

IDEAS *in* ACTION

External Oversight Board Meeting

February 25, 2025



Office of
Participatory
Budgeting

CITY of BOSTON

AGENDA

- 6:00 pm: **Agenda Overview**
 - *Motion to adopt meeting minutes*
 - *Board Meetings Schedule*
- 6:10 pm: **PB Cycle One: Voting Recap & Winning Projects**
- 6:40 pm: **Project Implementation Logistics**
- 7:00 pm: **Early Preparations for PB Cycle Two**
- 7:45 pm: **Public Comment**
- 8:00 pm: **Closing**

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Date	Board Meeting Topic
March 20, 2025 <i>(Thursday, Virtual)</i>	<i>Evaluation Findings & Proposed Rulebook Updates</i>
April 3, 2025 <i>(Thursday, Virtual)</i>	<i>Incorporation / Responding to Feedback Project Implementation Updates</i>
April 17, 2025 <i>(Thursday, Virtual)</i>	<i>Adopting Updated Rulebook Cycle 2 Next Steps</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

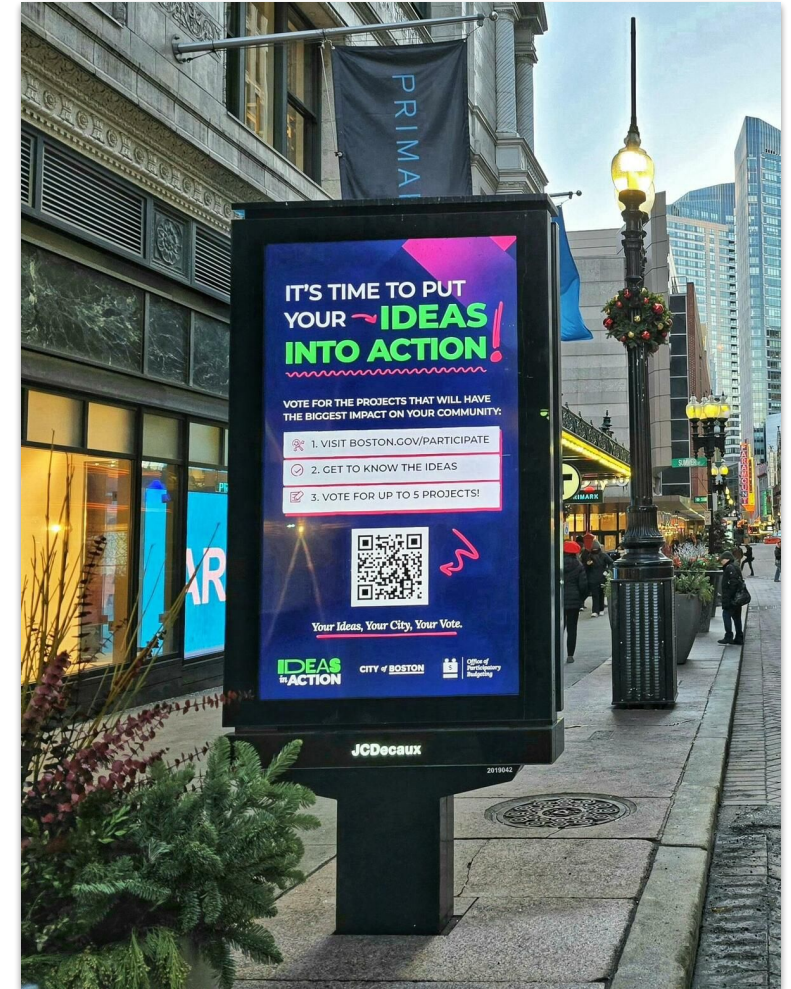
**PB CYCLE ONE:
VOTING RECAP &
WINNING PROJECTS**



