

Evaluating the Inaugural Participatory Budgeting Process in the City of Cambridge (2014-2015)



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I. Executive Summary

Overview of Cambridge PB

The City of Cambridge, MA recently completed its first-ever participatory budgeting (PB) process, in which residents decided how to spend public funds. In doing so, Cambridge joins more than 1,500 municipalities and organizations worldwide that have implemented PB in their own contexts since PB was formally established in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 1989. In 2009, the first PB process was implemented in the United States (in a Chicago ward), and PB has gained significant momentum across North America in the last few years.

In December 2014, Cambridge community members shared over 380 ideas for capital projects¹ to improve Cambridge. From January-March 2015, more than 40 volunteer Budget Delegates prioritized and developed select ideas into 20 concrete project proposals for community members to vote on. In March 2015, a total of **2,727** Cambridge residents age 12 and older voted at sites across the city and online to decide which projects the City should fund.

In the end, six projects won funding:

- 100 new trees and tree wells in low-canopy neighborhoods (\$120,000)
- 20 new laptops for the Community Learning Center (\$27,000)
- Bilingual books for children learning English (\$7,000)
- Public toilet in Central Square (\$320,000)
- 8 bike repair stations (\$12,000)
- Free public Wi-Fi in 6 outdoor locations (\$42,000)

Overview of Evaluation Findings

This report utilizes qualitative and quantitative data to comprehensively analyze Cambridge's first-ever experience with PB. It examines the breadth and depth of resident participation throughout the process. Despite facing the snowiest winter on

¹ The City worked with residents to ensure projects fully met this capital expenditure criteria, but this category of spending can broadly be understood as capital and infrastructure-related projects for the public good on City property that could be implemented through a one-time expenditure.

record and other challenges due to this being the city's first experience with PB, Cambridge's first participatory budgeting process achieved notable success in many ways.

Key Findings:

- A majority of voters (and voters who responded to the voter feedback survey) voted online
- 67% of all voters responded to the voter survey – this is a notably high response rate (despite some areas for improvement in designing and administering the surveys)
 - The vast majority (90%) of voter respondents recommended that PB continue in Cambridge
 - 43% of voter respondents were long-time Cambridge residents who have lived in the city for more than 15 years
 - All non-white racial/ethnic groups combined represented less than 20% of voter respondents. Racial/ethnic minority groups participation was even lower in all other phases of the process
 - Virtually all voter respondents (94%) reported that English is the language they are most comfortable in; at the same time, voter respondents hailed from at least 75 different countries of birth
 - Almost 60% of voter respondents possessed a graduate degree, and another 28% had a Bachelor's degree. Although 74% of all Cambridge residents have a college education, this suggests that more work is needed to adequately engage less educated residents, even the most basic level of engagement (voting)
 - Though there was much discussion about the eligibility of teenagers to vote, 12-18 year olds seemed to make up only a small fraction (2%) of voter respondents²
- When asked for open-ended feedback to evaluate the process, the majority of feedback participants provided through open-ended survey questions was positive

² This percentage may be lower than the actual participation rate, however, if 12-18 year olds were significantly less likely than other age groups to complete the voter survey immediately after completing their ballots.

- The two greatest areas of concern highlighted by participants through open-ended survey questions were a compressed timeline and insufficient outreach
 - Various points of feedback emphasized the need for expanded and improved efforts to engage a more diverse spectrum of Cambridge residents (including low-income, minority ethnic groups, less civically engaged individuals, and those with limited internet access)
- Of the three PB phases, Proposal Development was identified as the area needing most improvement
- An ambitious and challenging implementation timeline was a significant challenge for many participants, but seems to have particularly overburdened the volunteer budget delegates during proposal development

Key Recommendations:

1. **Invest in broadening and deepening outreach efforts** – Data from participants at all phases (idea submitters, delegates, steering committee members, and voters) illustrates low levels of participation by under-represented groups. It is admirable that inclusion is one key goal of this process and that significant efforts were made to reach out to diverse groups; however, there is tremendous scope for improvement, with important benefits for the city as a whole.
2. **Increase and diversify the funds available for PB** – One of the most powerful results of this study is that virtually all voters were in favor of seeing the process continue in Cambridge (only 1% were not in favor). This provides the political support as well as the civic capacity to expand the process. Identifying funds that could be used on non-capital expenditure projects could be one valuable way to evolve the process and expand the diverse positive outcomes resulting from the process itself and from funded projects.
3. **Build greater flexibility into the process, particularly the timeline.** A compressed timeline was clearly one of the greatest challenges identified by a diverse array of participants. The modified schedule proposed for the second PB cycle is an encouraging step in this direction. At the same time, flexibility could be introduced in other ways – for example, many delegates felt that a too-rigid structure was imposed on many of their earlier discussions.
4. **Further clarify the roles, responsibilities, and expected commitments to all parties in all phases of the process** – A few key groups became overburdened at different times. Clarifying roles and expectations at the outset can help ensure

certain key stakeholders are not overburdened and spread work more evenly across groups. Budget delegates faced much pressure to rush the final phase of their work to stay on schedule, while some city staff were over-burdened with information requests at a time when they were busy preparing their department's own budgets for the coming year. Meanwhile, Steering Committee members had highly variable levels of engagement. Clearer delineation of all roles at the outset will help set expectations and smooth the workload across different key groups of participants.

- 5. Involve more community groups and institutions in different stages of the process.** Unlike some other cities, community groups did not play a very pronounced role in the process. Such organizations - particularly groups that represent marginalized residents and that have a track record of collaboration – could make key contributions to improving outreach and other elements of the process. Community groups could also add a valuable addition to the face-to-face interactions in the process (which would be very valuable given the reality that most residents who participated in PB did so by voting remotely through the website). In addition, there is tremendous potential to increase the involvement of youth throughout the process; schools might be another community institution to engage.

II. Introduction: Participatory Budgeting in the City of Cambridge

The City of Cambridge, MA recently concluded its first-ever participatory budgeting process to have residents decide how to spend \$500,000 from the City's Capital Budget. Over nine months in 2014-2015, PB Cambridge proceeded through three phases: 1) *Idea Collection*: obtaining a wide range of hundreds of ideas from residents on how to spend public funds; 2) *Proposal Development*: narrowing and developing ideas into 20 concrete and feasible proposals, and 3) *Voting*: empowering residents to select their favorite projects.

1. Process Overview

Fast Facts about Cambridge PB

What:

- \$500,000 of Cambridge's FY 2016 Capital Budget allocated
- Only one-time expenditure capital projects were considered eligible
- 20 projects presented on final ballot - five projects for each of four categories:
 - Culture & Community Facilities
 - Environment, Public Health & Public Safety
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Streets & Sidewalks
- 6 projects won, totaling nearly \$528,000 in funding

How:

- Any Cambridge resident age 12 and older could vote for up to 5 projects on the ballot
- Voting took place online and in person at 25 events around the city
- 380 projects submitted during idea collection phase
- 40+ Budget Delegates narrowed hundreds of ideas to 20 concrete projects
- 20 Steering Committee members helped facilitate the whole process

During the first phase, over 380 ideas for how to spend the allocated funds were submitted via an interactive online mapping tool, at events, and through mail, email, and phone calls to the Budget Office.³

³ All ideas were categorized under one of these six themes: Culture and Community Facilities; Education; Environment; Parks and Recreation; Streets and Sidewalks; Public Health and Safety. The ideas map can be found at: <http://shareabouts-pbcambridge.herokuapp.com/place/295578>

During the second phase, community members who volunteered as budget delegates reviewed all project ideas and worked with City staff and representatives of the Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) to develop the best ideas into concrete proposals. Delegates were provided with extensive demographic information about the city and were given resources by facilitators to help them consider community needs, particularly for under-represented groups. Budget delegates conducted additional research and site visits to evaluate ideas on four main criteria: project need, community need, impact, and feasibility.

Four committees of budget delegates were created around the following themes:

1. Culture and Community Facilities
2. Environment, Public Health, and Public Safety
3. Parks and Recreation
4. Streets and Sidewalks

For each of these four committees, budget delegates were responsible for submitting five proposals for the final ballot. Budget delegates undertook significant, time-intensive work to transform countless ideas into a few high-quality and feasible proposals. These mandatory criteria helped budget delegates filter ideas:

- 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, the following rule applied:

- 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

Figure 1: Three Key Phases and Outputs of Cambridge PB Process



Notable Traits Unique to Cambridge PB

- Cambridge was the first city implementing PB in North America to use SMS verification of voters (a technology developed for the City of Cambridge by the Stanford Crowdsourced Democracy Team)
- Cambridge was the second city to have the lowest minimum voting age of 12 years old (Boston was the first city to institute this voting age in 2014).

