

Civic candidates engage ethnocultural communities ahead of elections



[Edmonton's civic candidates engage with ethnocultural communities during an event organized by the Coalition September 28, 2013.](#)

By Sanjaya Dhakal, Edmonton, October 1 2013

The Edmonton Multicultural Coalition in partnership with the Centre for Public Involvement (CPI) delivered a pilot project designed to support the civic and political engagement of immigrants and refugees in Edmonton. This project is aimed at making a difference in the civic life of immigrant and refugee communities by promoting community involvement through both political and non-political processes.

The Edmonton Multicultural Coalition and its network of communities developed a pilot project to support and motivate the participation of immigrants and refugee populations in the election process. The pilot project involved two components including:

1. Civics 101 was an educational workshop that provided participants with the tools and opportunities to understand government in Canada on municipal, provincial and federal levels. This workshop was also designed to increase the knowledge of participants of all the ways to be involved civically including elections. The civics 101 event took place at Stanley A. Milner Library, Churchill Square, Edmonton on September 14, 2013.
2. Civics 102 was an Open Space forum designed for participants to have a dialogue with candidates who are running in the Edmonton Municipal Election, taking place on Monday October 21, 2013. The civics 102 event took place at Stanley A. Milner Library, Churchill Square, Edmonton on September 28, 2013. It provided a unique engagement opportunity for ethno-cultural community members to interact with mayoral and ward (councillor) candidates.

The participants generally discussed issues within the city and then with their specific ward councillors, sharing information and concerns about the different wards. Participants raised their concerns on pot hole, education, affordable housing/rent, LRT/Metro/Capital line extension, city taxes, snow-plowing, etc. and requested candidates' to have them on their agenda. This forum also served as a platform for the electoral candidates to hear the priorities of hard-to-reach multicultural communities. The reactions and feedback from the two forums indicated that multicultural communities are very receptive to such interactions and information sessions which enlighten them on the governance structure of the city, province and federal body.



[EMC's executive director, Mrs Dianna Fondo \(2nd right\) with EMC's Injera Program Coordinator, Sanjaya Dhakal \(right\) posing with attendees during the Civic Engagement event September 28 2013. The event's aim was to sensitize ethnocultural communities on the power of](#)

[using their vote to engage and influence political agenda in Edmonton during the forthcoming civic elections on October 21, 2013.](#)



[Edmonton mayoral candidate, Don Iveson with Pauline Mukashema during the Coalition's civic engagement event held September 28 2013 at Stanley Milner Library.](#)

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