

IDEAS *in* ACTION

External Oversight Board Meeting

January 9, 2024



Office of
Participatory
Budgeting

CITY of BOSTON

AGENDA

- 6:00 pm: **Agenda Overview**
 - *Motion to adopt meeting minutes*
 - *Board Meetings Schedule*
- 6:10 pm: **Public Comment Responses**
- 6:25 pm: **FY26 Budget**
- 7:15 pm: **PB Voting Updates**
- 7:45 pm: **Public Comment**
- 8:00 pm: **Closing**

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Date	Board Meeting Topic
January 30 <i>(Thursday, TBD)</i>	<i>Office and Process Updates (Tentative)</i>
February 25, 2025 <i>(Tuesday, Virtual)</i>	<i>Announcing Winning Projects Project Implementation Logistics</i>

MEETING MINUTES

- Sent to External Oversight Board members to review in advance of this meeting

Note: Minutes will be posted in OPB's website, www.boston.gov/participatory-budgeting

STAFF UPDATE



PUBLIC COMMENT RESPONSES



Public Comment #1

Comment:

Proposal for year-round youth jobs pilot to pay \$18-\$24/hour year-round, both increasing the pay rates and expanding the months of the current SuccessLink jobs program. While the proposal includes jobs from September to June for 14-18 year olds that pay \$18/hr (an increase from \$15/hr), the 15 jobs in the proposal for 19-24 year olds only pay \$20/hr which is not an increase from SuccessLink's current pay rates. The Office of Participatory Budgeting should work with SuccessLink to increase pay rates for 19-24 year olds from \$20/hr to \$22/hr or \$24/hr in the proposal.

Response:

- In the summer of 2024, the Office of Youth Employment and Opportunity revised the pay rate for youth ages 19-24 in the SuccessLink program, increasing their hourly rate from \$17 to \$20. This \$3 increase was made to ensure competitive compensation to attract and retain youth in the City's youth jobs program.
- The proposed \$20/hr rate for 19-24 year olds in the pilot is consistent with the current SuccessLink pay rates for similar positions, which will help **maintain our commitment to pay equity within the city.**

Public Comment #2

Comment:

Provide clear communication to the public about how the city is sharing feedback with the Mayor and relevant departments that civilian construction detail is a priority for residents to advance.

Response:

As part of Proposal Development, OPB collaborated with relevant City Departments and the Mayor's Office on the review of all 15 proposals developed by residents during the Visioning Forums.

The civilian detail proposal was not pursued as part of the PB process. It is confirmed that the project is actively underway and on track for implementation, as this has been a priority for the Administration since contract negotiations with the Boston Police Union.

The City is actively working towards implementing a new detail system and process including civilian flaggers.

- The City has released a request for proposals (RFP) for a technology management system to schedule details.
- A second RFP for a third party administrator, which will hire civilians to perform details, will be released this winter. Administrative revenue from the details will support this project over the long-term.

Public Comment #3

Comment:

Expand opportunities to facilitate in-person paper ballot voting. Youth Lead the Change had in person voting. Having ballots available at more locations where people are already gathering would greatly increase voting turnout. Some organizations are interested in picking up stacks of ballots, helping residents and turning them back in. Perhaps if paper ballots are distributed by groups, people would still have to call to get a PIN in order to write down the PIN on their ballot to verify who they are.

Response:

OPB has developed a feasible and manageable approach that will ensure the integrity of the PB voting process for the first cycle.

Simplifying the voting process

- **One-step authentication.** Authenticate using one time PIN code through cell phone number or contacting OPB.
- **Confirming Eligibility Requirements.** Simply confirm voting requirements and provide full name and neighborhood.

Making voting more accessible:

- **Languages.** All online and paper ballots will be multilingual
- **Online + In Person.** Options for voting both online and in-person at Boston Public Library branches and City Hall

Facilitating voting access

- **OPB Library Voting Office Hours.** OPB staff will be on site at select library branches to help promote and assist participants with PB voting. Residents and organizations can drive people to these hours, as needed.