2. Overarching Goals

At the outset, the Cambridge PB Steering Committee (comprised of 22 volunteers) outlined four key goals for the process. These are articulated in the Cambridge PB Rulebook, as follows:

- I. *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.
- II. *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.
- III. *Promote Sustainable Public Good:*** Make sustainable decisions that promote the long-term future and well-being of Cambridge residents.
- IV. *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.

3. Roles of Key Stakeholders

PB in Cambridge could not have happened without the meaningful and significant participation of a number of key stakeholder groups.

I. The Steering Committee:

This body served to guide and facilitate the overall PB process. It was comprised of 22 volunteer residents (as individuals and as representatives of local organizations). The Steering Committee also consisted of three thematic working groups: Event Planning (helping organize idea collection events, Budget Delegate meetings, project expos, and the vote); Outreach (setting strategies and priorities for outreach, with focus on underserved communities; and Communications. Some key responsibilities included (but were not limited to): creating the rulebook, overseeing the process and monitoring implementation, coordinating events and outreach/publicity, and mobilizing voters.

II. Budget Delegates:

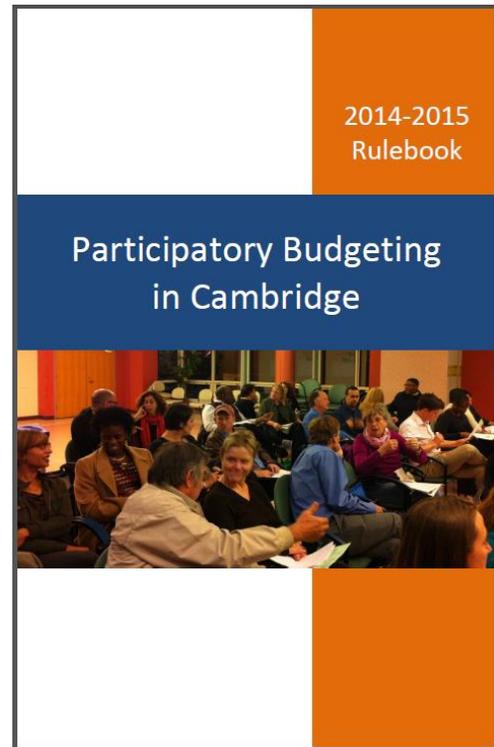
About 40 residents volunteered to be budget delegates. Each delegate served on one of four thematic committees (Culture and Community Facilities; Environment, Public Health and Public Safety; Parks and Recreation; and Streets and Sidewalks). They played a vital role in facilitating the overall process by reviewing and vetting the 380 ideas submitted during idea collection, and translating a select few of the ideas into concrete, actionable proposals voted upon by residents. They also made posters as visual aids and explained projects to voters at project expos during the voting week. Many delegates were also active in outreach during the voting phase.

III. Facilitators:

Facilitators served as impartial parties to support the proposal development phase. They helped ensure that the work of budget delegates proceeded on schedule and was aided by outside resources.

IV. City Staff:

While PB was initially proposed by and then approved by the Cambridge City Council, it was the Cambridge Budget Department that



spearheaded its implementation throughout all stages of the process. In addition, several City departments were consulted by budget delegates during proposal development, including the Arts Council, Conservation Commission, Community Development, Electrical, Human Services, Library, Police, Public Works, Traffic, and Water Departments. City staff provided technical information to help delegates create cost estimates and to help determine feasibility of projects.

V. The Participatory Budgeting Project:

The Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) is a national nonprofit established in 2006 that encourages the expansion of participatory budgeting in North America and provides technical support to cities that implement PB. PBP was contracted by the City of Cambridge (as it has been with other cities) to serve as the core implementing partner, providing extensive resources and facilitation support throughout the process.

Based on the goals outlined above and a consideration of the diverse stakeholders, this report evaluates the overall PB process. It focuses on two dimensions: analysis results and feedback by phase of the process, and results and feedback by key stakeholder groups. Attention is paid to understanding *who* participated (with consideration towards equity and inclusion) and *to what end* (i.e. what seem to be the initial outcomes of this process for its diverse stakeholders).



4. The Next Cycle

Soon after successfully concluding the pilot, Cambridge renewed PB for a second cycle. \$600,000 from the FY2017 Capital Budget has been allocated for the process. Taking into account a common piece of feedback about a challenging timeframe, the City has modified the schedule so that the process runs from June-December 2015.

This report seeks to provide valuable analysis and summarized feedback from the pilot experience with the hope of strengthening this unique civic process to help improve Cambridge during the second cycle and years to come.

III. Research Methodology

This report utilizes a variety of both quantitative and qualitative sources to comprehensively assess the Cambridge PB process. This includes the following:

- Quantitative survey data collected at various stages of the process
- Qualitative interviews with a variety of stakeholders
- Research observations throughout the process

I. Sources of Quantitative Data

- i. Voter Surveys (from online, digital, and paper ballot voters)⁴
- ii. Budget Delegate Surveys
- iii. Neighborhood Assembly Surveys

II. Sources of Qualitative Data

- i. Public Evaluation Session on May 5, 2015
- ii. Overall Feedback Survey (distributed to all stakeholders after results announced)
- iii. Responses to open-ended question in Voter Survey
- iv. 12 individual and small group interviews
- v. Field notes (from all stages of process)
- vi. Observations (from all stages of process)

When relevant, this report includes footnotes to consider for purposes of data interpretation. The design of this evaluation report was also facilitated by a review of similar evaluation reports of PB in other cities in North America (more information about this is in Annotated References at the end of the report).

⁴ Online voters are people who voted remotely using the online text message-authenticated ballot system that was available on the PB Cambridge website. Digital voters are those who voted in person at voting events using a laptop. Paper ballot voters are those who voted in person at voting events on paper ballots.

Summary of Survey Response Rates

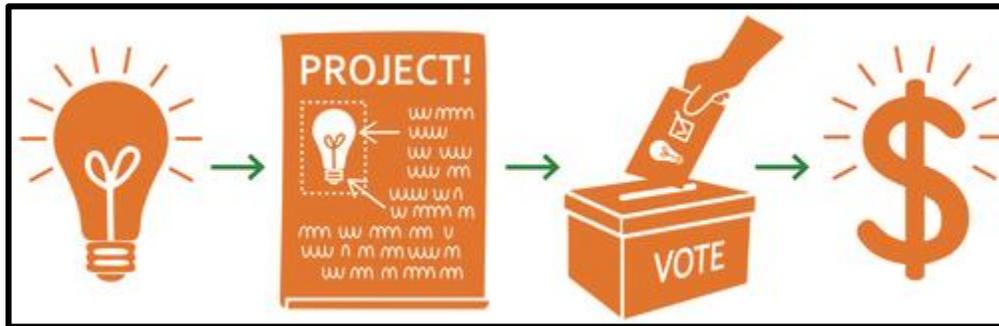
Data Source	Total Responses	Response Rate (% of Total Possible Responses)
<i>Voter Survey (for in-person voters)</i>	261	57%
<i>Voter Survey (for online & digital voters)</i>	1,567	73%
<i>All Voter Surveys (total)⁵</i>	1,828	67%
<i>Overall Process Feedback Survey (distributed after results announced)</i>	50	3%
<i>Budget Delegate Surveys</i>	29	73%* ⁶
<i>Neighborhood Assembly Surveys</i>	21	45%



⁵ Of all voter survey respondents, about 15% provided additional feedback when asked an open-ended question for any additional comments at the end of the survey.

⁶ Approximated value.

