

# IDEAS *in* ACTION

*External Oversight Board Meeting*

*December 18, 2024*



Office of  
Participatory  
Budgeting

CITY of BOSTON

# AGENDA

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- 6:00 pm: **Agenda Overview**
  - *Motion to adopt meeting minutes*
  - *Board Meetings Schedule*
- 6:10 pm: **Idea Submission Dashboard**
- 6:20 pm: **Ballot Proposals Review**
- 7:20 pm: **Voting Logistics**
- 7:45 pm: **Public Comment**
- 8:00 pm: **Closing**

# BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Board Meeting Topic</b>
<b>January 9, 2025</b> <i>(Thursday, Virtual)</i>	<i>PB Voting Updates</i> <i>Board Discussion on FY26 Budget</i>
<b>January 30</b> <i>(Thursday, TBD)</i>	<i>Project Implementation Logistics (<u>Tentative</u>)</i>
<b>February 25, 2025</b> <i>(Tuesday, Virtual)</i>	<i>Announcing Winning Projects</i> <i>Project Implementation Logistics</i>

# MEETING MINUTES

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- 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](http://www.boston.gov/participatory-budgeting)

# IDEA SUBMISSION DASHBOARD





# IDEA SUBMISSION DASHBOARD

Visit: [Boston.gov/Participate](https://Boston.gov/Participate)

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IDEA SUBMISSIONS DASHBOARD
Office of Participatory Budgeting

Welcome to the Ideas in Action Summary of Findings Dashboard!

This dashboard will allow you to explore all the ideas submitted by residents as part of the City's new Participatory Budgeting process. You can navigate the dashboard by selecting one of the nine (9) Community Priorities or explore all the ideas in one page.

**Explore the Nine Community Priorities for PB Cycle 1**

Community Health and Wellbeing	Community Resources and Social Equity Programs	Expanding Economic Opportunities
Housing Support and Resources	Inclusive Community Spaces and Cultural Enrichment Programs	Public Space Enhancements and Maintenance
Transportation Safety and Access Initiatives	Urban Greening and Environmental Initiatives	Youth Development and Opportunity

Explore All Project Ideas

All Project Ideas

Return to Homepage
Community Health and Wellbeing
Español

This page contains ideas focused on improving the safety of residents and their physical and mental health. These ideas generally include expanding access to healthcare services, mental health support, wellness programs, nutrition education, and public safety.

Total Number of Category Ideas

142

Select a neighborhood:

All ▼

Search project ideas by keyword:

🔍

Subtopics	Count
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Mental Health Support and Crisis Response</b> <span style="float: right;">50</span></li> <li>  Mental Health and Well-being Programming: Youth <span style="float: right;">24</span></li> <li>  Mental Health and Well-being Programming: Community <span style="float: right;">12</span></li> <li>  Alternative Crisis Response <span style="float: right;">10</span></li> <li>  Mental Health and Well-being Programming: Formerly Incarcerated <span style="float: right;">4</span></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Food Access Resources</b> <span style="float: right;">31</span></li> <li>  Enhance Access to Fresh Food <span style="float: right;">12</span></li> <li>  Community Fridges and Food Pantries <span style="float: right;">7</span></li> <li>  Financial Food Assistance <span style="float: right;">6</span></li> <li>  Farmers Markets <span style="float: right;">4</span></li> <li>  Nutrition Education and Resources <span style="float: right;">2</span></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Comprehensive Healthcare Services</b> <span style="float: right;">26</span></li> <li>  General Health Resources <span style="float: right;">11</span></li> <li>  Preventative Services <span style="float: right;">7</span></li> <li>  COVID Resources <span style="float: right;">5</span></li> <li>  Pre-transplant Patient Assistance <span style="float: right;">3</span></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment</b> <span style="float: right;">23</span></li> <li>  Drug Prevention Education and Programming <span style="float: right;">11</span></li> <li>  Recovery and Rehabilitation Services <span style="float: right;">10</span></li> <li>  Safe consumption sites <span style="float: right;">2</span></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Community Safety Initiatives</b> <span style="float: right;">12</span></li> <li>  Gun Violence and Crime Prevention <span style="float: right;">12</span></li> </ul>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>

**Project Ideas**

Youth programs need resources to provide mental health support - grants, having folks do 1:1 work, training youth, etc.