**FY26
BUDGET**



OPB Budget

Office of Participatory Budgeting	FY24	FY25	FY26
	\$2,000,000	\$2,132,323	\$2,132,972
Salary & Operational Expenses	Actuals	Current	Proposed
Permanent Employees	\$232,884	\$372,323	\$372,972
Operational Expenses (Telecom, Transportation, PD, Equipment)	\$18,915	\$20,246	\$20,246
Total Salary & Operational Expenses	\$251,799	\$392,569	\$393,218
PB Process Expenses			
Marketing & Communications	\$242,423	\$159,000	\$109,000
Community Engagement	\$10,665	\$101,000	\$179,000
Evaluation	\$104,500	\$100,000	\$65,000
PB Online Platforms	\$9,950	\$70,000	\$21,000
Total PB Process Expenses	\$367,538	\$430,000	\$374,000
Total Expenses	\$619,337	\$822,569	\$767,218
Estimated Funds for PB Projects	\$1,333,250	\$1,309,754	\$1,365,754

PB Process Expenses	FY25	FY26
Marketing & Communications	\$159,000	\$109,000
Branding & Design	\$1,000	\$1,000
Communications & Marketing	\$150,000	\$100,000
Materials (Fliers, Printouts, Translations)	\$1,000	\$1,000
Promotional Expenses	\$7,000	\$7,000
Community Engagement	\$101,000	\$179,000
External Oversight Board meetings (in-person)	\$1,000	\$1,000
Meeting Design Support	\$20,000	-
Community Partner Grants	\$80,000	\$60,000
Community Engagement Contract Support		\$100,000
Community Engagement Fellow (Academic Year)		\$18,000
Evaluation	\$100,000	\$65,000
PB Online Platforms	\$70,000	\$21,000
Idea Collection Online Platform + Maintenance	\$10,000	\$10,000
Voting Portal	\$60,000	\$11,000
Total PB Process Expenses	\$430,000	\$374,000

**VOTING
LOGISTICS**



Voting Logistics

Voting Time frame:

- Wednesday, January 15 to Saturday February, 15, 2025

Languages:

- All online and paper ballots will be multilingual and available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, and Brazilian Portuguese

Online + In Person:

- Options for voting both online and in-person at Boston Public Library branches and City Hall

OPB Library Voting Office Hours

- OPB identified six (6) library branch locations in Brighton, Chinatown, Dorchester, Downtown, East Boston, and Roxbury throughout the voting period
- OPB staff will be on site to help promote and assist participants with PB voting

In- Person Voting

City Hall (Paper Ballots)

- **Locations:** Front entrance lobby desk and 2nd floor entrance desk (by the Credit Union).
- **Collect participant information:** Ask residents to fill out a brief information sheet **for eligibility verification:**
 - Full Name
 - Neighborhood (BOS residency)
 - Required Age to Participate (11+)
 - Voting (only once)
- **Distribute PB Ballots:** Hand out ballots to residents who request them. Each ballot will be accompanied by an optional evaluation survey.

BPL Libraries (Online Ballot)

- **Location:** Library branches will have a flyer displaying a call to action sign, QR code, and website for people to vote with their phones.
- **Librarians will assist residents** to the areas in the library where they can cast their vote. They can assist people, when needed, with voting on a computer.



Online Voting Platform

Welcome + Voter Eligibility

IDEAS in ACTION

English

Welcome to Ideas in Action, the City of Boston's new Participatory Budgeting initiative! Ideas in Action is an opportunity for residents to decide how to spend a portion of the City's budget.

From January 15 to February 15, 2025, Boston residents can VOTE and decide on how \$2 million in Participatory Budgeting funds will be invested in community-driven projects across the City. Selected projects are a one-time, non-recurring investment, and will be implemented beginning this spring 2025.

Make your voice heard — vote for up to five (5) projects that will have the biggest impact on YOUR community!

IDEAS in ACTION

English

- English
- Español
- 简体中文
- Kreyòl ayisyen
- Tiếng Việt
- Português brasileiro
- Kabuverdianu

Welcome to Ideas in Action, the City of Boston's new Participatory Budgeting initiative! Ideas in Action is an opportunity for residents to decide how to spend a portion of the City's budget.

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Voter Eligibility

I understand that to vote in Participatory Budgeting 2025, I must:

- Be a City of Boston resident
- Only vote one time
- Be at least 11 years old (or at least in 6th grade)

FIRST NAME

Cynthia

LAST NAME

Lin

NEIGHBORHOOD

Roxbury

By checking this box, I affirm that these statements are true and that I meet the voting eligibility requirements

Confirm

Online Voting Platform

Voter Authentication


IDEAS in ACTION

 English ▼

To authenticate your vote, please enter your cell phone number.

Your phone number will be used to send you an SMS code to access a ballot and ensure one vote per person.

 +1 ▼ xxx xxxxxxxx

 Send me a code

[I don't have a cell phone.](#)



Have PIN from somewhere else?


Enter your PIN 

For more info see user verification [terms of service.](#)

To authenticate your vote, please enter your cell phone number.


Your phone number will be used to send you an SMS code to access a ballot and ensure one vote per person.

 +1 ▼ 6178889999 

 Send me a code

[I don't have a cell phone.](#)

Enter the code we have sent you via SMS.

215454 

 Confirm Code

[Send me a code again.](#)
[Use different phone number.](#)

How to vote without a cell phone?

