

Responses to Q4: Barriers to Participation on Civic Agencies

Responses by Theme

Responses were grouped into themes to provide a general overview of what candidates felt could be barriers to participation.

Responses By Theme	Total Responses	% of Responses
Time commitment	49	75%
Lack of remuneration / Costs Incurred / Resources	15	24%
Awareness	7	11%
Bureaucracy	3	5%
Other	4	6%

Complete Responses from All Respondents

Identifying personal information has been removed but responses are otherwise unedited.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

- Time, money, transportation, access to technology (covid times).
- Burnout potential, fear that we won't be cared for within that agency because we systematically are the first to have funds cut or frozen, awareness that we remain a tokenized population and the belief that we won't be taken seriously or have our opinions respected or followed through on beyond lip service responses. This applies to marginalized folk across the board. Also the sense that we are required to do the emotional labour for dominant culture, which is a big part of what lends to our burnout as marginalized peoples.
- Time, Energy, Compensation.
- The time commitment is great and takes away from opportunities to engage in paid work. If I did not have the privilege of having a well paid full time job, I would not be able to offer the large number of hours I spend on this committee free of charge.

Anti-racism Advisory Committee

- Having to choose between taking an extra shift to earn income and attending subcommittee meetings in the evenings.
- If i have to take work shifts that conflict with civic agency participation
- Participating on a civic agency requires time beyond the official 2-hour monthly meeting and this can be a challenge for hourly and shift workers, especially considering it is volunteer work. My experience serving on a civic agency has been limited (. . .) and therefore I can only speak to the limitations at this time (not including travel time, parking, transit/cab/Uber fare, accessibility etc.).
- Lack of remuneration
- Time commitment, no remuneration - some people don't have the privilege of dedicating whole evenings to a civic agency meeting. Their focus may be on survival, or earning a living.
- A lack of supports, visibility that may lead to threats or safety concerns, work or time not being recognized, Admin / councillors / mayor / etc not engaging w/ the committee
- There are many barriers to participating in civic agencies ranging from the application process to attending meetings to giving up time - it's only from a position of privilege that one can serve
- Lack of time or compensation.
- Risk from becoming a visible figure, lack of supports for disability, or accomodation needs. Environments must be trauma informed and actively anti-oppression / anti-racist.
- Nothing will prevent me from doing this work. Others may feel that the time commitments without the prospect of an honorarium or remuneration would prevent them from sharing, participating, or consistently attending these meetings. Citizens in our city deserve to feel like they are activity engaged in a more diverse an inclusive society. A society that is willing to compensate them for actively pursuing and committing to anti-racism work will benefit greatly for years into the future.
- Lack of time, energy, or other personal resources. Choice of pursuing activism in another form.

City of Edmonton Youth Council

- Time comittment
- Like I said above, the large volunteer time commitment is the most notable barrier; time that could otherwise be used taking care of dependents,

childcare, or working a job. I am sure many individuals would love to participate on a civic agency but would simply have to sacrifice too much out of their personal lives in these areas to make a meaningful contribution. Access to transportation is another issue - some may live far from City Hall where taking transit is infeasible, and even if they can take transit they still have to pay to get to in-person meetings, another pay barrier. The same goes for taking a car (mileage, insurance, wear and tear) or taking a taxi/Uber, these costs can add up quickly.

- Time is easily the biggest barrier- not only juggling CEYC and school as a full time student as most of our members are, but often youth also have to have jobs to support themselves or their families. It can be very difficult to impossible for someone to commit to both school, work, and CEYC so offering remuneration for CEYC allows for a more diverse range of youth, particularly less privileged youth, to be represented. As well, in the time of COVID, technological barriers exist in the form of lack of suitable devices or stable internet connection to join virtual meetings.
- Mainly the application process and time pressure. CEYC applications are not very well advertised; I only knew about CEYC because I was actively searching the internet for ways to get involved. I can imagine that there are many individuals out there with valuable viewpoints who aren't participating because they're just not aware of the opportunity that CEYC has to offer then. Time pressure is another big hurdle. CEYC demands a lot from VCMs. For people who have to spend their free time working, or those who are balancing multiple commitments, I can see how time (and the inflexibility of our meeting times) could be a limiting factor.
- Accessibility in terms of the amount of time one can dedicate. As well as volunteering which means that those not in a position to donate time without money cannot participate.

Community Services Advisory Board

- Time... Everyone has something that keeps them busy, and time of meetings within the day as well as frequency and length of meetings or planning prior can be a challenge.
- Without prior board experience, it can be intimidating and inaccessible for some to participate. Ideally, there will be communication and supports for those who are new and unfamiliar with board governance and language surrounding formal decision making.

Edmonton Combative Sports Commission

- Costs of childcare, time, thinking that they do not have the skills (financial acumen, board basics) to be an effective board member.
- I would imagine a lack of awareness about the opportunity or a lack of time.
- Time commitment, workload when working a separate full time job, child care, travel and travel expenses, exposure to public harassment/public attention, and potential legal liability.