In general mental health struggles are stigmatized when there are so many racist systems that beat down on people, and then when people need support they can't get it and instead are criminalized. In general we need a community-led mental health crisis response without police, and counselors and youth leadership programs and restorative/transformativ justice in schools instead of police and punishment and surveillance. To start with, some resources for programs to provide mental health support would help.

Youth program to prevent drug use.  
Programs accessible to low-income communities.

What I feel is really important is mental health and substance abuse services because most of formerly-incarcerated individuals experience being sidelined in getting some certain things they need and that often leads to mental breakdown

Weekly/biweekly farmers markets and craft sales in neighborhoods!

weekly/ biweekly farmers markets and craft safes in more neighborhoods.

We should a mental health crisis response team to city that operates all the time. This would help prioritize the wellbeing and needs of city residents.

We need to lower the availability of weapons like guns and knives in the street. An idea would be to have a stand where people can turn in weapons they have or maybe exchange them for

**BALLOT  
PROPOSALS**





# Public Feedback

## Timeframe:

- Thursday 11/7 to Friday 11/22 (Two weeks)

## Participation:

- 27 Public comments from online form
- 18 participants in BBA public comment session on Thursday, November 20th

## Review:

- OPB reviewed comments and classified comments into two buckets:
  - Consider for proposal
  - Consider for implementation

\* *Public feedback available at [Boston.gov/participate](https://boston.gov/participate)*



## Resident Feedback on Boston's Participatory Budgeting Draft Ballot Proposals

During the month of October 2024, the Office of Participatory Budgeting (OPB) held series of Visioning Forums in partnership with community organizations in East Boston, Dorchester, and Roxbury. At these events, residents helped draft 15 ballot proposals from the 1,200+ ideas collected between July 1st and August 15th.

**Please share your feedback on any or all of these 15 draft proposals.** We value your input and encourage you to share your thoughts to help shape these project ideas for PB Voting in January 2025.

[Comments through this online form will be open until Friday, November 22nd.](#)

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** After the public comment period, the Office will work to incorporate feedback and review proposals with relevant City Departments to ensure feasibility and determine approximate costs. During this time, proposal details may need to be further refined. All proposals will need to be certified by the City's Chief Financial Officer before being finalized on the PB Ballot, as per the City's PB Ordinance.

If you have any questions, please email [PB@boston.gov](mailto:PB@boston.gov)



\* Indicates required question



# PROPOSALS SUMMARY

## *Expanding Economic Opportunities*

Support free and local space activation efforts to offer low-income entrepreneurs

## *Housing Support and Resources*

Supports for youth to cover security deposits and other housing/rent expenses

## *Community Health and Wellbeing*

Substance abuse programs for prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation

Bolster assistance programs for Boston residents facing food insecurity and access to fresh food

Prevention programs to support low-income youth who are at-risk of gang recruitment/gun violence

## *Transportation Safety and Access Initiatives*

Benches at high-ridership bus stops for seniors, people with disabilities, youth, and all users

Pilot a non-police construction detail to enhance pedestrian safety

## *Urban Greening and Environmental Initiatives*

Community gardens in underutilized lots to address food insecurity

Plant fruit trees to support green space that provides affordable, organic produce

## *Public Space Enhancements and Maintenance*

Invest in rat prevention through improving waste management practices and reducing food access for rats

## *Youth Development and Opportunity*

Pilot year-round youth jobs for ages 14-24 with higher hourly wages

## *Inclusive Community Spaces and Cultural Enrichment Programs*

Expand evening and weekend recreational opportunities for Boston youth to promote community connection through healthy activities