If you don't have or want to use a cell phone you can request a PIN code to vote by sending an email to pb@boston.gov with the following subject line: "PIN Request".

You can only request one PIN code per email. You will be sent a PIN within no more than two business days.

Ok 

Enter PIN code

1A2B3C

 Confirm Code

Online Voting Platform

Ballot Proposals Review and Selection

Ideas in Action - Boston's Participatory Budgeting Initiative

Vote for up to five projects that will have the biggest impact on YOUR community!

You must cast at least one vote.

 English ▼

Pilot an Expansion of the Youth Jobs Program during the School Year



Cost: \$515,000

This proposal will create a one-time pilot program to assess the viability of year-round, part time youth jobs for residents ages 14-24. This grant initiative will serve fifty-seven (57) low income youth across the City, and run for 40 weeks (September to June) to complement the City's SuccessLink Summer Youth Jobs.

- Forty-two (42) youth ages 14-18 will be able to work 10 hours per week at a rate of \$18 per hour.
- Fifteen (15) youth ages 19-24 will be able to work 15 hours per week at a rate of \$20 per hour.

The Boston Office of Youth Employment and Opportunity will closely monitor this pilot program to evaluate the impact of year-round, part-time jobs on youth.

Select

Enhance Access to Essential Items for Boston's Senior Populations



Cost: \$500,000

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations that can assist older adults in accessing small necessities not covered by government programs.

Many older adults face challenges in accessing essential items necessary for daily living, which can significantly impact their quality of life, safety, and independence. Supports through these grants may include emergency appliance replacement, health-related expenses not covered by insurance, companionship for older adults who are socially isolated, or respite care for family caregivers, and more.

Select

Rat Prevention Initiatives in Dense Residential Areas



Expand Access to Fresh Foods in Boston



Cost: \$400,000

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations to bolster assistance programs for Boston residents facing food insecurity.

The purpose of these grants is for residents to access fresh food (fruits and vegetables, dairy, eggs, meat, seafood).

Select

Online Voting Platform

Welcome + Voter Eligibility

IDEAS in ACTION

English



Thank you for your submission!

Your vote has been counted.

Don't miss the opportunity to help us improve Participatory Budgeting in Boston! Please answer this optional survey.

[English](#) [Español](#) [简体中文](#) [Tiếng Việt](#) [Kabuverdianu](#) [Kreyòl ayisyen](#)

[Português brasileiro](#)

For more information on Participatory Budgeting, please visit boston.gov/participate or email us at pb@boston.gov

Please share with your community!



[← Back to the beginning](#)

IDEAS
in ACTION

DATA+SOUL
RESEARCH

IDEAS IN ACTION VOTING SURVEY

Thank you for voting in Boston's first ever City-wide Participatory Budgeting Initiative! Please answer the questions below to help the City of Boston:

- Learn how it is meeting its goals for participatory budgeting; and,
- Make the process better in the future.

Your responses are anonymous. You can:

To learn more about this survey, [click here](#).

Questions about Ideas in Action

1. How did you hear about Ideas in Action? *Check all that apply.*

- City of Boston (example: newsletter or event)
- Boston City Councilor or other public official
- Boston Public Library
- Local community organization
- Social Media (examples: Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- Print Newspaper/ Online Newspaper

IDEAS
in ACTION

DATA+SOUL
RESEARCH

KHẢO SÁT - ĐÁNH GIÁ CHƯƠNG TRÌNH IDEAS IN ACTION

Cảm ơn bạn đã bỏ phiếu cho Sáng kiến lập ngân sách tham gia toàn thành phố đầu tiên của Boston! Vui lòng trả lời các câu hỏi bên dưới để giúp Thành phố Boston: Tìm hiểu cách thức đạt được mục tiêu về lập ngân sách có sự tham gia; và, Cải thiện quy trình tốt hơn trong tương lai. Các câu trả lời là ẩn danh. Bạn có thể bỏ qua bất kỳ câu hỏi nào mình không muốn trả lời. Để biết thêm thông tin về cuộc khảo sát này, nhấp vào đây.

Những câu hỏi về Ideas in Action

1. Bạn đã biết đến Ideas in Action như thế nào? Đánh dấu tất cả các mục áp dụng:

- Thành phố Boston (ví dụ: bản tin hoặc sự kiện)
- Nghị viên thành phố Boston hoặc nhân viên các cơ quan khác
- Thư viện công cộng Boston
- Tổ chức cộng đồng địa phương
- Mạng xã hội (ví dụ: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter X)
- Báo in/ Báo điện tử
- Đài phát thanh
- Quảng cáo hoặc Biển quảng cáo

PUBLIC COMMENT
15 minutes, 3 minutes per person

