January 29 and March 31, 2024.

This **Community Stakeholder Survey** was sent to over 270 organizations and groups in Edmonton. The survey gathered insights from organizations that work directly with residents from a broad range of communities. Recipients of the survey were invited to participate in a **Facilitated Conversation** with Edmonton Elections. These relationships are key in understanding complex and longstanding barriers to participation and in developing solutions to address these challenges.

Demographic information was collected from respondents to better understand the barriers that are faced by voters, in particular, those in equity-seeking and historically underrepresented populations (see Appendix A).

Snapshot of Engagement

Engagement Opportunity	Date, Format and Location	Participation Numbers	Audience	
	Online Survey	January 29 - March 31, 2024 Online, Edmonton Insight Community, Engaged Edmonton	4,349 respondents	General Public, Edmonton Insight Community, Community Organizations
	Engaged Edmonton page	January 29 - March 31, 2024 Online	651 visitors	General Public, Community Organizations
	Questions Tool	January 29 - March 31, 2024 Online Engaged Edmonton	1 public response 5 questions	General Public, Community Organizations
	Community Stakeholder Survey	February 29 - March 31, 2024 Online Survey	9 survey responses	Community Organizations
	Facilitated Conversation	July 3, 2024	4 participants	Community Organizations

Research Summary

- Respondents to the online **general survey** are **satisfied** with the voting process, participate in voting, and prefer advance voting options.
 - Respondents want **increased information and awareness** about voting procedures, voting locations, candidates' platforms¹ and the importance of voting.
 - Community organizations highlighted the **need for community outreach** and communication to encourage some eligible electors to vote.
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Research Findings: General Online Survey

See Appendix B Perceptions of Voting in Edmonton Elections for a full overview of the data.

Motivating Factors

The most common answers on the factors that will motivate people to vote in the 2025 Edmonton Election include:

- **The perceived quality and accountability of the candidates.** Respondents indicate that they are primarily driven by the desire to support candidates who demonstrate integrity.
- **A sense of civic duty and responsibility.** Respondents feel that voting is a fundamental aspect of good citizenship, motivating them to participate in the electoral process.
- **Access to clear and comprehensive information about the election.** Respondents indicate that having thorough and accessible information about the candidates is crucial in helping voters feel prepared and motivated to cast their votes.

¹ Candidates are responsible for creating their own platform and communication materials. Edmonton Elections provides no guidance in that regard. Edmonton Elections may post links to a candidate's webpage or social media accounts via the Register of Nominated Candidates, at their request, but does not otherwise communicate candidate's platforms on their behalf.

Barriers to Voting

Ninety-nine per cent of the survey respondents stated they are eligible to vote in elections in Canada. Among those eligible to vote, one percent (39 respondents) indicate they want to vote but experience barriers to voting.

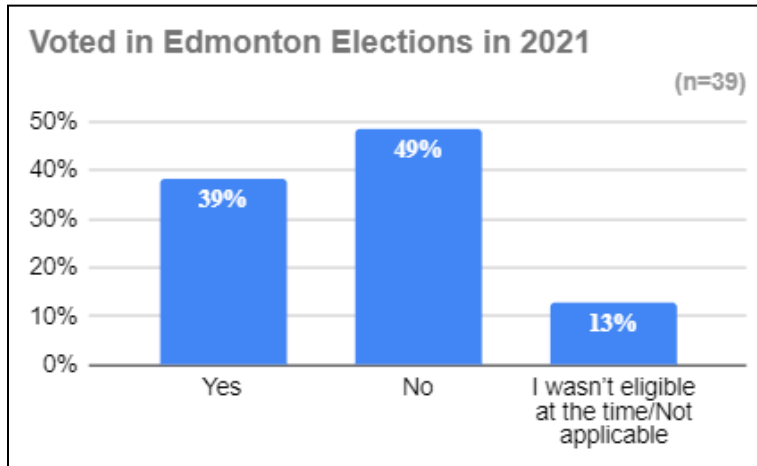


Chart - Voter Participation Among Those Facing Barriers in 2021 Edmonton Election

Among those who experienced barriers to voting (39 respondents), 49 per cent (19 respondents) did not vote in the 2021 Edmonton election. **The most common barriers** among the 39 respondents who indicate experiencing barriers to voting include:

- **Not having enough information** on election processes, candidates, voting locations
- **Limited access** to location due to health issues
- **Time constraints** due to work commitments

Within this group, **the candidates and a desire to influence the results of the election were top motivations among those who voted** in the 2021 Edmonton Elections.

General Attitudes Towards Voting

- Ninety-one per cent of survey respondents who are eligible to vote, vote in every election
- Fifty-two per cent of survey respondents indicate they always vote without any influencing factors, followed by those who vote because they feel it's important to exercise their right to vote (42 per cent).
- The most important factors that influence a decision to vote on election day include:
 - Whether they have been able to vote during Advance Voting (fifty-five per cent)
 - What time of day they can vote (forty-two per cent)

Voting In the Next Edmonton Election

- Ninety-five per cent of overall survey respondents (4,098) are likely to vote in the next Edmonton Election.
- Sixty-two per cent of those who experience barriers to voting (24) are likely to vote in the next Edmonton Election.