## *Community Resources and Social Equity Programs*

Assist older adults in accessing essential items necessary for daily living

Community resource programs to get information out about health resources

Programming for youth ages 14-21, who are formerly or currently incarcerated, to expose and prepare them for better opportunities in the future

# Ballot Proposal 1

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**Original Proposal:** Create a program that directs dollars and education to low income pre-teens and younger teens (10-15) who may be vulnerable to recruitment by criminal elements to engage in gun violence.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Existing youth programs for different older age brackets. Could be extended to lower age ranges</li><li>Safe spaces for young people to connect and learn from one another</li><li>Diverse youth programming</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Option to supplement and expand the current grant programs to focus on youth experiencing gaps in services (ages 10-13). Too old for camps, too young for youth jobs</li><li>Leverage the City's Youth Development Fund network and infrastructure</li></ul>

## Support and Education Programming for at Risk Youth Ages 10-13

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations to provide high-quality and engaging programming for Boston youth, aged 10 to 13, living in communities disproportionately affected by crime and violence.

The goal of these grants will be to increase the variety of youth programming in the city, offer a positive outlet for young people when they are not in school, and foster safe and supportive environments.

**Proposal Cost: \$300,000**

# Ballot Proposal 2

**Original Proposal:** Benches at bus stops that do not have them. Prioritize bus stops with the highest ridership on major routes and streets to benefit the disabled, seniors, youth, and all users. This would enhance the safety, comfort for residents and improves access to transit. Work with the MBTA and City departments to determine bus stop inventory and prioritize stops for installation.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Criteria should include ridership and use by vulnerable populations (seniors, etc.)</li><li>Benches should be designed for comfort and not deter people</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Age strong worked with DPW in 2015-2016 on similar program</li><li>Streets and Public Works to use existing contracts to develop 150 additional benches in high priority neighborhoods/ populations</li><li>Design of benches tailored on context</li></ul>

## Install Benches at High-Ridership Public Transit Bus Stops in Boston

This proposal will allow the City's Transportation Department to install approximately 150 benches at high-ridership bus stops across the City.

The project will prioritize neighborhoods with the greatest need, including lower-income areas and environmental justice zones, while ensuring accessibility for those who may have difficulty standing, such as older adults and individuals with disabilities. Bench designs will be selected based on the context of each location to maximize comfort and usability.

**Proposal Cost: \$450,000**

# Ballot Proposal 3

**Original Proposal:** Services for elderly who do not live in assisted living homes. Services like helping clean their home, getting groceries for them, having a fun community day for elders + intergenerational events. Provide company to elders. This will help elderly people who are alone and don't have a lot of family, facing mental illness, those who are low income. This will also help people who are unemployed to have job opportunities that provide these services. This is how we help people who need it, who can pay and don't have family to help them. Age Strong to give funding to a non-profit to disseminate to the elderly residents and provide these services.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase quality of life for seniors in the City</li><li>• Age Strong Dept can advise whether this supplements existing programs or would be a new pilot program</li><li>• Consider what kinds of services they would like to use the funds for</li><li>• Combine this with the jobs for youngs / teens and get a two-for-one, plus community building</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Age Strong to assist with grant services</li></ul>

## Enhance Access to Essential Items for Boston's Senior Populations

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations that can assist older adults in accessing small necessities not covered by government programs.

Many older adults face challenges in accessing essential items necessary for daily living, which can significantly impact their quality of life, safety, and independence. Supports through these grants may include emergency appliance replacement, health-related expenses not covered by insurance, companionship for older adults who are socially isolated, or respite care for family caregivers, and more.

