

2014-2015  
Rulebook

# Participatory Budgeting in Cambridge





## About this Rulebook

This booklet was developed by the City of Cambridge, the Participatory Budgeting Steering Committee, and the non-profit organization The Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) in November 2014 for Cambridge’s pilot participatory budgeting process. While participatory budgeting is inspired by experiences elsewhere, we want the Cambridge process to reflect the special characteristics of our community.

## About the PB Cambridge Steering Committee

The following individuals serve on the Steering Committee for the 2014-2015 pilot PB process:

- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>1.</b> Joseph Aiello     | <b>12.</b> Kate Krontiris    |
| <b>2.</b> Torgun Austin     | <b>13.</b> Mina Makarious    |
| <b>3.</b> Diane Beck        | <b>14.</b> Mark Mullikin     |
| <b>4.</b> Brendan Boyle     | <b>15.</b> James Poplasky    |
| <b>5.</b> Judy Bright       | <b>16.</b> Sasha Purpura     |
| <b>6.</b> Barbara Broussard | <b>17.</b> Hasson Rashid     |
| <b>7.</b> Doug Brown        | <b>18.</b> Ellen Shachter    |
| <b>8.</b> Kelly Dolan       | <b>19.</b> Rebecca Schofield |
| <b>9.</b> Camilla Elvis     | <b>20.</b> Naomi Stephen     |
| <b>10.</b> Jenny Herrera    | <b>21.</b> Elie Yarden       |
| <b>11.</b> Robin Kelly      | <b>22.</b> Jay Yesselman     |

## **What is Participatory Budgeting?**

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a democratic process where community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget.

## **Participatory Budgeting in Cambridge**

For the first time, the City of Cambridge will set aside \$500,000 of the FY16 Capital Budget for community members to allocate through a pilot PB process. Cambridge residents and collaborators will submit ideas for capital projects, develop those ideas into project proposals in conjunction with City staff, and vote on which projects will be implemented by the City.

## **Project Eligibility**

Projects are eligible for funding if they meet the following criteria:

- Are capital projects that do not exceed \$500,000.
- Benefit the public. Projects that only benefit private individuals or groups are not eligible.
- Are a one-time expenditure that can be completed with funds from this year's PB process.
- Are implemented by the City of Cambridge on public property.

In addition to these criteria, the following rules apply to PB projects:

- Before being submitted to the public vote, all projects must be reviewed by the City Manager to ensure they meet all of the legal requirements of capital projects.

## Goals: What is this for?

We hope to accomplish the following goals through PB Cambridge:

**1. Make Democracy Inclusive:**

Engage all community members, particularly those who are not the “usual suspects,” in the process to improve their city. Expand and diversify participation in the decision-making process.

**2. Have Meaningful Social and Community Impact:**

Use PB as a tool to affect meaningful social change in the community. PB in Cambridge should be mission driven and results oriented.

