

Office of Participatory Budgeting

External Oversight Board - Meeting #23

- 6:00 pm: **Agenda Overview**
 - *Motion to adopt meeting minutes*
 - *Board Meetings Schedule*
- 6:10 pm: **Public Comment Response**
- 6:30 pm: **OPB Workflow Updates**
- 6:40 pm: **Community Priorities**
- 7:15 pm: **Visioning Forums and Online Engagement**
- 7:45 pm: **Public Comment**
- 8:00 pm: **Closing**

For questions or comments, please email pb@boston.gov

- 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

Board Meetings Schedule



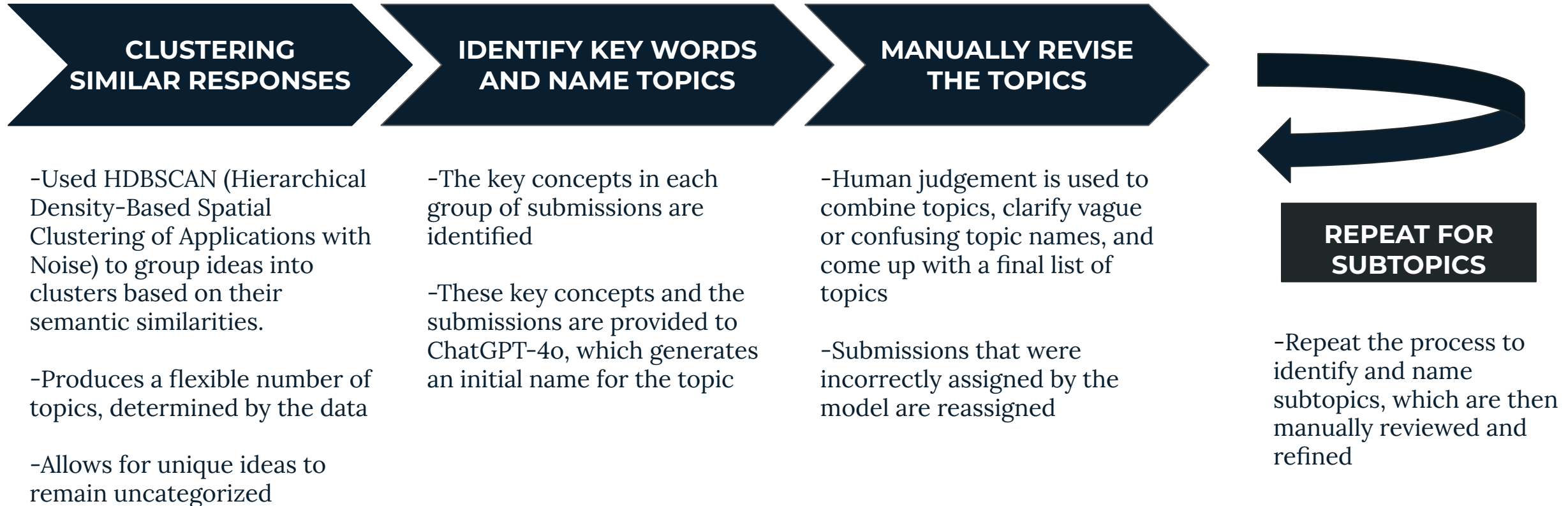
Date	Board Meeting Topic
September 19, 2024 (Virtual)	<i>Community Priorities Visioning Workshops Updates</i>
October 3, 2024 (Virtual)	<i>Visioning Forums Updates/Coordination Initial Evaluation Findings by Data+Soul</i>
October 31, 2024 (Virtual)	<i>Visioning Forums Debrief and Initial Findings</i>

Public Comment Response



Topic Modeling:

- How are themes created? What is the model threshold for selecting topics? What was the content of the idea submission for the algorithm to categorize topic like Participatory Budgeting for Racial and Social Equity?



Topic Modeling:

- **What have other cities done to determine ideas that will be selected?**
 - *The identification of Community Priorities and the data analysis process is unique to Boston's PB process. Cities like NYC, Cambridge, and Somerville utilize Budget Delegates to review, select ideas, and develop them into proposals.*
- **What happens to ideas that are not selected as Community Priorities? Ineligible ideas?**
 - *All ideas are retained and housed under the appropriate Community Priority for review. Residents will chose which idea(s) best represents that Community Priority and draft proposals during Visioning Forums.*
 - *Ineligible ideas that are outside the City of Boston jurisdiction can be shared with 311, as they have process to communicate these type of requests to other entities (MBTA, etc.)*