**Proposal Cost: \$500,000**



# Ballot Proposal 4

**Original Proposal:** "Future Prep" Program for (formerly?) Incarcerated youth: Home economics, grant writing, college prep, entrepreneurship, trade schools for incarcerated youth. Expose youth to more diverse opportunities. Make youth feel more prepared for their future. Offering a grant through the Office of Returning Citizens to organizations serving the incarcerated youth population to expand their reentry services and programs.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consult with Office of Returning Citizens (ORC) and subject matter experts on types of support services</li><li>• Consider and prioritize housing support for youth in this</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Office of Returning Citizens to provide grants for assistance</li><li>• Interested in supporting formerly incarcerated as well as youth who are currently incarcerated</li></ul>

## Programs to Support Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Youth

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations to support youth ages 14-21 who are formerly or currently incarcerated, helping them build a brighter future.

The Boston Office of Returning Citizens will offer one-time grants opportunities to organizations that can provide access to mentorship, skills training and education, health and wellness programs, and other types of support services that can expose and prepare impacted youth to diverse opportunities. Programs may include home economics, grant writing, college prep, entrepreneurship, trade learning, etc.

**Proposal Cost: \$250,000**

# Ballot Proposal 5

**Original Proposal:** Invest in rat prevention efforts, such as more exterminators and rat birth control to get rid of the rat population in Boston. This would benefit the public, residents, and business owners from potential health hazards and address sanitary and health issues.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider tradeoffs between different methods- traps, exterminators, birth control, poison, better trash receptacles</li><li>• Focus on the trash program and being more aggressive about ensuring sealed public trash cans</li><li>• Prioritize densely populated areas of the city</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Align with recently launched Boston Rodent Action Plan to mitigate the rodent population and enhance the quality of life for residents</li><li>• Opportunity to expand rodent-proof waste storage solutions in high-density residential areas</li></ul>

## Rat Prevention Initiatives in Dense Residential Areas

This proposal aims to tackle rodent infestations in identified hotspots by improving waste management practices and reducing food access for rats. By investing in rodent-proof waste storage solutions in high-density residential areas, food sources for rodents can be limited where they are most problematic.

The City will use sensor technology to monitor the effectiveness of these upgrades and expand successful solutions. This initiative supports the newly launched Boston Rodent Action Plan, which aims to reduce the rodent population and improve residents' quality of life.

**Proposal Cost: \$500,000**

# Ballot Proposal 6

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**Original Proposal:** Programs for prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of people and families struggling with substance abuse.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand on existing city services</li><li>• This already exists in various forms. Important to bolster these services</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PAATHS (Providing Access to Addiction Treatment, Hope and Support), an effective but underutilized program of the Boston Public Health Commission's Recovery Services Bureau</li><li>• Expand campaign to strategically increase access to PAATHS services in all Boston neighborhoods</li></ul>

## City-Wide Campaign to Promote PAATHS Addiction Support Services

This proposal seeks to enhance outreach and resident engagement in the City's PAATHS program, a one-stop resource for all families and residents seeking help with addiction and related issues.

By engaging in community meetings, collaborating with neighborhood organizations, and utilizing media channels, PB funds will help raise awareness about PAATHS (Providing Access to Addiction Treatment, Hope and Support), an effective but underutilized program of the Boston Public Health Commission's Recovery Services Bureau.

**Proposal Cost: \$300,000**

# Ballot Proposal 7

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**Original Proposal:** Creating feasible resource programs to get information out on health resources. This would serve POC, low income individuals. To shine light on healthcare is a right! Everyone should have access to it. Educating people on their rights.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinate with the Boston Public Health Commission</li><li>• Make resource available to all Boston residents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure program is open to all low income individuals</li><li>• BPHC's Mayor's Health Line outreach and engagement serves this purpose and can be expanded</li></ul>

## Connecting Boston Residents to Health Resources

This proposal will expand the work of the Mayor's Health Line (MHL), a multilingual health and social service referral line that connects Boston residents with health resources in the community.

MHL will use PB funds to expand and enhance their outreach in Boston neighborhoods and offer multilingual community workshops. Workshop topics may include resources for medical debt, how to access medical services, how to apply and who qualifies for MassHealth and Health Connector plans, how to find a primary care provider, learning about patients' rights, etc.