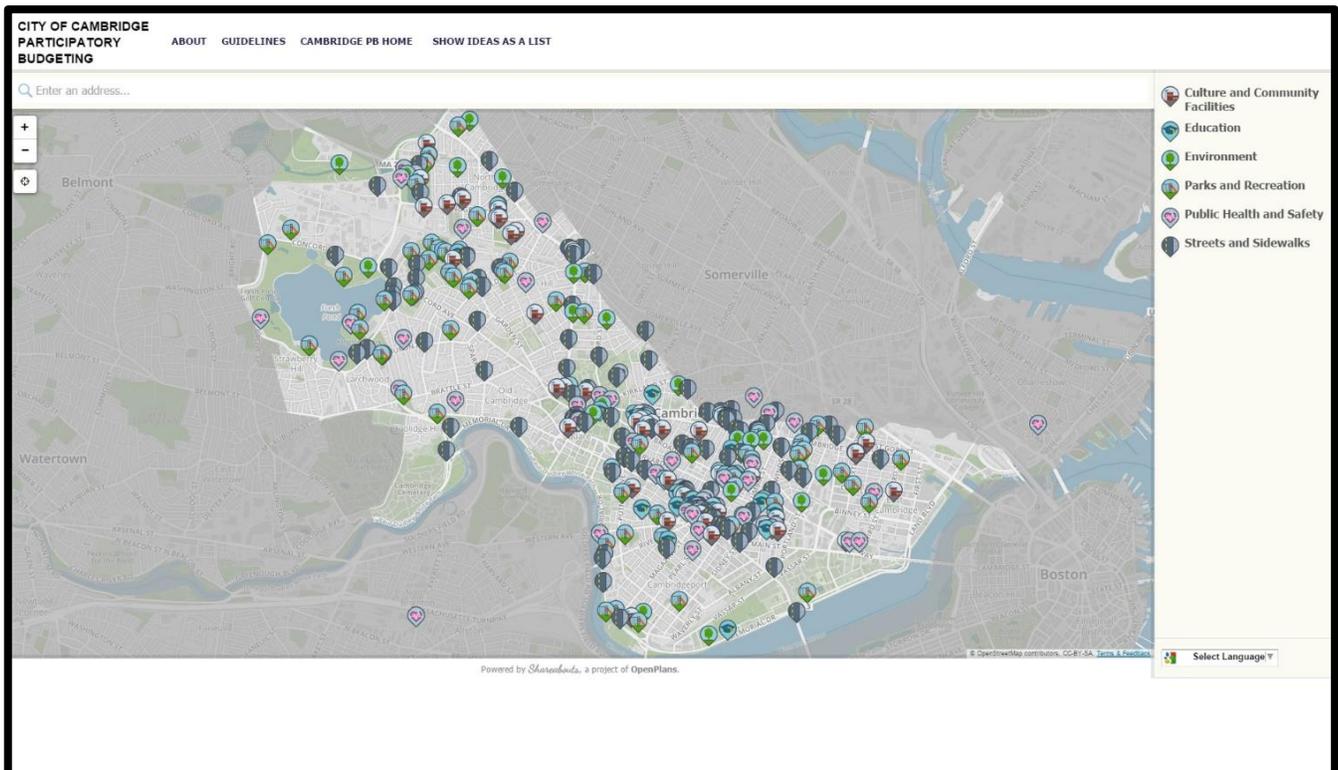
IV. Results and Feedback by Stage of the PB Process: Idea Collection, Proposal Development, and Voting



1. Phase One – Idea Collection

Over 380 total ideas were submitted in late 2014 for consideration at the very beginning of the process. These were submitted in multiple ways: individual online submissions, on paper at idea collection events, and via email, mail, and phone calls to the Budget Office.

The map below reveals the geographic location of all ideas submitted. Ideas are also categorized by six different themes (Culture and Community Facilities; Education; Environment; Parks and Recreation; Public Health and Safety; Streets and Sidewalks).



Five public assemblies were held at different City facilities and dozens of other “pop up” events were held around Cambridge to solicit project ideas from the community. Data about the backgrounds of assembly participants is limited to a few dozen responses, but is analyzed in the next section of the report. Briefly, it suggests that more effort could be made to attract under-represented groups to this activity. While the majority of these assembly participants were female, for example, only a small minority identified as non-white.

Key Overall Points of Feedback on Idea Collection⁷

The feedback here on both the strengths and challenges of the idea collection process (and the subsequent feedback on the next two phases) comes from input obtained from a variety of data sources. This includes the Overall Feedback Survey, the Public Evaluation Meeting, interviews, and the Voter Survey.

Strengths of Idea Collection

- Online mapping tool was very useful
- Other useful information on website
- Helpful and organized neighborhood meetings
- High number of ideas generated
- Quick and very easy to contribute ideas (including online)
- Helpful resources were provided to understand PB and how to participate
- Smooth and well-run application process for steering committee members and budget delegates
- Targeted assemblies (ex: youth centers)

Areas for Improvement for Idea Collection

- Some scheduling challenges around meetings
- Some confusion around roles (facilitators vs. steering committee vs. delegates)
- Possibility of making broader outreach efforts, especially early on
- Could incorporate idea collection into meeting agendas of existing community groups and school curriculum

“This is a great process for building civic engagement.” – Neighborhood Assembly Participant

⁷ The points in this section and in subsequent Key Overall Points of Feedback lists for the other phases of PB come from: the Overall Feedback Survey (after results were announced), the Public Evaluation Meeting, and interviews.

2. Phase Two – Proposal Development



As perhaps the most labor-intensive phase of the process, the proposal development phase is characterized by significant interaction between budget delegates and City staff, in addition to the independent work done by budget delegates (and supported by facilitators). The nature of this involved phase indicates that budget delegates are one of PB's key stakeholders with the most to gain from the PB process (particularly in terms of influence in the PB process, skill development, relationship building with other community members, and direct interaction with City representatives). An analysis of the background profiles of budget delegates is provided in this report's next section. Briefly, an analysis of the demographic survey results from this suggests that progress can be made toward diversifying the pool of budget delegate participants.

Key Overall Points of Feedback on Proposal Development

Strengths

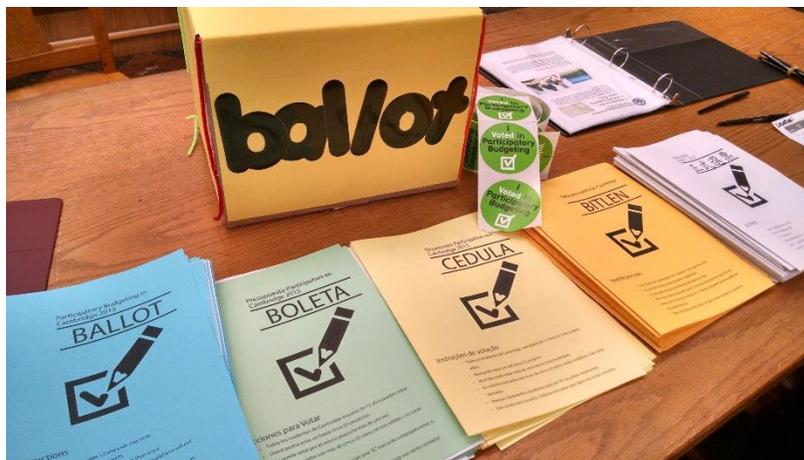
- Maps were useful
- Thoughtful reflection
- High level of dedication and effort by budget delegates
- Direct interaction between delegates and City staff
- Many resources provided to enrich discussion

Areas for Improvement

- Many budget delegates felt pressure and were rushed to complete their work, especially toward the end of this phase.
- Uneven number of delegates across committees
- Creating more space for open, collaborative discussion to develop project ideas
 - One respondent noted, "*It felt like most attendees at the session I was at came with agendas.*"

- Others stated they sometimes felt pressure from facilitators to use outside resources in a way that felt a bit contrived
- Challenges around budget delegate-City staff interactions (at least in part due to extraneous factors such as historic snowfalls but also perhaps partly due to communication issues within budget delegate committees and limited understanding of PB with some City staff.)
 - One survey respondent recommended, “*There should be in each department a person selected who understands the purpose of participatory budgeting as an instrument of efficient and democratic decision-making.*”

3. Phase Three – Voting



All Cambridge residents age 12 and older were encouraged to participate during the week of the PB vote in March. They were given the option of voting remotely through an online platform or voting in person at one of 25 voting events around the city. At most voting sites, residents had the choice of voting digitally using a laptop or voting on a paper ballot. Paper ballots were available in five languages (Chinese, English, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish), while digital/online ballots were available in two (English and Spanish).

Residents were asked to support **five of the 20** projects listed on the ballot. The final 20 projects on the ballot had a very wide range of cost estimates (from \$7,000 to \$350,000).

Voters used different rationales when deciding on projects. Some mentioned that they voted on projects that they thought benefited the city most as a whole (rather than individual neighborhoods or communities). Meanwhile, others seem more concerned about potential cost-benefit ratio of each project, and others mentioned their preference for supporting many smaller projects rather than a few more costly ones.

The projects with the highest number of votes were supported, up to the funding limit. In the end, voting produced the following result⁸:

Project	Total Votes	Project Cost	Cumulative Project Costs
100 new trees	1,441	\$ 119,400	\$ 119,400
CLC computers	1,110	\$ 27,000	\$ 146,400
Bilingual books	970	\$ 7,000	\$ 153,400
Central Square toilet	945	\$ 320,000	\$ 473,400
Bike repair stations	917	\$ 12,000	\$ 485,400
Free outdoor wifi	875	\$ 42,000	\$ 527,400
Danehy amphitheater	786	\$ 350,000	
Bus shelter real time monitors	748	\$ 30,000	
Little free libraries	620	\$ 13,000	
O'Connell Lib furniture	534	\$ 36,000	
North Camb. community garden	521	\$ 240,000	
Planting materials	506	\$ 40,000	
Traffic garden	475	\$ 200,000	
Danehy fitness equipment	468	\$ 65,000	
Dog park	302	\$ 250,000	
Peace garden	297	\$ 340,000	
Russell Field mural	289	\$ 22,000	
Wayfinding banners	274	\$ 15,600	
83 bus shelter renovation	271	\$ 75,000	
Raymond Park community garden improvements	193	\$ 20,000	
	12,542	\$ 2,224,000	

Key Overall Points of Feedback on Voting – Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Strengths

- Great ease of voting (several site options, several days, as well as online)
- Continued involvement of many idea submitters in developing proposals
- Helpful and committed staff and volunteers
 - One participant said: *“The PB staff who were at City Hall were very welcoming and enthusiastic. They showed the students around and helped them with the voting process. Several of my students were able to vote on laptops, with help, and several of them voted using the paper ballots. **Even for the non-Cambridge residents who couldn’t vote, it was a great lesson on democracy in action.**”*⁹

⁸ In the end, the City decided to slightly increase the funding allocation to \$528,000 in order to fully fund the sixth most popular project, free outdoor Wi-Fi.