Constraints

The overwhelming majority of respondents to this survey were highly motivated to vote and indicated that they do not experience barriers to doing so.

Compared to voter turnout in 2021, which was 37.6% of the total number of eligible voters, we can conclude that highly motivated voters were over-represented in the 2024 general survey results.

Research Findings: Community Group Survey and Facilitated Conversation

The community group survey was sent to 276 organizations and received nine responses.

Organizations that responded to the Community Group Survey and expressed interest in further engagement were invited to participate in a Facilitated Conversation. This discussion aimed to identify barriers to participation faced by the populations they serve and represent, as well as potential solutions to address these challenges.

Of the seven organizations interested in participating in the conversation, four representatives attended.

The representatives that attended included:

- Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society
- Filipino Canadian Saranay Association of Alberta
- North Edge Business Association
- Women's Advisory Voice of Edmonton (WAVE) Committee

The participants identified **access to information as the most common barrier** for voters with their organizations.

The participants identified several potential actions, with the most impactful being:

- Increase communication about the role of municipal government, the voting process, eligibility criteria, voter identification requirements and the importance of voting
- Increase the use of social media to share important dates related to upcoming elections and indicate where further information on voting processes may be found
- Engage young and new voters
- Engage older generations who were historically prevented from participating in elections
- Test key messages with stakeholder organizations

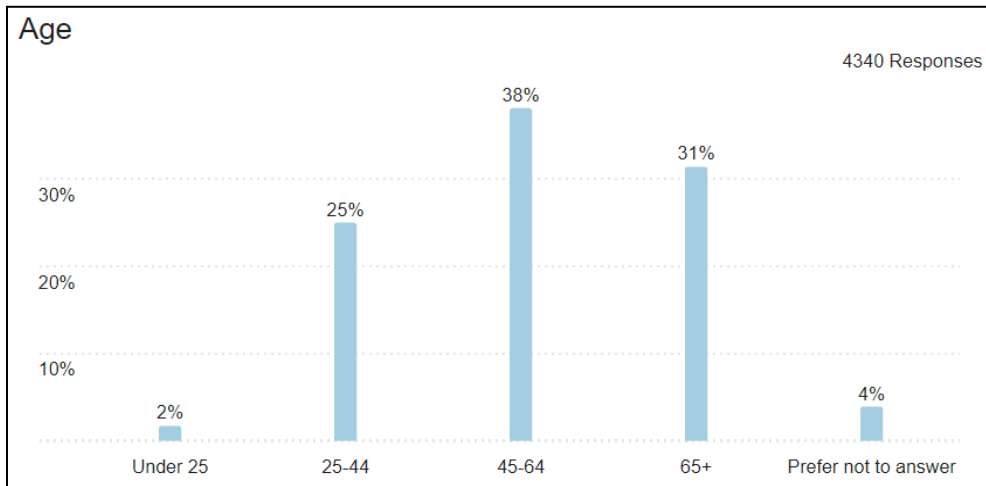
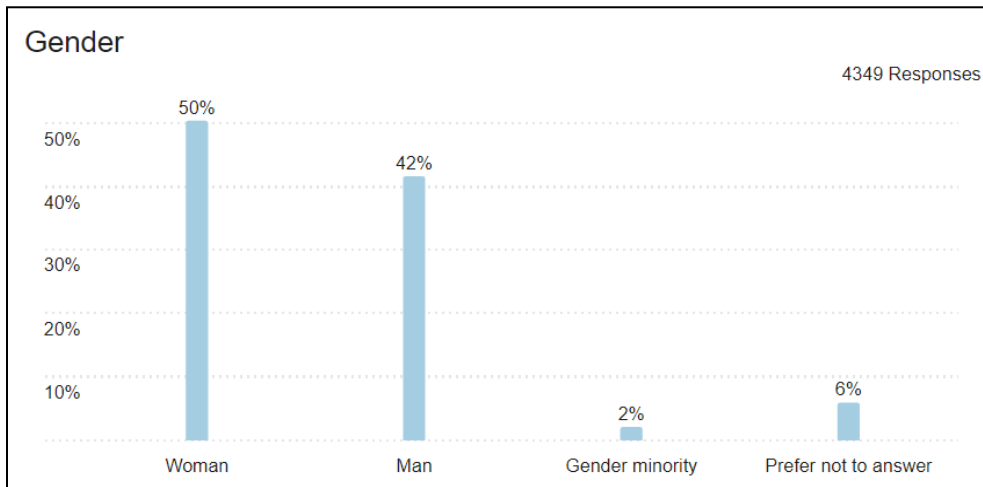
What Happens Next?