**Proposal Cost: \$250,000**



# Ballot Proposal 8

**Original Proposal:** Housing and accessible rent for youth between 16-28 that can cover security deposits and additional expenses in safe spaces.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address legal challenges if any are minors</li><li>• Consider a no interest loan program to cover the upfront costs of moving</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Office of Housing Stability currently services adults 18+</li><li>• Pilot a program focused on youth under the existing Tenant Stabilization Fund (TSF) infrastructure and guidelines</li><li>• City's Legal team is currently analyzing this proposal and the City's existing programming and funding options</li></ul>

## Rental Assistance for Boston Youth Ages 16-24

This proposal will fund a pilot rental assistance program for Boston residents between the ages of 16-24 to stabilize their housing situation. Eligible residents will be able to access up to \$5,000 in assistance to help cover late rent payments or move-in costs, such as first/last month's rent, security deposit, and/or a broker's fee.

The fund will operate under the Office of Housing Stability, using the infrastructure and guidelines of the existing Tenant Stabilization Fund (TSF).

**NOTE:** Minors under 18 years old must be legally emancipated to apply for assistance.

**Proposal Cost: \$200,000**

# Ballot Proposal 9

**Original Proposal:** Free space/incubator with a kitchen for low-income entrepreneurs. Creates opportunities to access a high-quality space. Fosters economic growth. Creates new employment opportunities.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand focus to non-food operations</li><li>• More community spaces where people can meal prep, learn to cook, and where people in need can get healthy prepared meals.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feasibility of City managed kitchen incubator would require oversight and management beyond the scope of work of dept</li><li>• Within scope of Office of Small Business:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Support local activation efforts in public spaces, such as seasonal markets.</li><li>○ Partner with existing businesses to offer access to free/low cost spaces</li></ul></li></ul>

## Economic Opportunities for Low-Income Entrepreneurs

This proposal will help identify spaces for low-income entrepreneurs to develop their business idea and help market their products or services. By partnering with nonprofit organizations across the City, the Office of Small Business will help identify and facilitate the use of public and private spaces that can be used to support low-income entrepreneurs and foster economic growth.

PB funds will be used as grants to nonprofits to support local activation efforts in public spaces, such as seasonal markets; and to offer entrepreneurs access to free or low cost private spaces, such as kitchens.

The term activation will be defined by the community to ensure it reflects its actual needs.

**Proposal Cost: \$500,000**

# Ballot Proposal 10

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**Original Proposal:** Build community gardens in vacant lots, including species that deter rodents, for community residents. This will create a healthier environment, beautify the community, address food insecurity, and build camaraderie among residents.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make it open for public use</li><li>• Ensure it aligns with City's plans for vacant/underutilized public lots</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with GrowBoston and Housing to determine eligible underutilized lots and prioritize locations that have limited access to fresh food</li></ul>

## Support Community Gardens in Boston's Neighborhoods with Limited Access to Affordable Food

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations to build community gardens on underutilized land for public access and use, prioritizing areas where people have limited access to affordable, nutritious food.

This project will create a healthier environment, beautify the community, address food insecurity, and build camaraderie among residents. Garden operations must have a robust rodent management plan.

**Proposal Cost: \$500,000**

# Ballot Proposal 11

**Original Proposal:** Plant apple, pear, grapevines, fig trees and bushes for community organizations and residents. This will create healthier air, protect our green space, help with food insecurity and be a cheaper source of organic produce.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make it open for public use</li><li>• Prevent local wildlife (rats, squirrels, and birds) from getting to this fruit.</li><li>• Consider location and areas where the median income is low</li><li>• Consider areas with high land surface temperature/ locations that can benefit from more trees</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with Grow Boston, Housing, and Environment to determine eligible underutilized lots, prioritize locations that have limited access to fresh food, and experience increased heat during the summer</li></ul>

## Publicly Accessible Fruit Trees for Boston Residents

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations to plant fruit trees and bushes on underutilized land for public access and use. This will create healthier air, protect our green space, help with food insecurity, and be a cheaper source of organic produce.