Idea Collection

- Participants submitting ideas on the PB portal had to select if they were submitting ideas through **(1)** Idea Collection Workshops, **(2)** Community Organized Events, and **(3)** Individual submissions.
- **Community Organized Events-** Meetings hosted by organizations or individuals outside of Contract Partners/ OPB workshops. Ability to download the Idea Collection Toolkit online and participants would need to upload their ideas through the PB portal. No direct reporting provided to OPB.
- **Were instructions for idea submission accessible residents? How many ineligible ideas from all submissions.**
 - About 140 of the total 1,238 submissions were “ineligible”
 - A majority of ineligible ideas were incomplete ideas or in other jurisdictions (MBTA, DCR, etc.)
 - OPB is evaluating surveys from Idea Collection Workshops and will incorporate feedback for future cycles

Equity Guidelines

- **Visioning Forums-** Equity guidelines will serve as a guide for participants reviewing ideas
- **Funding Proposals-** Working with Procurement and Legal department on crafting proposal requests

Workflow Updates



Data Analytics

- OPB continue working with Data Analytics to refine subtopics

Coordination with City Departments

- Discussing idea collection findings
- Coordinating involvement in Visioning Forums and Proposal Development Phases

Evaluation

- Preparing evaluation findings from Idea Collection: Surveys, Board conversation, and Contract Partner debriefs
- Presenting mid-cycle findings on 10/3 EOB meeting

Voting Platform

- Securing a contracting opportunity with Decision 21, the same vendor used for voting by NYC's PB process.

Community Priorities



Nine (9) Community Priorities DRAFT



Transportation Safety and Access Initiatives

Projects focused on enhancing the safety and accessibility of Boston's transportation network for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and public transit riders. This may include the installation of traffic calming and traffic safety measures, enhanced crosswalks, protected bike lanes, improved street lighting, better street signage, public transit access infrastructure, and promoting alternative transportation options.

Urban Greening and Environmental Initiatives

Efforts to improve environmental sustainability and increase green spaces in the city. Projects may include planting trees, developing community gardens, implementing green roofs, enhancing parks, and launching programs that emphasize waste reduction and reduce carbon emissions.

Public Space Enhancements and Maintenance

Efforts to improve and maintain public areas such as parks, playgrounds, sidewalks, and plazas. Projects may include upgrading facilities, public restroom accommodations, lighting improvements, enhancing accessibility, installing public art, and ensuring these spaces are clean and safe.

Nine (9) Community Priorities DRAFT



Youth Development and Opportunity

Programs designed to support the growth and development of young people. This includes after-school programs, mentorship opportunities, job training, educational workshops, recreational activities, and initiatives that encourage civic engagement among youth.

Inclusive Community Spaces and Cultural Enrichment Programs

Projects that foster community engagement and celebrate cultural diversity. This may involve creating or renovating community centers, supporting local arts and cultural events, offering multicultural programs, and ensuring public spaces are welcoming and accessible to all.

Community Health and Wellbeing

Initiatives focused on improving the physical and mental health of residents. This includes expanding access to healthcare services, mental health support, wellness programs, nutrition education, and activities that promote a healthy lifestyle.

Nine (9) Community Priorities DRAFT



Expanding Economic Opportunities	Programs aimed at boosting the local economy and supporting job opportunities. This could involve supporting small businesses, offering workforce development and job training programs, promoting entrepreneurship, and creating pathways to employment for underrepresented groups.
Housing Support and Resources	Initiatives aimed at addressing housing affordability and stability. This could involve rental assistance programs, offering resources for first-time homebuyers, legal assistance, and other housing support services.
Community Resources and Social Equity Programs	Initiatives that address social inequities and provide essential resources to underserved communities. This may involve offering legal assistance, language services, food security programs, and other supports, in addition to efforts to ensure equitable access to city services and opportunities.

Nine Community Priorities



Maverick Landing (10/18)

- Expanding Economic Opportunities (EOI,)
- Housing Support and Resources (Housing)
- Community Health and Wellbeing (BPHC, Equity)

UCB (10/24)

- Transportation Safety and Access Initiatives (Streets)
- Urban Greening and Environmental Initiatives (Environment)
- Public Space Enhancements and Maintenance (Streets)

CTE (10/30)

- Youth Development and Opportunity
- Inclusive Community Spaces and Cultural Enrichment Programs (Arts, Human Services, 311,)
- Community Resources and Social Equity Programs (everyone, mostly Age strong,)

Visioning Forums & Online Engagement



Visioning Forums - Goals and Revision



Visioning Forums are spaces for residents to analyze and review all ideas collected, and to help define 15 proposals for the ballot.

- Residents will **engage with each other, OPB, its Board, and relevant City Departments** to review, discuss, and assess the feasibility and impact of all ideas under each Community Priority.
- Through this process, Visioning Forum attendees will **draft a statement to define what ballot proposals should look like** considering each Community Priority.