**3. Promote Sustainable Public Good:**

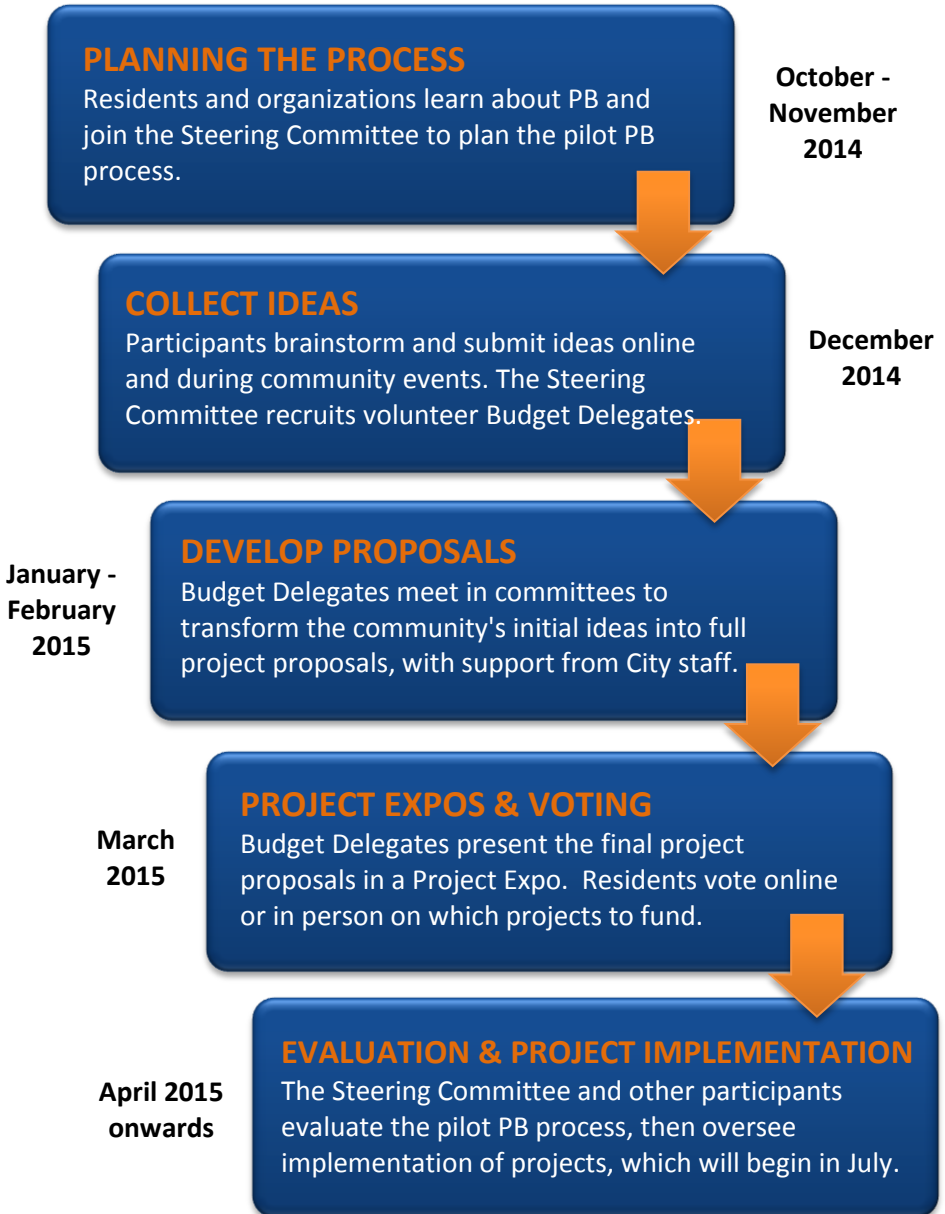
Make sustainable decisions that promote the long-term future and well-being of Cambridge residents.

**4. Create Easy and Seamless Civic Engagement:**

Enable the community to be involved without barriers or frictions. Create a welcoming space for residents to become engaged, fostering a “contagious” civic environment.

## Timeline: What happens when?

The PB process has five main steps, starting in October 2014 and continuing into 2015, aligning with the City's annual budget cycle.



## Rules: How does it work?

### Budget Assemblies

- The public will propose project ideas during public brainstorming assemblies.
- The public will also submit project ideas online, through mail-in and email submission.
- Ideas will be collected through “pop-up” events at places like senior centers, schools, libraries, etc.
- Anyone is welcome to propose project ideas.
- Participants can volunteer as Budget Delegates if they:
  - Are at least 14 years old;
  - Are residents of Cambridge, *or* affiliated with Cambridge – people who work in Cambridge, own a business in Cambridge, attend school in Cambridge, *or* are parents of children who attend school in Cambridge.

### Budget Delegate Meetings

- All Budget Delegates (BD) must attend a delegate orientation session on January 6, 2015.
- At the BD orientation session, each BD will join a committee to discuss and develop project proposals for a certain issue area.
- Issue committees may include but are not limited to: Transportation, Public Safety, Education, Parks & Recreation, Environment & Community Planning, Art & Culture, Housing, etc.
- All BD committees will have 1-2 trained facilitators.
  - BDs will consider criteria such as community need, impact, and feasibility when prioritizing projects.
- Each committee will send its project proposals to the City Manager for review before the public vote. The City Manager will review projects to ensure they meet the legal requirements of capital projects.

## Project Expos

- At the Project Expos, BDs will present their project proposals to the community through a science fair format.
- Project Expos may be combined with the launch of the voting period.