Community organizations must prioritize areas that experience increased heat during the summer, as well as locations where there is limited access to affordable, nutritious food. Sustainable fruit cultivation practices should be used, and managing partners must have a robust rodent management plan.

**Proposal Cost: \$500,000**



# Ballot Proposal 12

**Original Proposal:** Grants for youth jobs (18-24 an hour) year round (52 weeks) for youth ages 14-24. This would serve Black and Brown youth. There is a gap in the school year when youth are unable to work, affecting their ability to support themselves and provide for family. Creating 125 slots for youth, \$500K budget.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not race/ ethnicity specific and inclusive of all youth</li> <li>• Include details of expansion of jobs, rates, and hours in proposal</li> <li>• Enhance and expand SuccessLink model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot program and evaluate impact of year-round, part-time jobs on youth</li> <li>• Cannot use race/ethnicity as criteria for identifying youth for the program. Can look at socioeconomic indicators</li> <li>• A one-time, continuous youth job program with increased wages from Sep to Jun</li> <li>• Not to supplement existing SuccessLink program, but fund a separate pilot</li> </ul>

## Pilot an Expansion of the Youth Jobs Program during the School Year

This proposal will create a one-time pilot program to assess the viability of year-round, part time youth jobs for residents ages 14-24. This grant initiative will serve fifty-seven (57) low income youth across the City, and run for 40 weeks (September to June) to complement the City’s Success Link Youth Jobs School-Year program that currently runs from October to early May.

- Forty-two (42) youth ages 14-18 will be able to work 10 hours per week at a rate of \$18 per hour. (Current pay rate is \$15 an hour for this age group)
- Fifteen (15) youth ages 19-24 will be able to work 15 hours per week at a rate of \$20 per hour.

The Boston Office of Youth Employment and Opportunity will closely monitor this pilot program to evaluate the impact of year-round, part-time jobs on youth.

**Proposal Cost: \$515,000**

# Ballot Proposal 13

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**Original Proposal:** We want nighttime sports opportunities + gym time. Also, provide food for participants. This would help young people to relax at night. The people who work late. To help people distress and maintain good health. So there's better ways for the community to connect together through activities.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand beyond just nighttime + sports activities. Could include music, art, etc.</li><li>• This could be a drug free, alcohol free zone that is inclusive for all youth</li><li>• Expand BCYF and YMCA hours and programming</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BCYF has tried to pilot late night programming in the past</li><li>• Human Services to implement youth sports grants to nonprofits to expand programming</li></ul>

## Expand Evening Recreational Opportunities for Youth

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations to expand evening and weekend recreational opportunities for Boston youth. Grants will be designed to reduce barriers to participation by reducing fees and improving access to equipment. Through sports participation, Boston youth will build positive connections and enhance community engagement.

**Proposal Cost: \$300,000**

# Ballot Proposal 14

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**Original Proposal:** Make food more affordable by gift cards distributed by community organizations to low income people, public housing residents, single mothers, sick and disabled, etc.

Public Comment Proposal Considerations	Departmental Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand affordable, healthy, and fresh food access</li><li>• Increase and expand SNAP and WIC benefits.</li><li>• Broader policy and zoning changes for food access</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The City cannot offer gift cards to residents, either directly or indirectly, due to the State's anti-aid amendment.</li><li>• Legal is currently analyzing this proposal and the Office of Food Justice's existing programming and funding options.</li></ul>

## Expand Access to Fresh Foods in Boston

This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations to bolster assistance programs for Boston residents facing food insecurity. The purpose of these grants is for residents to access fresh food (fruits and vegetables, dairy, eggs, meat, seafood).