REVISION: OPB will host three (3) in-person Visioning Forums across the City in collaboration with Contract Partners.

- Visioning Forums will be led by OPB, while contract partners will support with meeting logistics and facilitation.
 - **Logistics:** Contracted partners will be in charge of securing a venue, recruitment and registration of at least 24 participants (registration form provided by OPB), and providing refreshments and childcare, as needed.
 - **Training:** Staff/facilitators will be required to attend a prep session prior to the Visioning Forum.

Visioning Forums Workflow



In- Person Forums

- Starting in mid-October, each Forum will focus on **3 Community Priorities** that emerged from Idea Collection.
- EOB and relevant City Departments will be invited to join, observe, and provide valuable guidance as participants consider proposals.

Online Engagement:

- OPB and the Board will host an online public meeting to **present the 15 draft proposals to the public**, allowing for public comment.
- Residents will have one week to submit written feedback on the proposals after the meeting. These will be considered by the Office and the Board.

Concurrently

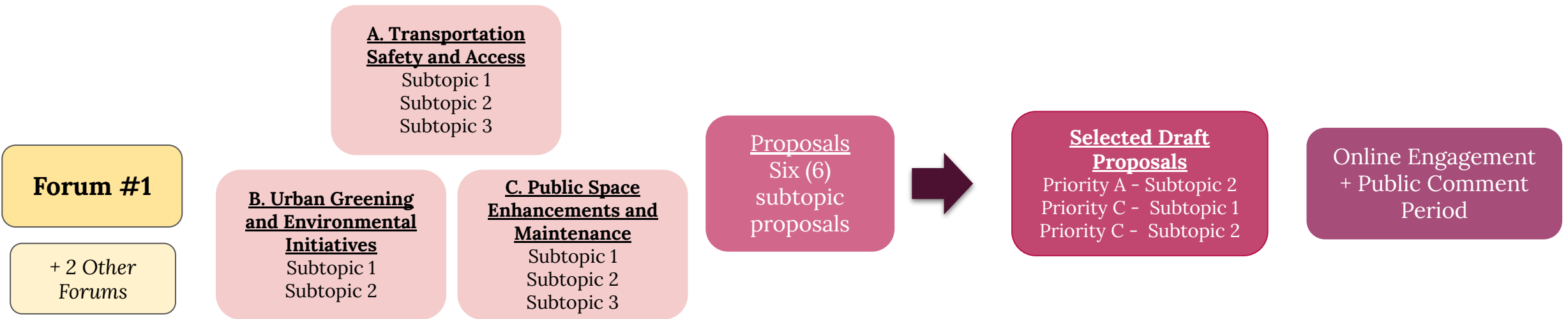
- **Meetings with City Departments:** In between Forums, as proposals are drafted by residents, OPB will meet with relevant City Departments to assess feasibility and determine costs for each proposal.
- **Meeting with the EOB:** OPB and its Board will meet online on 10/31 to do an initial review of resident proposals.

Equity Guidelines (Visioning Forum)



- **Equity:** Historical legacies of institutions of power have shaped differences in access and power in the community. These disparities include the social, economic, structural and other barriers to the health and well-being of residents. **Projects will address ongoing and identified inequities in communities.**
- **Priority:** **Projects will engage all Boston residents, including priority populations** such as residents who (1) cannot or do not participate in local government decision-making; (2) residents who have been historically excluded or underrepresented; and (3) residents living in historically underserved neighborhoods.
- **Impact:** **Projects will meaningfully improve the residents' quality of life.** It will remove barriers to accessing an existing resource and/or provides a resource to a part of the community which did not previously have access.

Visioning Forums Process (DRAFT)



- OPB will host three (3) forums.

- Each will focus on three (3) Community Priorities

- Residents will break out into **facilitated Table Discussions** for each Community Priority

- Residents will discuss and select their top **two (2) subtopics** based on equity, priority, impact, and feasibility considerations → Equity Guidelines

- Each table will **draft proposals for the two (2) selected subtopics**, for a total of six (6) subtopic proposals

- Each small group will **share their two draft proposals** with the larger room (poster paper on the wall)

- As a group, residents will **vote** on a final set of 5 draft proposals
→ 5 dots per participant, one vote per proposal

- After the 3 forums, there will be a total of **15 draft proposals** for the PB Ballot

- OPB and EOB to host a public meeting to **present results and gather feedback**

- Public comment period (1 week)

- OPB, City Departments, and Board will **refine and add cost estimates**.

- Final sign off from CFO.

Public Comment

pb@boston.gov