## Voting for Projects

- People are eligible to vote for projects if they:
  1. are at least 12 years old, *and*
  2. live in Cambridge
- At the time of voting, voters must sign an affidavit stating that they are residents of Cambridge.
- Voting will take place on multiple days, in multiple locations, and online. Each voter can vote once.
- Each voter may cast one vote per project. The Steering Committee will decide the number of total votes a voter can cast, once the approximate number of projects on the ballot is known.

## Roles & Responsibilities: Who does what?

### Cambridge Residents and Collaborators

Anyone can participate in the process, even if they only come to one meeting or only vote.

- Identify local problems and needs
- Propose project ideas
- Volunteer to serve as Budget Delegates
- Mobilize Cambridge residents and collaborators to participate
- Vote on project proposals, *if a Cambridge resident*

### Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC) coordinates PB Cambridge. The committee includes 22 members of non-profit organizations and residents of Cambridge. Whenever possible, the SC will make decisions by consensus. When there is no consensus, decisions will be made by a simple majority.

The SC will have two co-chairs, one secretary, and three workgroups (see workgroups below). SC members may not miss more than three SC meetings. SC members are welcome to send an alternate if they cannot attend.

- Decide on key questions about the implementation of PB
- Oversee the PB process
- Distribute promotional materials
- Promote PB in their organizations and at community events
- Volunteer for assemblies, expos and voting sites, or recruit volunteers to meet these requirements
- Mobilize Cambridge residents to participate
- Facilitate brainstorming assemblies and BD committee meetings
- Help arrange food, childcare, and interpretation for assemblies and meetings with City staff



- Evaluate the PB process
- Monitor project implementation

Steering Committee workgroups consist of:

1. **Event Planning:** Help organize idea collection events, Budget Delegate meetings, project expos, and the vote.
2. **Outreach:** Set strategies and priorities for outreach, with focus on underserved communities.
3. **Communications:** Advise the event planning and outreach workgroups on how to broadcast messages; create media products, including flyers, social media posts, website content, and press.

## Budget Delegates

Budget Delegates do the extra work necessary to turn community ideas into real projects.

- Identify local problems and needs
- Discuss and prioritize initial project ideas
- Consult with Cambridge residents and collaborators on project proposals
- Develop full project proposals
- Prepare project posters and presentations
- Mobilize Cambridge residents and collaborators to participate
- Monitor project implementation
- Evaluate the PB process

## Facilitators

Facilitators are neutral parties that do not advocate for particular projects. They help facilitate brainstorming assemblies and BD meetings to make sure that all participants are able to contribute.

- Serve as the main liaison between City staff and BDs
- Manage BDs and ensure that proposals are developed on time

- Ensure that notes are taken at meetings and distributed afterward
- Make commitment of 4-5 hours per week during BD process to support committees

### **The Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP)**

- Prepare educational and promotional materials
- Conduct trainings for staff and participants
- Provide ongoing technical assistance on the PB process
- Assist in categorizing project ideas for delegate committees

### **Budget Department Staff**

- Help coordinate PB outreach efforts with the Steering Committee
- Recruit and coordinate volunteers
- Reserve spaces for assemblies and meetings
- Help arrange food, childcare, and interpretation for assemblies and meetings with the Steering Committee
- Distribute promotional materials
- Serve as liaison between PB participants and City
- Manage the PB website and online submission of ideas
- Update participants on the status of winning projects
- Coordinate evaluation of the PB process

### **City Staff**

- Assess feasibility of project proposals
- Help provide cost estimates for project proposals

## About the Cambridge City Council

The 2014-2015 Cambridge City Council is made up of the following nine members:

- David P. Maher, Mayor
- Dennis A. Benzan, Vice-Mayor
- Dennis J. Carlone, Councillor
- Leland Cheung, Councillor
- Craig A. Kelley, Councillor
- Nadeem A. Mazen, Councillor
- Marc C. McGovern, Councillor
- E. Denise Simmons, Councillor
- Timothy J. Toomey, JR, Councillor

The City Council established Cambridge's pilot PB process. The Council will appropriate the \$500,000 for the winning PB projects.



## **Participate!**

Find out more at:

[www.cambridgema.gov/yourbudget](http://www.cambridgema.gov/yourbudget)

## **Questions?**

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