**Proposal Cost: \$400,000**

# Ballot Proposal 15

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**Original Proposal:** Pilot non-police construction detail (that was enabled in the most recent police contract but haven't been set up). This would benefit everyone, but especially elderly people with disabilities, parents with strollers, students and all pedestrians. This will make roads and sidewalks safer. The Boston Police Department and Transportation Department would need to figure out steps to implement.

**Not considered.** *The initial idea for a participatory budgeting proposal to pilot non-police construction details is not certified because the City is already actively working towards implementing a new detail system and process including civilian flaggers. The City has released a request for proposals (RFP) for a technology management system to schedule details. A second RFP for a third party administrator, which will hire civilians to perform details, will be released this winter. Administrative revenue from the details will support this project over the long-term.*

## NEXT STEPS

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- CFO has reviewed and signed off on proposals
- Prepare ballot proposals for online and paper voting
- Once voted by residents, work with City Departments to determine proposal and grant evaluation process

# VOTING LOGISTICS





# Voting Logistics

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## **Voting Time frame:**

- Wednesday, January 15 to Saturday February, 15, 2025

## **Languages:**

- All online and paper ballots will be multilingual and available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, and Brazilian Portuguese

## **Online + In Person:**

- Options for voting both online and in-person at Boston Public Library branches and City Hall

## **OPB Library Voting Office Hours**

- OPB identified six (6) library branch locations in Brighton, Chinatown, Dorchester, Downtown, East Boston, and Roxbury throughout the voting period
- OPB staff will be on site to help promote and assist participants with PB voting

# Online Voting Platform

## Multilingual website is mobile first and web accessible

### Voter Eligibility

- Required to confirm they are:
  - **(1) Boston residents, (2) will only vote one time, (3) be at least 11 years old (or in the 6th grade).**
- Required to submit their first name, last name, and neighborhood.
- Of note personal information is not tied to vote

### Authentication

- Participants required to submit their cell phone number for one time code verification
- Those with no cell phone can email OPB for PIN code (respond within two (2) business days)

The screenshot shows the top of the website with the logo "IDEAS in ACTION" in green and blue. Below the logo is a language dropdown menu set to "English". The main text reads: "Welcome to Ideas in Action, the City of Boston's new Participatory Budgeting initiative! Ideas in Action is an opportunity for residents to decide how to spend a portion of the City's budget. From January 15 to February 15, 2025, Boston residents can VOTE and decide on how \$2 million in Participatory Budgeting funds will be invested in community-driven projects across the City. Selected projects are a one-time, non-recurring investment, and will be implemented beginning this spring 2025. Make your voice heard — vote for up to five (5) projects that will have the biggest impact on YOUR community!" Below this is a "Voter Eligibility" section with the text: "I understand that to vote in Participatory Budgeting 2025, I must:" followed by a bulleted list: "• Be a City of Boston resident", "• Only vote one time", "• Be at least 11 years old (or at least in 6th grade)". There are three input fields: "FIRST NAME" (John), "LAST NAME" (Doe), and "NEIGHBORHOOD" (a dropdown menu). At the bottom is a checkbox: "By checking this box, I affirm that these statements are true and that I meet the voting eligibility requirements" and a "Confirm" button with a checkmark.

The screenshot shows a "DRAFT MOCK UP" of a voting page. The header reads "Ideas in Action - Boston's Participatory Budgeting Initiative". The main heading is "Vote for up to five projects that will have the biggest impact on YOUR community!". Below this is a language dropdown menu set to "English". The first project is "Support and Education Programming for at Risk Youth Ages 10-13". The description reads: "This proposal will offer grants to nonprofit organizations to provide high-quality and engaging programming for Boston youth, aged 10 to 13, living in communities disproportionately affected by crime and violence. The goal of these grants will be to increase the variety of youth programming in the city, offer a positive outlet for young people when they are not in school, and foster safe and supportive environments." There is a "Select" button with a checkmark. The second project is "Economic Opportunities for Low-Income Entrepreneurs". The description reads: "This proposal will help identify spaces for low-income entrepreneurs to develop their business idea and help market their products or services. By partnering with nonprofit organizations across the city..." There is a "Select" button with a checkmark.