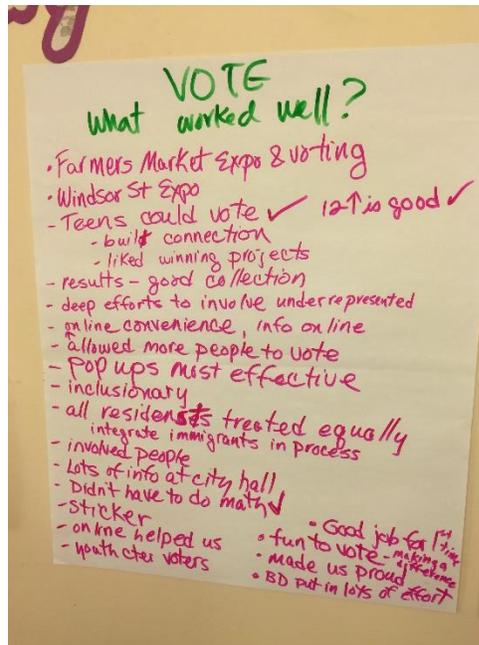
⁹ <https://friendsofclc.wordpress.com/2015/05/05/clc-students-participate-in-citywide-participatory-budgeting-vote/>

- Helpful information on online ballots and through posters at project expos
- Ability for teenagers to vote
- Numerous pop-up sites
- Some targeted outreach to under-represented groups

Areas for Improvement

- Further clarifying roles of different participants in this phase, before commitments are made
- Some confusion/lack of transparency to some voters about exactly how delegates had narrowed many ideas into the final proposals
- Some confusion about how to vote and how funds would be allocated (exacerbated by the very wide range of cost estimates) – some voters did not realize that the five projects they voted for did not need to total \$500,000, while others thought that voting might be ranked
- Significant outreach concerns; One resident noted:

“We need more targeted engagement of underserved groups. These groups are left out of much democracy and civic engagement, so it is very important to me that we prioritize this participation.” – Voter



V. Results and Feedback by Key Groups: Idea Submitters, Budget Delegates, Steering Committee Members, City Staff, and Voters

While the previous section captured overall results and common points of feedback specific to the three different stages of the PB process, this section provides a detailed picture of *who* participated in various roles, and what their reflections were on the process. Some of the points of feedback below echo sentiments raised in the previous section, but here the report emphasizes points of feedback that are specific to certain participating groups.

1. Who Participated? The Neighborhood Assembly Attendees

Data collected from about 20 neighborhood assembly participants who responded to the assembly survey suggests that more outreach can be done to attract more diverse segments of the population, particularly renters, less educated individuals, diverse ethnic groups, and non-longtime residents of Cambridge.

Median Traits of Neighborhood Assembly Participants vs. Overall Cambridge Demographics

Demographic Trait	Neighborhood Assembly Participants	Comparison to Overall Cambridge Demographics¹⁰
Years Lived in Cambridge	35+ years	Data not available
Education	Graduate or Professional Degree	74% of the Cambridge population over 25 has either a four year bachelor degree or a graduate degree.
Ethnicity	White	66% of Cambridge residents are White
Gender	Female	Females make up 51% of the population.
Age	65 or older	Median age is 30.2 years old.
Income level	None (\$35k, \$50k, \$75k, and \$100k all received equal number of responses)	Median family income totaled \$94,100 (in inflation adjusted dollars), and 14% of all persons have incomes below the poverty line.

¹⁰ Data taken from the City of Cambridge, Community Development Department (Sources: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/factsandmaps/demographicfaq.aspx>. and http://www.cambridgema.gov/~media/Files/CDD/FactsandMaps/profiles/demo_profile_statistical.pdf).

Household size (# people supported by household income)	Two	Average household size is 2 persons
Predominant Language	English	Other common languages include Spanish (5.4%), French, including Haitian Kreyol (4.3%), Chinese (4.8%), Portuguese (2.1%), and African Languages (1.7%)
Country of Birth	United States	28% of Cambridge residents are foreign born
Rent or Own	Own	65% of Cambridge housing units are rented and 35% are owner occupied

Most Common Responses to Additional Questions from Neighborhood Assembly Participants

How Did You Hear About Today's Assembly? (top two responses, tied)	Family/Friends; Community Group
Issue of Greatest Concern	Housing (followed by Transportation)
Response to the following: "How much of the time do you think you can trust the City to do what is right?"	"Some of the time"
Affiliations	Community Organization (followed by Religious Group)

2. Who Participated? The Budget Delegates

The brief demographic sketch of budget delegates provided below is based on surveys completed by 30 participants at the budget delegate orientation. There were over 40 budget delegates total involved in the pilot PB process.

"I had to figure out the 'process' of getting an idea to a proposal. There isn't really a step by step guide to follow, so this experience prepares you for taking on those kinds of [other community improvement] projects where you start with an idea and try to move forward to make it happen." – Budget Delegate



Brief Budget Delegate Demographics

Of the 30 delegates who completed the survey at budget delegate orientation...

- All 30 responded that it is “not at all difficult” for them to speak and understand English; they also noted that English is the language they feel most comfortable using
- Women were more than two times as involved as budget delegates than men (with a ratio of 19 to 9)
- Though not all participants provided an estimated income bracket, 38% of respondents identified as having a yearly income of \$75,000 or greater (while 54% identified as having a yearly income of \$50,000 or greater)

One delegate interviewed stated that even though she was an active citizen before PB, she is now more likely to engage in community efforts post-PB.

3. Who Participated? The Voters

“I am so impressed by this process and I am very proud of our City. Congratulations on a great achievement!” - Voter

Out of 2,727 total residents who voted, a remarkable 67% provided feedback through a survey immediately after the vote. 1,828 total survey responses were received - 1,567 from online and digital ballots, and 261 from paper ballots.

This section provides a detailed breakdown of the profiles of voters based on those results. Because voters were not required to answer all survey questions, some surveys were only partially completed. This means that the total number of responses varies across survey questions; this report thus includes the total number of responses *for each question* in the descriptive tables below. These numbers were then used to calculate overall percentages of total respondents for each item within each question.

It first illustrates who participated in the vote (demographically), then summarizes how and where they voted, their primary interests, and, importantly, concludes with their feedback on the PB process (including strengths and areas for improvement).

How Long Have You Lived in Cambridge?

Duration	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,386)	Paper Ballots (total=218)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,604)
Less than 1 year	90	18	108	7%
1-3 years	187	20	207	13%
4-7 years	224	20	244	15%
8-15 years	304	40	344	21%
16+ years	569	120	689	43%

Homeowners vs. Renters¹¹

Ownership Status	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,386)	Paper Ballots (total=215)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,601)
Own	816	105	921	58%
Rent	532	108	640	40% ¹²

¹¹ As reported by the 2010 Census, 65.4% of all units in Cambridge are rented and 34.6% are owner occupied (including owner occupied condominiums) (Source: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/factsandmaps/demographicfaq.aspx>).

¹² Total percentages do not equal exactly 100% because of a small number of invalid survey entries.

