

QUESTIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES

The YWCA of Edmonton supports women and their families as they strive to fulfill their potential. The YWCA is also committed to keeping the community informed and proactive on issues of importance to women and their families.

In keeping with this spirit, the YWCA is encouraging women to ask questions of candidates before they go to the polls to cast their vote.

- How familiar are candidates with the May 2004 recommendations from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' recent research: *A City Tailored to Women: The Role of Municipal Governments in Achieving Gender Equality*?
- How many gender-equality and good governance measures are already in place in our municipality?
- What is their position on citywide services specific to the needs of women?
- What is their understanding of how policy decisions impact women in the City of Edmonton?
- What steps would they take to ensure equitable gender representation on committees of City Council?
On Edmonton School Board of Trustees?

Unsure where to vote? Check out the web site or phone the election office before, or on election day.

For more information, contact:

Office of the City Clerk

3rd Floor, City Hall

1 Sir Winston Churchill Square

Edmonton AB T5J 2R7

Phone: (780) 496-8008 Fax: (780) 496-8175

Email: elections&census@edmonton.ca

Website: www.edmonton.ca

“By exercising their right to vote, women become active participants in shaping the public agenda”.

For the YWCA, encouraging women to vote doesn't mean encouraging them to vote in a certain way. It means helping women to be informed about their choices and the political process, encouraging dialogue regarding candidates' positions on public policy topics, and increasing women's understanding of their own power to affect change.

The YWCA One Woman One Vote is inviting the participation of women's groups, service clubs, and other women's organizations to encourage women to become informed, to vote and to assist other women who to vote who wouldn't typically get to the polls.

Women talking to women, connecting through their communities, local neighbourhood centres, daycares and cultural associations, the intent is to encourage all women to exercise their democratic choice by voting.

In Edmonton, women make up 50.7% of our population. (1). Research shows that although women (55%) are slightly more likely to vote than men (52%), there remain barriers that prevent many women from voting: (2)

- Women with lower education levels are less likely to vote (3)
- Women who are not long-term residents, or not well established in their community are less likely to vote (4)
- For many women, the more youngsters at home under the age of 18, the less likely they are to get out to vote. (5)

Sources:

(1) *Edmonton Civic Census, 1999*

(2) *Centre for the American Woman and Politics, 1999*

(3) *Baxter and Causing, p.24, Conway, et al, p.85*

(4) *US census, 1999*

(5) *Conway et al, p. 88*



City of Edmonton Civic Election October 18, 2004

“By exercising their right to vote, **women** become active **participants** in shaping the public agenda”.

When and Where To Vote

On election day, voters report to the voting station in their voting subdivision.

For the 2004 Election, a “where-to-vote” card will be mailed out to every household.

The card will contain the candidates that voters are eligible to vote for, the voting station name and address where a household's eligible residents will go to vote and advance vote dates and hours.



www.onewomanonevote.org

www.ywcaofedmonton.org

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ELECTION DAY

Election Day is **Monday October 18, 2004**

- Voting stations open at 9:00 a.m.
- The stations will remain open continuously until 8:00 p.m.

Voters will elect three governing authorities:

- Edmonton City Council
 - Edmonton Public School Board of Trustees
 - Edmonton Catholic School Board of Trustees.
- The city is divided into six wards, with voters in each ward able to choose two city councillors and the Mayor.*

Voters also vote for candidates for one of the school boards.

- Trustees for the Catholic School Board will be elected in wards that are the same as the city's six wards.
 - Trustees for the Public School Board will be elected from each of nine wards.
- Trustees play an important role as advocates for children and for public education and funding.*

Voter eligibility

Voters are required to sign a statement (Form 8 - Voting Register) when attending a voting station to confirm qualifications required to vote are met (identification is not required).

To be eligible to vote, you must:

- be at least 18 years old,
- be a Canadian citizen,
- be a resident in Alberta for the six consecutive months immediately preceding election day,
- be a resident of the city of Edmonton on election day, and have not voted previously in this election.

DID YOU KNOW...?

The YWCA One Woman One Vote wish to highlight the newly released report from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities "Bridging the Gap in the 21st Century - Strategies to Increase Women's Participation in the Municipal Consultation Processes" (May 2004).

The report shows that Canada, with only 21.7% women elected to local governments is falling behind countries around the world, including Costa Rica, Chile, Sweden, United Kingdom and others.
Source: IULA database <http://www.cities-localgovernments.org>

The majority of Canadian municipal councils surveyed did not have equal representation of elected women on council.

- 14% reported having **no women** on council at all
- 32% reported having one women on council
- 40% had more than one women but less than 50% of council were women
- 13% reported having 50% or more women on council
- Less than 1% reported having **no men** on council

WHY ONE WOMAN ONE VOTE?

The YWCA believes that equity and equality for women require that women's perspectives help shape society's direction.

The true harm of under-representation is that the public is largely deprived of the positive impact that women, representing half the population of Edmonton, could have on the formulation of public policy in decision-making bodies.

EDMONTON CIVIC ELECTION 2001

Thirty-three women of 136 candidates ran for the positions of mayor, city councillors, trustees for the Public and Catholic School Boards, and in addition, for the first time ever, for positions on the Regional Health Authority.

- There were 3 female candidates of nine (33%) as mayoral contenders. None were successful.
- Three women (25%) were elected to City Council.
- Two women (22%) were elected as Trustees to the Edmonton Public School Board.
- Four women (71%) were elected as Trustees to the Edmonton Catholic School Board.
- Five women (71%) were elected to serve on the Capital Health Authority Board.

Women achieved the highest rate of election success to Health Authority Boards. However, the right to elect citizens to the Health Authority Boards has since been removed; candidates are once again appointed by the Province.

INTERESTED IN ONE WOMAN ONE VOTE?

If your organization would like print materials and ideas on sponsoring your own "One Woman One Vote" information session for women, please contact the YWCA One Woman One Vote Coordinator at (780) 423-9922, ext. 504. Please leave a message, your call will be returned.



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