VOTING RECAP

During the voting period, **4,462 Boston residents voted!**

- **4,449 Boston residents voted online** and **13 votes were submitted in person** at City Hall.
- **4.35 (high) average number of projects** selected per voter
 - Indicates engagement with PB as whole, rather than isolated support driven by individual project campaigns
- **98% of votes were in English**
 - While the selection of languages other than English is relatively low, according to Decision 21, this is common among PB processes
 - Approx 1% in Spanish, followed by < 1% in Chinese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Vietnamese
- The strong support for winning projects, combined with the high average number of projects selected per voter, means that **most participants will see at least some of their chosen projects funded and implemented.**
- Voting demographics will be discussed after evaluation surveys are tabulated



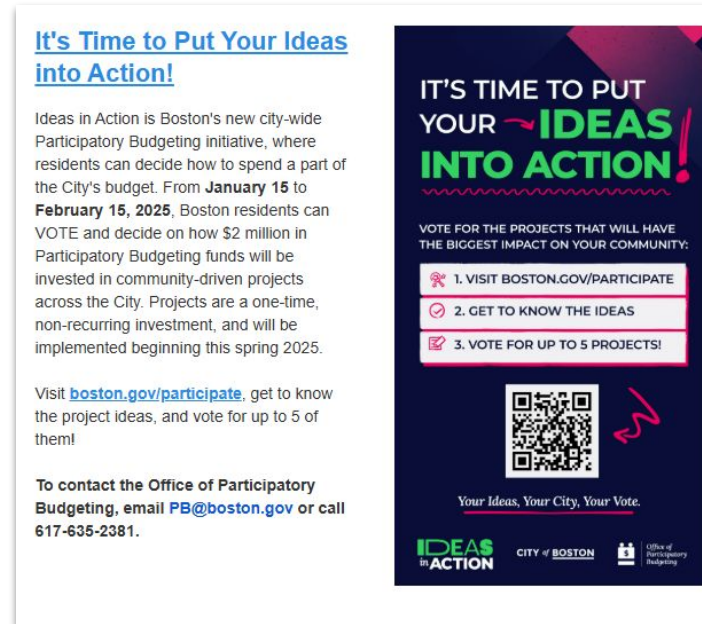
VOTING RECAP (online votes)

NEIGHBORHOOD	TOTAL VOTES	PERCENTAGE
Dorchester	1,026	23%
Brighton	633	14%
Roxbury	414	9%
East Boston	350	8%
South Boston	313	7%
Hyde Park	239	5%
South End	157	4%
Allston, Charlestown, Fenway, Jamaica Plain, Downtown	650 (combined)	3% each
Back Bay, Mattapan, Mission Hill, Roslindale, West Roxbury	466 (combined)	2% each
Beacon Hill, Chinatown, Longwood, West End, South Boston Waterfront, North End, Leather District, Bay Village, Harbor Islands	201 (combined)	1% or less each
TOTAL	4,449	100%

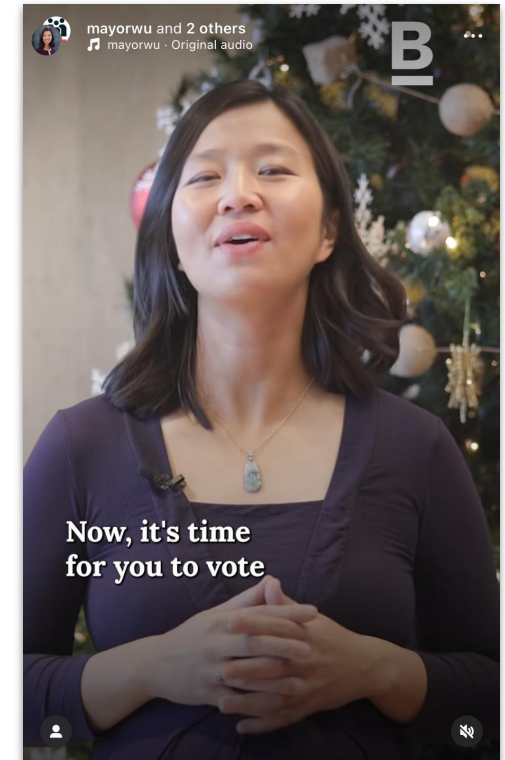
VOTING RECAP

Outreach Details:

- **City of Boston Outreach/ Social Media**
 - OPB coordinated with the Mayor's Office on content for social media posts on the City's account, as well as the video from Mayor Wu encouraging residents to vote.
 - OPB worked with the Office of Neighborhood Services to advertise in their monthly newsletters and other departments for content to post on their own newsletters and social media.



City of Boston Neighborhood Newsletter



Mayor Wu, Instagram Video

VOTING RECAP

- **Boston Public Schools**

- OPB connected with leadership at Boston Public Schools, and approximately 1,100 PINs for voting were shared with social studies 6-12 grade teachers to assist their students with voting as part of their classroom curriculum.

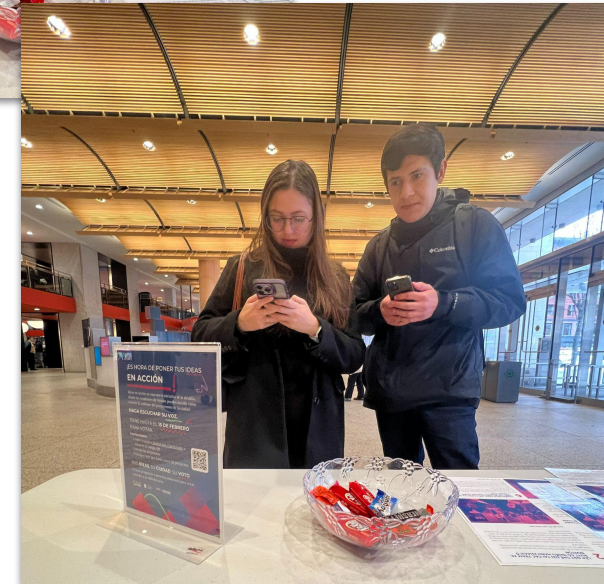
- **Boston Public Libraries**

- OPB hosted library office hours to engage with residents in voting. This took place at the East Boston, Roxbury, Dudley Sq, Copley, Brighton, and Chinatown branches during the voting period.

- **City Hall Voting**

- Age Strong Volunteers assisted with voter engagement throughout the voting period.

Library Office Hours- Central Library Copley



VOTING RECAP

- **Media Outlets**
 - OPB worked with an external media contractor for advertising during the voting phase. This included traditional and ethnic media outlets such as digital and paper news outlets, ethnic radios stat, etc.
- **Additional Engagement**
 - OPB worked closely with its External Oversight Board (EOB) and community organizations to help with voter engagement and outreach.



Boston Herald- Op Ed



Dorchester Reporter Ad



Sampan Digital Ad

VOTING RECAP

Lessons Learned

- **Unpaid and Paid News Media:** Correlation between news media coverage and voting activity throughout January/February 2025. Will work with ASG on evaluating media statistics.
- **Voting Accessibility:** Online voting has the most reach for residents; however, in-person voting should be maintained for accessibility. Rethink strategies for City Hall and BPL (resources and capacity).
- **City Department Partnerships:** Expand BPS coordination. Identify potential avenues with City Departments for engaging their constituencies- e.g. seniors, youth, formerly incarcerated, etc.
- **PIN Code Access:** Approximately 350 PIN codes were used for online voting. Investigate ways to make this operation more streamlined for future cycles.
- **Partnerships with Community Organizations:** Several community organizations engaged with residents to promote PB Voting. OPB will explore outreach collaborations for the voting phase in Cycle Two.