*Highest Level of Education*¹³

Education Level	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,380)	Paper Ballots (total=214)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,594)
<i>Less than 9th Grade</i>	8	7	15	1%
<i>9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma</i>	17	7	24	2%
<i>High School Diploma or Equivalent</i>	28	11	39	2%
<i>Some College, No Degree</i>	87	17	104	7%
<i>Associate's Degree</i>	15	6	21	1%
<i>Bachelor's Degree</i>	389	64	453	28%
<i>Graduate or Professional Degree</i>	823	102	925	58%

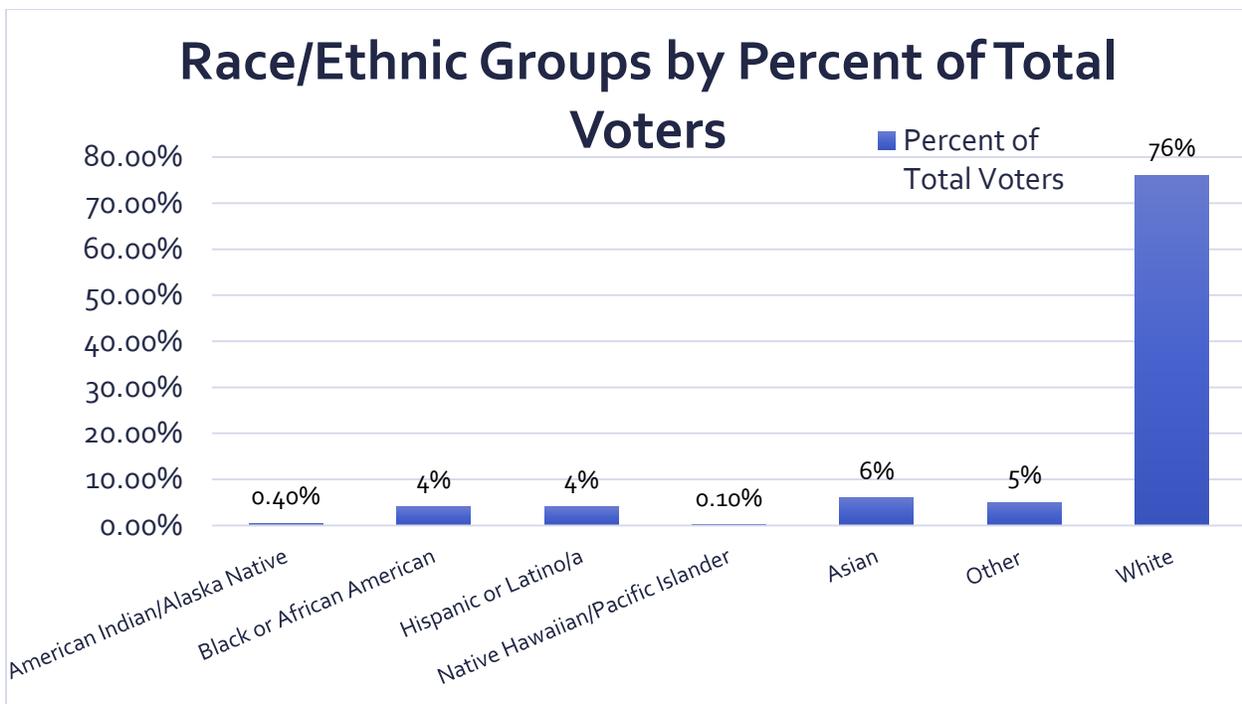
One of the most striking demographic voter results relates to educational attainment. The vast majority of Cambridge PB voters – fully 86% - possess a college education, holding at least a bachelor's degree and in most cases a graduate degree. This suggests that this first cycle of PB did not sufficiently incorporate less educated segments of the population.

This is a very important finding for future PB implementers in the city to consider. However, it should also be understood in the context of broader Cambridge trends. Nearly 74% of all Cambridge residents possess a college education.

¹³ According to the 2010 - 2012 American Community Survey data, 74.3% of the population over 25 has either a four year bachelor degree or a graduate degree, 10.1% has either an Associate degree or some college course work, 9.7% has a high school diploma, and 6.0% does not have a high school diploma. (Source: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/factsandmaps/demographicfaq.aspx>)

Ethnicity¹⁴

Ethnicity	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,380)	Paper Ballots (total=210)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,590)
American Indian/Alaska Native	5	1	6	0.4%
Black or African American	43	18	61	4%
Hispanic or Latino/a	48	11	59	4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	0	1	0.1%
Asian	84	13	97	6%
Other	67	6	73	5%
White	1,073	160	1,233	76%



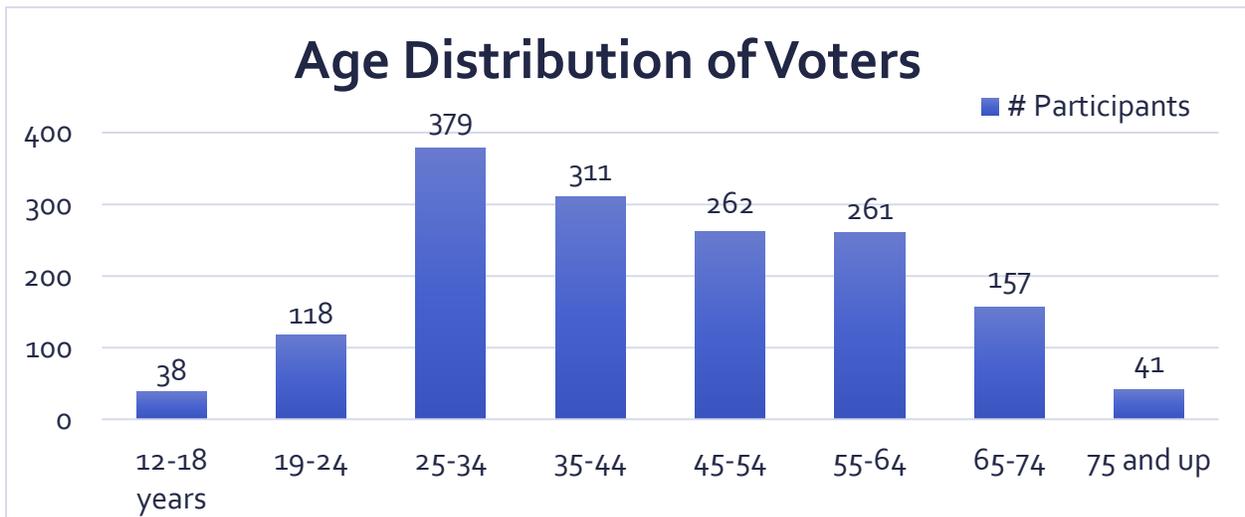
¹⁴ The 2010 U. S. Census found that 66.6% of Cambridge residents are White, 11.7% Black, 15.1% Asian or Pacific Islander and 6.6% classified themselves as some other race or a member of two or more races. Hispanics total 7.6% of the population. 62.1% of the population is White and Non-Hispanic. (Source: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/factsandmaps/demographicfaq.aspx>). While paper survey respondents had the option to identify more than one ethnic group, online voter respondents did not.

Gender¹⁵

Gender	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,377)	Paper Ballots (total=467)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,844)
Female	866	285	1,151	62%
Male	472	167	639	35%
Other	11	0	11	1%

Age¹⁶

Age Group	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,373)	Paper Ballots (total=213)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,586)
12-18	29	9	38	2%
19-24	111	7	118	7%
25-34	335	44	379	24%
35-44	280	31	311	20%
45-54	236	26	262	17%
55-64	215	46	261	16%
65-74	119	38	157	10%
75+	29	12	41	3%



¹⁵ Females make up 51% of the overall Cambridge population (source: http://www.cambridgema.gov/~media/Files/CDD/FactsandMaps/profiles/demo_profile_statistical.pdf).

¹⁶ The average age of a Cambridge resident is 30.2 years old, with 11% of the population under the age of 18, and nearly 10% of the population 65 or older (source: http://www.cambridgema.gov/~media/Files/CDD/FactsandMaps/profiles/demo_profile_statistical.pdf).

Total Household Income¹⁷

Income Levels	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,369)	Paper Ballots (total=193)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,562)
Less than \$10,000	44	11	55	4%
\$10,000-\$14,999	17	7	24	2%
\$15,000-\$24,999	44	13	57	4%
\$25,000-\$34,999	66	14	80	5%
\$35,000-\$49,999	90	23	113	7%
\$50,000-\$74,999	144	36	180	12%
\$75,000-\$99,999	151	22	173	11%
\$100,000 -\$149,999	279	26	305	20%
\$150,000 or more	392	41	433	28%

Language of Greatest Comfort¹⁸

Language	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,360)	Paper Ballots (total=217)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,577)
English	1,278	200	1,478	94%
Amharic	26	3	29	2%
Chinese	5	2	7	0.4%
Haitian Creole	9	1	10	1%
Portuguese	1	0	1	0%
Spanish	13	4	17	1%
Other	23	7	30	2%

Country of Birth¹⁹

Country	Online & Digital Ballots (total=1,356)	Paper Ballots (total=211)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,567)
United States	1,142	173	1,315	84%
Other ²⁰	191	38	229	15%

¹⁷ Cambridge median household income was \$70,757 in inflation adjusted dollars with 14% of all individuals and 10% of all families with incomes below the poverty line, according to the 2010-2012 American Community Survey. (Source: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/factsandmaps/demographicfaq.aspx>)

¹⁸ Major languages and language groups other than English recorded by the 2010 - 2012 American Community Survey include Spanish (5.4%), French, including Haitian Kreyol (4.3%), Chinese (4.8%), Portuguese (2.1%), and African Languages (1.7%). (Source: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/factsandmaps/demographicfaq.aspx>.)

¹⁹ According to the 2010 - 2012 American Community Survey, 28.1% of Cambridge residents are foreign born. (Source: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/factsandmaps/demographicfaq.aspx>)

²⁰ Some countries of origin listed include: Bangladesh, Barbados, Morocco, Egypt, Canada, Chile, Ethiopia, France, Haiti, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, South Africa, Spain, and Turkey to name a few.