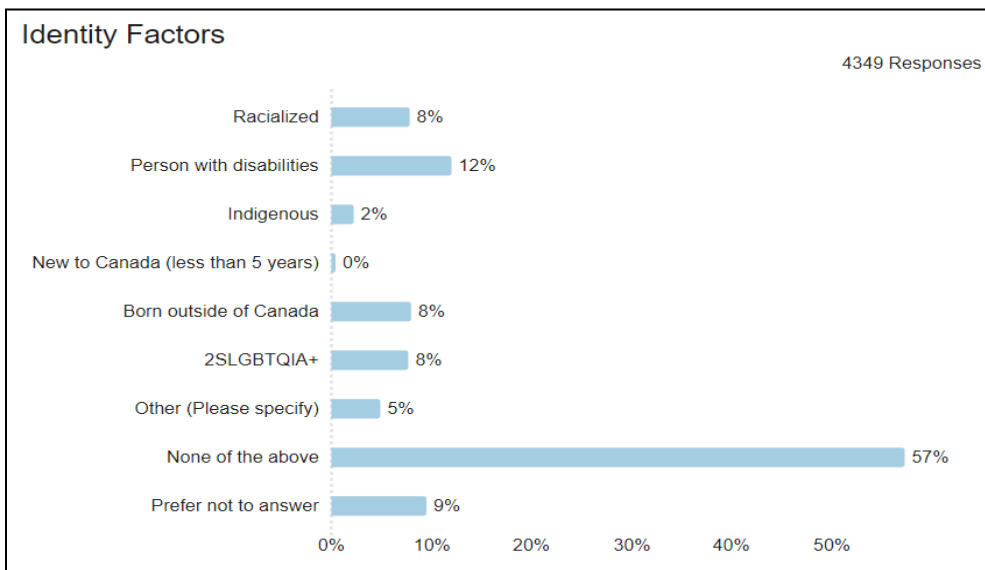
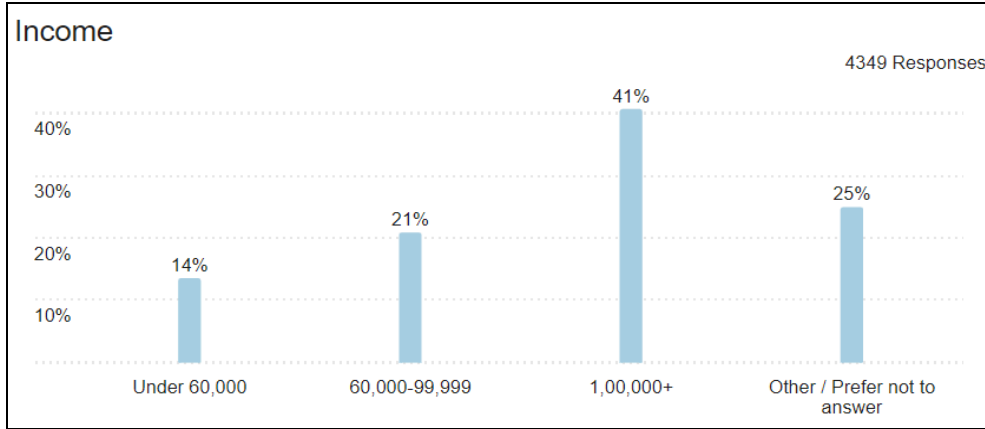
Edmonton Elections is completing a [GBA+ analysis](#) of all election processes, strategies and operational procedures. This analysis will incorporate feedback received through the voter engagement initiative and build on existing City frameworks, such as the [Anti-Racism Strategy](#), [Anti-Black Racism Action Plan](#) and [Indigenous Framework](#).

Edmonton Elections will develop the 2025 Accessibility and Inclusion Plan based on the GBA+ analysis, which will outline processes and actions to address barriers to inclusion in the 2025 Edmonton Election.

Appendices

Appendix A: Demographics profile of survey respondents





Appendix B: Perceptions of voting in Edmonton elections

% Total Agreement (somewhat/strongly)	All Respondents (4,349)	Respondents who experience barriers to voting (39)
I vote because I care about what happens in my city	93%	77%
Voting in Edmonton elections is important	92%	79%
The voting process in Edmonton elections	86%	49%

is straightforward		
I trust the Edmonton election process	82%	59%
I think my vote will make a difference to the outcome	72%	51%
Edmonton elections are inclusive and accessible	72%	36%

% Total Agreement (somewhat/strongly)	Respondents who voted in the last Edmonton elections (n=4,204)	Respondents who experience barriers to voting (n=34)
I want to vote in every Edmonton election	93%	76%
I understand the voting process of Edmonton elections	92%	56%
I am able to get information on my voting location in an Edmonton election	90%	50%
Voting stations in Edmonton elections accommodate my needs	85%	29%
I can easily get the information that I need in order to vote in an Edmonton election	83%	32%
I can get the help that I need at the voting locations in Edmonton elections	82%	44%
I enjoy voting in the Edmonton election	57%	26%

