

CITY OF BOSTON

Office of Participatory Budgeting External Oversight Board Meeting

Thursday, February 19th, 2026

EOB members present:

Jim Kennedy, Carla Pantaleon-Stovell, Jarret Wright, Marilyn Forman, and Claire Teylouni

OPB staff present: Renato Castelo, Director; Blanca Teixeira, Finance and Contracts Manager; Alexandra Mackay, Community Engagement & Outreach Fellow

This in-person External Oversight Board meeting was used to publicly announce the winning projects of the FY26 Cycle of Ideas in Action. Members of the External Oversight Board, community groups, and residents participated in this celebratory gathering at the Civic Pavillion in City Hall.

The awarded projects, number of votes received, and lead implementing City Departments are:

Proposal Title & Number of Votes	Ballot Language	Funding	Department
<p>Immigrant Legal Defense Fund</p> <p>Votes: 3,733</p>	<p><i>This proposal provides grant funding for immigration legal services including consultations, application assistance, and legal representation for immigrants facing detention and deportation. This initiative will prioritize detained immigrants, those at heightened risk of detention, and immigrant youth.</i></p>	<p>\$400,000</p>	<p>Office of Immigrant Advancement</p>
<p>Neighborhood Fresh Food Access Initiative</p> <p>Votes: 3,035</p>	<p><i>This proposal provides funds to local organizations to increase access to healthy food in neighborhoods with higher food insecurity rates. Resources will be used to support food pantries, pop-up markets, farmers markets, food vouchers, or refrigerated food distribution.</i></p>	<p>\$500,000</p>	<p>Office of Food Justice</p>
<p>Bridging the Gap: Assistance for Housing Stability</p> <p>Votes: 2,805</p>	<p><i>This proposal establishes a flexible funding pool to help Boston residents at risk of or experiencing homelessness to secure or maintain housing. Through grants to nonprofit organizations, low-income individuals, people with disabilities, and those with intersecting marginalized identities would be able to receive one-time financial assistance for housing-related costs such as storage fees, arrears, moving costs, start-up expenses, and basic furniture.</i></p>	<p>\$200,000</p>	<p>Supportive Housing Division (MOH)</p>

<p>Immigrant Career Pathways: Bridging Language and Employment</p> <p>Votes: 2,091</p>	<p><i>This proposal provides grants for ESOL classes combined with skills training and certifications in childcare, construction, and small business development. The program addresses language barriers and workforce needs for immigrant residents while meeting the city's demand for qualified workers.</i></p>	<p>\$300,000</p>	<p>Office of Workforce Development</p>
<p>Green My Block</p> <p>Votes: 1,930</p>	<p><i>This proposal transforms underutilized city-owned spaces along roadways and sidewalks through community-led greening initiatives. The program provides contracting opportunities and resources for residents, schools, community groups and organizations to adopt, beautify, and maintain local spaces with native plantings.</i></p> <p><i>This initiative will prioritize heat-vulnerable locations while remaining accessible to all neighborhoods.</i></p>	<p>\$100,000</p>	<p>Office of Green Infrastructure (Streets Cabinet)</p>
<p>Workforce Training Programs Focused on Trades</p> <p>Votes: 1,661</p>	<p><i>This proposal provides grants to expand vocational training in trades such as HVAC, automotive, computer skills, and cooking, with a focus on low-income residents. The initiative creates pathways to better-paying jobs while addressing the community's need for skilled workers.</i></p>	<p>\$300,000</p>	<p>Office of Workforce Development</p>
<p>Youth Financial Literacy and Empowerment Workshops</p> <p>Votes: 1,556</p>	<p><i>This proposal provides financial literacy workshops delivered at youth job sites, local events, and colleges for young people ages 14-24. Sessions cover banking, credit, investing, budgeting, and career readiness, empowering youth to build financial skills and grow their wealth.</i></p>	<p>\$250,000</p>	<p>Center for Working Families (Worker Empowerment)</p>
<p>Small Business Development Resource Program</p> <p>Votes: 1,202</p>	<p><i>This proposal offers technical assistance in relevant subject matter areas to support small business entrepreneurship across Boston. The goal is to create greater financial stability and capacity for small business, which will ultimately benefit communities citywide. Resources will be made available through avenues that will attempt to target entrepreneurs who have not benefited from City supports and resources in the past.</i></p>	<p>\$150,000</p>	<p>Office of Small Business</p>

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