Consistent with results from some other cities (such as including New York City), the majority (64%) of voters who responded to the evaluation survey were female.

Some feedback indicates that some historically under-represented groups appreciated the ability to voice their opinion through PB. One voter noted:

“As a permanent resident in the US who otherwise has no political say, I’m delighted to have been able to participate in this budgeting process.” - Voter

Previous Community Involvement

Of 220 fully completed voter survey respondents, 41% noted having at least one community affiliation, including involvement with political, religious, neighborhood and other associations.²¹

List of Countries of Origin of Foreign-Born Residents

In total, residents born in nearly 75 different countries participated (and listed their country of origin on the post-vote survey). In addition, when asked if individuals identified with one of seven common ethnic groups, numerous respondents gave additional ethnic identifications – over 40 different ethnic identities (beyond the main categories listed), in fact.

Voter Priorities

Post-vote feedback surveys indicated that a near majority of survey respondents highlighted the *Environment, Public Health, and Public Safety* category as the most important category they were concerned with of the four provided.

Most Important Category for Voters²²

Below are voter survey results in response to the question – *Of the projects you voted for today, which category best describes the project that is most important to you?*

²¹ A significant number of voters who responded to the final, open-ended question on the post-vote survey expressed their frustration that individuals were only able to select one option for organizations they are involved with, rather than more than one.

²² A caveat to interpreting this data: In the final open ended question at the end of this voter survey, several respondents noted were a bit unsure as to which projects fell into different categories, and/or felt that several projects could fall into more than one category.

Issue Areas	Online & Digital Voters (total=1,437)	Paper Voters (total=184)	Total	% of Total Respondents (total=1,621)
Culture & Community Facilities	346	52	398	25%
Environment, Public Health & Public Safety	625	76	701	43%
Parks & Recreation	251	39	290	18%
Streets & Sidewalks	171	18	189	12%

How Did Voters Hear About PB?

Outreach Methods	
Flyer/Poster	24
Community Group	34
Family/Friends	36
Online (City website, Facebook, etc.)	19
Library	2
City Council or City Staff	2
Cambridge Community Center	2
Farmers Market	32
Other Media (CCTV, newspaper, radio)	2
City Councillor	9

The majority of voters participated by submitting online ballots. Still, hundreds of residents voted in person. The table below shows a breakdown of in-person results:

Where Did Residents Vote?²³

Vote Site	Count
Cambridge Community Center (winter farmer's market)	165
City Hall	33
Community Learning Center	4
Main Library	16
Newtowne Court	1
O'Connell Library	5
Pisani Center	10
Senior Center	4
Unknown	7
Windsor Street Center	16
Grand Total	261

²³ It is important to note that this table only captures the voting sites of those who completed the post-vote evaluation survey (representing about 10% of total voters but the majority of in-person voters).

“I think it is great to see people generate new ideas. I loved that many of them were things staff are working on, so it validated some of our priorities.”

– City Staff Member

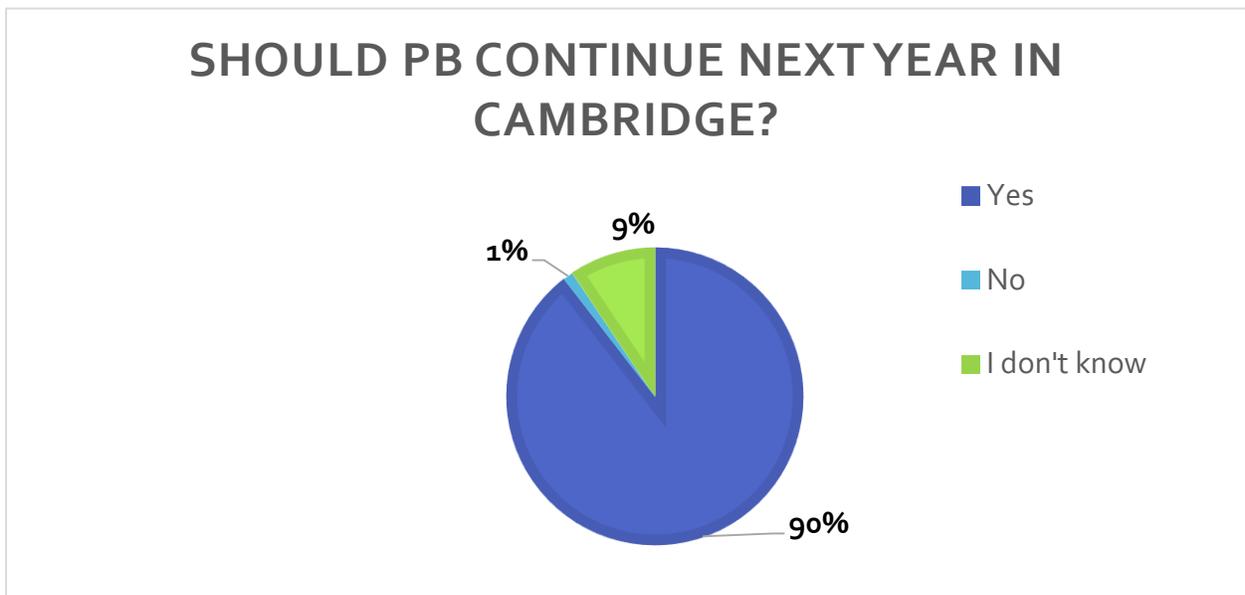
3. Overall Feedback

Strengths

Numerous participants across the process provided several positive points of feedback, including many points outlined in the previous section that focused on each of the three PB process phases.

This section summarizes overall points of feedback, particularly from the overall survey (distributed to all participants after voting) and the voter survey.

- **The vast majority of voter survey respondents enthusiastically believe PB should continue in Cambridge.**



When asked for open-ended survey feedback, several residents expressed enthusiasm for PB and their desire to see more money allocated, as many found it difficult to only support five projects.

“I feel really happy about this process because the city heard my opinion. It was an exciting opportunity for me because the city listened to me and that made me feel special. What is amazing is that they approved our ideas and I hope next year they take our opinions.” – Voter

Additional strengths noted by participants include:

- **Dedication and helpful support from Budget Office staff throughout the process**
 - *“I was wary of the process in the beginning, but now see how much it could benefit the city, plus the benefits of the inclusive process of creating and selecting projects for the ballot. Good work budget department!”*
- **Easy ability to get involved in all phases**
 - *“This was so easy and accessible- great way to be involved in the process despite not being at city council meetings.”* Another participant said, *“Excellent way to give residents the opportunity to weigh in, even if they don’t come to many meetings.”*
- **Appreciation of concerted efforts to reach nontraditional groups, and evaluation**
 - *“This process truly makes me feel like the community is meaningfully engaging in the democratic processes in Cambridge. Thank you for organizing this and collecting data to improve the process!”*

Areas for Improvement

- **Many voters emphasized their desire to see both earlier and more extensive outreach.**
 - This common sentiment was captured in the survey feedback of one participant, who stated, *“PB should be expanded, both in terms of the money allocated, and the outreach to people so as to involve as many Cambridge residents as possible.”*
- **Many respondents asked to see more money devoted to PB in the future.**
 - This includes funds not limited to capital expenditures/infrastructure projects.
- **There were some difficulties in interactions between budget delegates and City staff.**
 - Some staff were not very well-informed about PB, while some budget delegates did not have a full understanding of some of the constraints on staff and the feasibility restrictions of projects. It would be very helpful to invest in developing a more formal protocol to manage this difficult yet vital part of the PB process.

- **Different participants felt over-burdened at different times.**
 - Budget delegates felt pressure to rush the final phase of work to stay on schedule, and some staff were over-burdened with information requests while they were busy dealing with historic snowstorms and preparing their department's own budgets for the coming fiscal year. Meanwhile, Steering Committee members had highly variable levels of engagement. Clearer delineation of roles at the outset can help set expectations and smooth the workload across groups.

- **Preventing special interests from dominating the process is a general challenge.**
 - To address this, the Cambridge PB pilot has relied on facilitators to monitor the process and a ratings matrix for projects to keep the proposal assessment criteria fair and consistent. In interviews with participants, a few delegates noted that they got involved in PB to advocate a particular project they already had in mind. In some cases, the same idea submitters developed their ideas into proposals and advocated for them as delegates. This complicating aspect of the process could be both a conflict of interest as well as a motivator for participation.

- **The compressed schedule (done to align with the fiscal year) was a challenge.**
 - This was a hurdle to making site visits, for example, and historic snowfalls preoccupied a few key City departments who received information requests about project costs from delegates. However, Cambridge City staff have already begun making arrangements to shift the PB schedule for the next cycle so voting is completed by mid-December.