WINNING PROPOSALS

RANK	VOTES	PROPOSAL	FUNDING	LEAD DEPARTMENT
#1	1,834	<i>Expand Access to Fresh Foods in Boston</i>	\$400,000	Office of Food Justice
#2	1,761	<i>Rat Prevention Initiatives in Dense Residential Areas</i>	\$500,000	Inspectional Services
#3	1,707	<i>Programs to Support Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Youth</i>	\$250,000	Office of Returning Citizens
#4	1,638	<i>Rental Assistance for Boston Youth Ages 16-24</i>	\$200,000	Office of Housing Stability
#5	1,571	<i>Support Community Gardens in Boston's Neighborhoods with Limited Access to Affordable Food</i>	\$500,000	GrowBoston
#6	1,505	<i>Install Benches at High-Ridership Public Transit Bus Stops in Boston</i>	\$150,000 (\$450,000)	Boston Transportation Department

PROPOSALS NOT FUNDED THIS CYCLE

RANK	VOTES	PROPOSAL	FUNDING	LEAD DEPARTMENT
#7	1,415	<i>Expand Evening Recreational Opportunities for Youth</i>	\$300,000	Youth Sports Grants, Human Services
#8	1,411	<i>Support and Education Programming for at Risk Youth Ages 10-13</i>	\$300,000	Youth Development Fund, Human Services
#9	1,294	<i>Economic Opportunities for Low-Income Entrepreneurs</i>	\$500,000	Office of Small Business
#10	1,292	<i>Pilot an Expansion of the Youth Jobs Program during the School Year</i>	\$515,000	Office of Youth Employment and Opportunity
#11	1,193	<i>Enhance Access to Essential Items for Boston's Senior Populations</i>	\$500,000	Age Strong
#12	1,172	<i>Publicly Accessible Fruit Trees for Boston Residents</i>	\$500,000	GrowBoston
#13	841	<i>City-Wide Campaign to Promote PAATHS Addiction Support Services</i>	\$300,000	BPHC's Recovery Services Bureau
#14	782	<i>Connecting Boston Residents to Health Resources</i>	\$250,000	BPHC's Mayor's Health Line

**PROJECT
IMPLEMENTATION**



IMPLEMENTATION

- **Project Tracker**

- Internal and external facing communication

- **Coordination with Departments that have winning projects**

- City Department Implemented Projects

- Define and finalize project scope of work
- Define roles and responsibilities of OPB/ Department
- Coordinate timeline, points of contact, check in meeting, etc.
- Define project evaluation metrics + assessment

- Grants Administered by Departments

- Define and finalize project scope of work
- Coordinate grant application process with Departments
- Define roles and responsibilities of OPB/ Department
- RFP development, develop evaluation review criteria, application review committee, project awarding
- Define project evaluation metrics + assessment

**PREPARATION FOR
CYCLE TWO**



CYCLE TWO PREP

- **PB Evaluation**

- Review and incorporate Data + Soul evaluation findings (*March 2025*)

- **Rulebook Updates**

- Meeting #1- Evaluation Findings and Proposed Rulebook Updates (*March 2025*)
- Meeting #2- Incorporation / Responding to Feedback (*April 2025*)
- Meeting #3- Adopting Updated Rulebook (*April 2025*)

- **EOB Report to Mayor and Council**

- Incorporate PB Evaluation report + work with EOB to finalize (*June 2025*)

- **Idea Collection Phase**

- Idea Collection Methods: Re-engage PB Portal Website, PB Phone Line, PB Corners
- Toolkit Materials: Revamp materials
- Contract Community Partners: Expand applicant pool and outreach approaches
- Communications: Revamp Messaging and Branding
- Outreach Partnerships - Coordinate with City Departments

CYCLE TWO PREP

- **Community Priorities**
 - Re-engage with Data Analytics on analysis and methodology
- **Visioning Forums**
 - Rethink forums approach
 - Define forum agendas and materials
- **PB Voting**
 - Explore partnerships to support with voting outreach

PUBLIC COMMENT
15 minutes, 3 minutes per person