Edmonton Design Committee

- Time commitment and potentially location of meetings, however that is no longer an issue.
- Time commitment and juggling work and family life.
- Time commitment. Accessibility to technology during current public health measures as for meetings have moved to a virtual platform. Knowledge of committee recruitment opportunities.
- The key is combination of someone's availability and appreciation/ utilization of someone's services
- Time commitment: pre-committee meeting document reviews and bi-weekly EDC meetings.
- level of time available to commit to a civic agency

Edmonton Historical Board

- Lack of financial stability and fluidity. Lack of access and knowledge of civic agencies and their contribution.
- Workload requirements that take away from personal time outside of my regular job.
- Availability of time. Burnout. Desire to spend my time on other initiatives/priorities.
- Time commitment is the biggest hurdle in convincing people to apply, and having served on a civic agency for (. .) years it has been the biggest challenge in my role. Our board is supported by one part-time staff member, and while she is a great resource and support there is only so much she is able to do. Additional staff from the City do take part in our meetings and generally provide support to our work, however they are not dedicated staff resources.

For civic agencies that are expected to play a meaningful role in providing advice and making decisions, additional staff support may reduce the non-meeting time commitment and/or free up additional time for meaningful work.

I recognize that part of a time commitment could be offset by remuneration, particularly for high-quality candidates that do not currently apply and/or serve on a civic agency (the people who will not be taking part in this survey, but would be a valuable addition to the work of many civic agencies). However, too little remuneration would not communicate the value of the role while too much remuneration would likely be a short-lived venture before political pressure results in a return to a non-compensation model.

- Lack of time. There is the phrase time is money - if someone is working multiple jobs in order to get by, while they may have a passion to volunteer and help their city financially stop that. Basic needs have to be met first.
- Time commitment

Edmonton Salutes

- Time commitment or interest.
- Lack of clarity of purpose or goals, inarticulate mission and vision statements, improper or inadequate governance model including committee membership, lack of proper staff support, unclear accountability and lack of accessibility to City or identified stakeholders
- Time available and commitment
- Parking cost
- Too much bureaucratic and political attention.
- Nothing.
- Time commitments with family or work.
- Time and personal circumstance.
- Parking costs and availability!
- lack of time

Edmonton Transit Service Advisory Board

- Time.
- The barrier perceived by the steep requirements. It is very unlikely that a high school graduate would already have board experience but might be interested in the transit advisory board. A young university student taking

- criminology might bring great value to the Edmonton Police Commission but could be discouraged, thinking "I can't meet those criteria".
- lack of computer with webcam and sufficient bandwidth. Or lack of sufficient computer literacy
 - Mostly the start time of events - if an event starts at 4:30pm or 5, that may either not be possible at all to attend due to work, or only if there is dinner/snacks. There is also a line in terms of how many angry emails from the public I am willing to endure if I receive no payment/perks from the civic agency, which may make me resign from my position with an agency if things get out of hand.

Energy Transition Climate Resilience Committee

- Family and work commitments
- time. Those with the required expertise are more likely short on time than money.
- As mentioned earlier, with the amount of time and effort ETCRC requires it would be difficult for someone to participate without company support. technology may also be a challenge with the increase in virtual participation. Timing of meetings may also be a challenge. We meet during the day, as that works for the most people (consensus). No time is ever perfect as others work different schedules.
- Out of pocket expenses such as transportation, child care or time off work, which should be reimbursed on a case by case basis but not be considered remuneration for serving.
- The time during the day it takes away from my billable hours. High amount of time commitment.
- Time commitment is in the standard work day.

Naming Committee

- A large barrier is awareness, and the depth and rigor of the application process. For many, obtaining 2-3 letters of reference is difficult. Understanding the time commitment to participate, without compensation, may deter people who are low-wage workers from participating as they could be earning a living instead of volunteering their time. Currently, accessibility is not as much of an issue, as we are virtual, but transportation, parking and the stress of a meeting downtown may also prevent people from participating, though currently parking is reimbursed. Many adults with children under 12 simply do not have the time to take on additional volunteer roles, this may not be solved with compensation for ABC members.

- Time demands.
- No reliable internet at home, time restraints, inability to navigate forms.

Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton Committee

- Tokenism, time, and money . These are people's lives and they don't sit around for free trying to solve problems people are being paid for to deal with the ridiculous red tape they have to deal with. The job descriptions and how relations are built and how decisions are made are laughable. Volunteers don't get enough credit and should probably be hired to do the work anyway. At least that way perhaps red tape wouldn't be as ridiculous.
- I think people who live in poverty may find it harder to participate in civic agencies as they are either working more, looking for more work etc. Single parents would also have a hard time with participating. I am (. . .) and I would never be able to do this if I didn't have a partner to share the load.
- Family responsibilities, timing of meeting, cost or difficulty of travel/parking/child care
- Scheduling conflict
- Access to child care, safe and affordable transportation, time constraints