- **Significant opportunity to move closer toward the goals of equity and inclusion.**
 - As highlighted previously, more diversity and participation of underrepresented groups is needed across the three phases and in all key stakeholder groups.

- **Some benefits of PB may not be immediately apparent.**
 - The learning cycle for cities is steepest during the first year of PB. In some cases, it may take a number of PB cycles for the process to become "owned" by the local community. And, it may be difficult to measure or quantify this impact, and some of these investments may not yield tangible fruit for years to come.
 - For example, Cambridge had one of the youngest voting ages of any PB process in North America to date. Many participants praised the exposure for teenagers in the community. Yet it will be difficult to tell if PB helped increase the likelihood of current 12-year-olds to vote in traditional elections after they reach the age of

18. This presents a challenge in particular for expanding the evaluation process. Still, there is great potential to expand the evaluation that focuses on shorter-term outcomes, and it is encouraging that the PB process has already been renewed.

- **Risk of residents not participating/becoming discouraged due to the perceived limited scope of projects eligible for funding.**
 - This particularly seemed to be true because of the restriction of all funds going to capital projects. In the future, the City could consider expanding the process so funds from other sources become available for PB.
- **Some concerns about funding projects that may be seen as the City's responsibility.**
 - Some voters noted that they like some ballot projects but felt they should already be funded through the regular City budgetary process.

Participant Suggestions

Several participants also had recommendations to strengthen outreach, which was identified as one of the most important areas for improvement:

- Temporary signs on street
- More flyers
- Posters in businesses
- More Public Service Announcements (PSAs)²⁴
- Target more college and graduate student population
- Public information campaign

Finally, a few other general suggestions included:

- **Increase opportunities for voter education.**
 - A fair number of respondents wanted to have more and/or varied information to help them make an informed vote. For example, some requested a list of other major items in the City budget to help them vote on projects that would be most unique compared to comparable projects already being funded.²⁵
- **Utilize local expertise to strengthen proposal development.**
 - Some suggested connecting with experts from nearby universities or organizations to provide additional technical assistance and support to budget delegates during proposal development.

²⁴ The City did a few PSAs on CCTV and also on the municipal cable channel, 22-Cityview.

²⁵ This information can be found in the City's annual Capital Budget, which is available online at www.cambridgema.gov/budget.

VI. Recommendations

1. **Invest heavily and creatively in broadening and deepening outreach efforts** – Data from participants at all phases illustrates low levels of participation by under-represented groups across the board. It is admirable that inclusion is one key goal of this process and that significant efforts were made to reach out to diverse groups; however, there is a tremendous amount of improvement that could be achieved for the benefit of the city as a whole.
2. **Increase the amount of funds available for PB (and type of funds, if possible)** – One of the most powerful results of this study is that virtually all voters were in favor of seeing the process continue in Cambridge (only 1% were not in favor). This provides the political support as well as the civic capacity to expand the process. Identifying funds that could be used on non-capital expenditure projects could be one valuable way to evolve the process and expand the diverse positive outcomes resulting from funded projects.
3. **Build greater flexibility into the process, particularly the timeline.** A compressed timeline was clearly one of the greatest challenges identified by a diverse array of participants. The modified schedule the new second PB cycle will take is an encouraging step in this direction. At the same time, a bit more flexibility could be introduced in other ways – for example, many delegates felt that a too-rigid structure was imposed on many of their earlier discussions.
4. **Further clarify the delineation of roles, responsibilities and expected commitments to all parties at all phases** – A few key groups became overburdened at different times. Clarifying roles and expectations at the outset can help ensure certain key stakeholders are not overburdened and spread work more evenly across groups. Budget delegates faced much pressure to rush the final phase of their work to stay on schedule, while some city staff were over-burdened with information requests at a time when they were busy preparing their department's own budgets for the coming year. Meanwhile, Steering Committee members had highly variable levels of engagement. Clearer delineation of all roles at the outset will help set expectations and smooth the workload across different key groups of participants.
5. **Involve more community groups and institutions in different stages of the process.** Unlike some other cities, community groups did not play a very pronounced role in the process. Such organizations - particularly groups that represent marginalized residents and that have a track record of collaboration – could make key contributions to improving outreach and other elements of the process. Community groups could also add a valuable addition to the face-to-face interactions in the process (which would be very valuable given the reality that most residents who participated in PB did so by voting remotely through the website). In addition, there is tremendous potential to increase the involvement of youth throughout the process; schools might be another community institution to engage.



VII. Broader Implications and Conclusion

“Participatory budgeting is not just a great idea, it’s the right way to approach community engagement.” – Feedback Survey Respondent

In Cambridge and beyond, debate exists around the actual and intended objectives of PB. In other words, different audiences feel differently about whether PB has *intrinsic versus instrumental* value. On one hand, many observers and participants of PB assert that the PB process has tremendous intrinsic value – meaning that it brings great benefits to communities by providing residents with new and meaningful ways to engage in important public resource allocation that directly affects their lives. Others argue that PB has significant instrumental value – meaning that PB is an important vehicle for more effective resource allocation, as residents have perhaps the best understanding of what their communities need most.

Reports like this can play a key role in informing the broader public debate about the benefits and impact of participatory budgeting.

Given the many inevitable challenges that come with implementing a PB process for the first time, all stakeholders in the inaugural Cambridge participatory budgeting process should be highly commended for their creativity, contributions, and commitment to catalyzing a new way for residents to directly influence how public funds can be spent to best meet the needs of their community. This report has provided a comprehensive look at the overall process, highlighting the different types of participants and their important feedback to address challenges and build upon achievements.

All parties involved with PB’s second cycle in Cambridge and beyond are encouraged to build on the pilot’s successes and incorporate lessons learned to strengthen the process moving forward.

The debate around whether PB generates greater instrumental and/or intrinsic value (or both) may continue. Yet the more cities across North America like Cambridge engage in PB in a thoughtful manner and reflect upon the results of their work and how to continuously improve it, the more we will make a collective investment in strengthening an important and unique civic innovation in American democracy.

VIII. Annotated References

- *The City of Cambridge Participatory Budgeting Website* - www.cambridgema.gov/yourbudget
 - The comprehensive Cambridge website with complete information about the PB process, including the timeline, general information, the ideas map, announcements, and more.
- *A People's Budget: A Research and Evaluation Report on Participatory Budgeting in New York City, Year 3*. The Urban Justice Center with the PBNYC Research Team. New York: 2014.
 - Summary report on results of voting, demographics of participants, and future recommendations based on participant feedback surveys for New York's PB process.
- *A People's Budget: A Research and Evaluation Report on Participatory Budgeting in New York City, Year 2*. The Urban Justice Center with the PBNYC Research Team. New York: 2013:
 - More detailed report on results of voting, demographics of participants, and future recommendations based on participant feedback surveys for New York's PB process.
- Crum, D. et. Al. *Building a People's Budget: Draft Research and Evaluation Report on the 2013-2014 Participatory Budgeting Process in Chicago*. Chicago: UIC Great Cities Institute, 2015.
 - Evaluation report and lessons learned for the PB process enacted in three wards in Chicago.
- Grillos, T. *Youth Lead the Change: The City of Boston's Youth-Focused Participatory Budgeting Process Pilot Year Evaluation*. Boston: 2014.
 - Evaluation report and lessons learned for the pilot youth-only PB process enacted in Boston.
- *Participatory Budgeting Self-Evaluation Toolkit*. Yorkshire: PB Unit and the University of Bradford.
 - Self-evaluation guidance and tools to evaluate PB that was created knowing that "delivery phase of a participatory budgeting process is often very intensive. Organizers rarely have the time or the funds to carry out or commission a comprehensive evaluation process." It was also written with the purpose of building a strong [evaluation] process that meets local needs and audiences.
- *Participatory Budgeting in Cambridge: 2014-15 Rulebook*. 2014

- A handbook that overviews the basic “what” and the “how” of PB in Cambridge, developed by the Steering Committee.
- *Section 6: Participatory Evaluation.* Community Toolbox. Accessed April 2015.
<<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/evaluate/evaluation/participatory-evaluation/main>>
 - Summary of applicability, approaches and links to other resources for conducting a participatory evaluation.

IX. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Full Timeline of the Cambridge PB Process

2013: Councilor Leland Cheung formally introduces the idea of participatory budgeting in Cambridge (after being inspired by a local government officials exchange visit in Lisbon, Portugal)

September 2014: The City of Cambridge brings in the Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) to consult on implementing the new PB pilot

November 2014: Cambridge PB Steering Committee formed on a volunteer basis

December 1-31, 2014: Cambridge community members asked to submit ideas for capital projects

January – March 2015: 40+ volunteer budget delegates divided into 4 committees to evaluate and prioritize 380 submitted project ideas and develop 20 concrete proposals

March 2015: City staff works with budget delegates to assess feasibility and cost of proposals

March 22-28, 2015: Cambridge residents age 12 and older vote on PB projects to be funded

April 7, 2015: Winning projects announced at Results Party

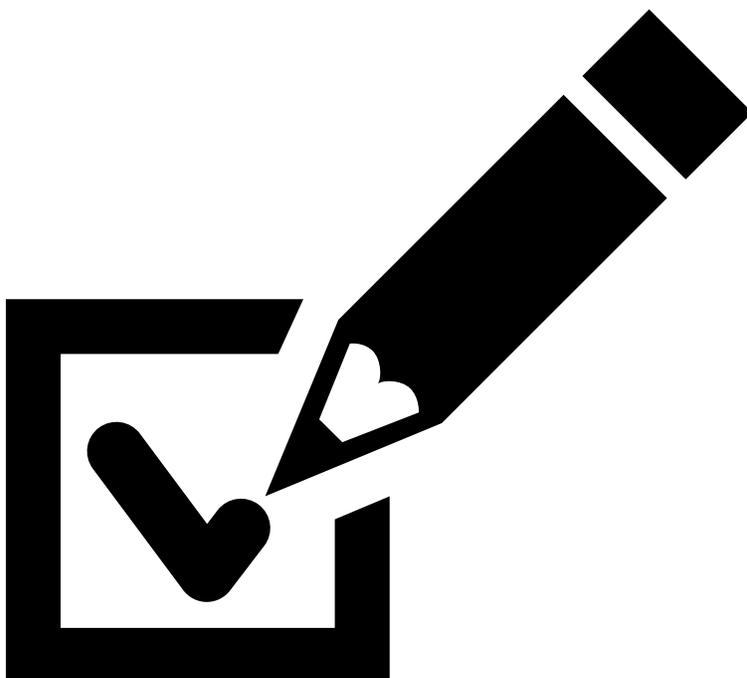
May 5, 2015: Community feedback session

July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016: Implementation of winning projects

Appendix 2 – Final Ballot with Project Descriptions

Participatory Budgeting in Cambridge 2015

BALLOT



Voting Instructions

- All Cambridge residents ages 12 and over may vote.
- You may vote for up to five (5) projects.
- You cannot vote for the same project more than once.
- Ballots marked with more than five (5) votes are invalid and will not be counted.
- Mark boxes clearly with an "X," a check mark, or fully shade them in.
- Use black or blue ink. Ballots marked in pencil will not be counted.



Culture & Community Facilities



A. Mural Project at Russell Field \$22,000

Russell Field FieldHouse, Rindge Ave

A middle-school student in North Cambridge proposed installing a mural in his neighborhood that “shows the community of Cambridge.”

The mural will be installed on the Russell Field Fieldhouse.



B. Furniture for the O’Connell Library \$36,000

East Cambridge (48 Sixth Street)

The furniture at the O’Connell library is quite worn down. This proposal would provide the library with new tables, chairs, computer workstations, and loveseats for parents and children to read together.



C. Bilingual Books for Children Learning English \$7,000

Citywide

This will fund the purchase of 300+ bilingual books for Cambridge children in the “Agenda for Children’s Literacy” Initiative project who are learning English, learning to read, & have limited/ no access to books in their home language.



D. Little Free Libraries (Book Exchanges) \$13,000

13 locations - 1 in each neighborhood.

Informal Book Exchanges are already popular in Cambridge on streets and at the DPW yard. This project would install 13 Little Free Libraries to support literacy, community engagement, and fun throughout the streets of our city.



E. Computers for the Community Learning Center \$27,000

Community Learning Center, 5 Western Avenue

At the CLC, students can improve their English or pursue a High School Equivalency Diploma. The CLC has 18 laptops and 12 ThinkPads for 630 adult learners. Project would fund 20 additional laptops, keyboards, mice and storage cart for the students.



Streetsmarts



F. Bike Repair Stations \$12,000

8 locations around Cambridge

Install 8 bike repair stations with tools and bike pumps around the City for cyclists to quickly, easily, and freely fix routine bike problems.

Locations include 2 libraries, 2 T stops, 3 parks (includes Inman Sq), and Fresh Pond Parkway.



G. Renovation of Bus Shelter at Comeau Field & Rindge Ave. \$75,000

Rindge Avenue at Comeau Field, North Cambridge

This project entails a major redesign and renovation, with community participation, of the #83 bus shelter. New features will include acrylic panels with cut-out figures and a roof element reflective of nearby recreation and natural habitat.



H. Wayfinding Banners - Neighborhood & Commercial Identity \$15,600

13 City Profile Areas of Cambridge

Hang banners in 13 strategic high-traffic, high-density business and neighborhood areas to identify commercial and/or neighborhood-specific local areas in Cambridge. This would support commerce, diversity, and neighborhood integrity.



I. Traffic Garden \$200,000

Location will be determined through a community process

A Dutch Traffic Garden, called “Safety School” in the U.S., is a permanent park for children to learn transportation etiquette by role playing. Kids take turns biking, walking, and driving a miniature streetscape in a safe environment.



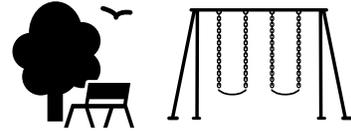
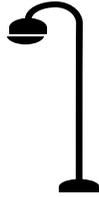
J. Bus Shelter Monitors with Real Time Arrival \$30,000

Inman Square

Install 2 real time bus arrival monitors with digital displays at the bus shelters at Cambridge Street & Hampshire Street and Cambridge Street & Inman Street.



Environment, Public Health & Safety



Parks & Recreation



K. Materials for Planting by Residents on Public Land

\$40,000

Throughout Cambridge

Raised beds for food plants, placed at sites around town determined by city staff, consulting with residents. Plant materials, such as flower bulbs, for planting on other city land, distributed to residents in several locations.



P. Free Wifi in 6 Outdoor Public Spaces

\$42,000

Public space outside 4 Youth Centers, the Golf Course, and Water Department

Install special outdoor wifi access points to offer free public wifi in the public space surrounding the Area IV, Frisoli, Gately, and Moore Youth Centers, as well as the Fresh Pond Golf Course and Cambridge Water Department.



L. Healthy Trees for a Healthy Cambridge!

\$119,400

Sidewalks in East Cambridge, Wellington/Harrington, Area IV/Port, and Cambridgeport

Street trees cool the city, absorb pollution, & make our neighborhoods more livable! Vote to plant 100 new trees & build tree wells in the areas that need them most, along with educational signage so you can learn about your "green neighbors."



Q. Outdoor Bodyweight Fitness Equipment in Danehy Park

\$65,000

Danehy Park

Install outdoor body-weight fitness equipment for stretching, strength building, and plyometric exercises at Danehy Park.



M. Toilet for All

\$320,000

Central Square (location will be determined through a community process)

24-hour access public toilet near Central Square, similar to the one currently underway in Harvard Square. The exact location will be determined through a public process.



R. Raymond Park Community Garden Improvements

\$20,000

Raymond Park

Beautify the community garden at Raymond Park through the addition of fencing, a partial retaining wall, landscaping and plantings, and furnishings.



N. North Cambridge Community Garden

\$240,000

Russell Field where Harvey Street meets Alewife Linear Park

The new North Cambridge Community Garden in the northeast corner of Russell Field will build community, provide healthy food, and promote wellness and environmental awareness



S. Dog Park at Gore Street Park

\$250,000

Gore Street Park, East Cambridge

Convert part of Gore Street Park (Gold Star Mother's Park) into a dog park with clear signage, a clean area for dogs to run, benches, and water fountains for dogs and owners.



O. Cambridge Garden of Peace

\$340,000

An area within Riverside Press Park at River Street & Memorial Drive.

The Peace Garden memorial will include benches and stones or objects reflecting names of loved ones from Cambridge who lost their lives to violence. An area of Riverside Press Park will be transformed into a place of tranquility & reflection.



T. Amphitheater in Danehy Park

\$350,000

Danehy Park

Build an amphitheater in Danehy Park for outdoor performances, music, stories, and other cultural events that the whole community can enjoy.

What is Participatory Budgeting?

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a democratic process that empowers community members to directly decide how to spend part of a public budget. PB was first developed in Brazil in 1989, and is now practiced in over 1,500 cities around the world.

In the fall of 2014, the City began the first PB process in Cambridge. In December, community members submitted over 380 ideas for how to spend \$500,000 of the capital budget to improve Cambridge. From January to March, volunteer Budget Delegates distilled and developed those ideas into proposals to meet community needs. Now, Cambridge residents are invited to decide which projects the City should fund. Make your voice heard!

www.participatorybudgeting.org

Credits

Special thanks to the PB Cambridge Steering Committee, the Budget Delegates, City of Cambridge staff, the Participatory Budgeting Project, and all the volunteers and participants!

For more information:

Please visit www.cambridgema.gov or contact the City of Cambridge Budget Office at (617) 349-3266 or PB@cambridgema.gov