# In- Person Voting

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## City Hall (Paper Ballots)

- **Locations:** Front entrance lobby desk and 2nd floor entrance desk (by the Credit Union).
- **Collect participant information:** Ask residents to fill out a brief information sheet **for eligibility verification:**
  - Full Name
  - Neighborhood (BOS residency)
  - Required Age to Participate (11+)
  - Voting (only once)
- **Distribute PB Ballots:** Hand out ballots to residents who request them. Each ballot will be accompanied by an optional evaluation survey.

## BPL Libraries (Online Ballot)

- **Location:** Library branches will have a flyer displaying a call to action sign, QR code, and website for people to vote with their phones.
- **Librarians will assist residents** to the areas in the library where they can cast their vote. They can assist people, when needed, with voting on a computer.



# Outreach and Marketing

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## Paid Media

- Traditional outreach and ethnic media outlets

## Earned Media

Coordinate with paid media to magnify message

- Promote final project proposals
- Tailor prior Op-Ed for voting
- Pitch targeted media (WGBH, mainstream, ethnic, and neighborhood media outlets)

## City of Boston

- Press Release
- Newsletters
- Digital Media/ Social Media

## Community Partners

- Coordinate with Community Partners on messaging and outreach particularly for those who participated in Ideas in Action phases

TYPE OF OUTLET	LANGUAGE	TYPE OF PLACEMENT
<i>PRINT/DIGITAL NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO</i>		
Brazilian Magazine	Brazilian Portuguese	Print Ads, Facebook Posts, :30s Radio Spot, WhatsApp Marketing
El Mundo	Spanish	Print Ads, Facebook Posts, Live Interviews
SAMPAN	Simplified Chinese	Print Ads and Web Banners
Dorchester Reporter	English	Print Ads and Web Banners
Ethnic Vision Group Marketing	Haitian Creole	:30s Radio Spot, On-Air Interviews

*Paid Media Plan*

# Evaluation Survey

## Paper Ballot

- Participants at City Hall will be given an evaluation survey and be asked to submit it into the voter ballot box
- Of note, voting ballot information will not be tied to evaluation surveys

## Online Platform

- After submitting votes, online participants will be asked to take an optional online evaluation survey (similar to the Idea Collection phase).

**IDEAS IN ACTION EVALUATION - VOTING SURVEY**

Thank you for voting! Please answer the questions below to help the City of Boston learn how it is meeting its goals for participatory budgeting and to make the process better in the future. Your responses are anonymous. You can skip any questions you do not want to answer.

1. How did you hear about Ideas in Action? Check all that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/> City of Boston (examples: newsletter or event)	<input type="checkbox"/> Print Newspaper/ Online Newspaper
<input type="checkbox"/> Boston City Councilor or other public official	<input type="checkbox"/> Radio Station
<input type="checkbox"/> Boston Public Library	<input type="checkbox"/> Ad or Billboard
<input type="checkbox"/> Local community organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Flier or postcard
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Media (examples: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter X)	<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Friends
	<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in:

2. Which of the following have you done as part of Ideas in Action? Check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/> Submitted an idea through the online portal	<input type="checkbox"/> Gave public comment on proposals in November
<input type="checkbox"/> Attended an Idea Collection Workshop in July	<input type="checkbox"/> Voted on proposals in January or February
<input type="checkbox"/> Attended a Visioning Forum in October	<input type="checkbox"/> Attended an External Oversight Board meeting

3. Please share your feedback on how Ideas in Action went. What worked well about the process?

4. What could make the process better in the future?


5. What is your age (in years)?

6. Do you identify with any of the following in terms of your race and/or ethnicity? Check all that apply. We know some of the choices below might not be perfect for you, but please answer as best you can. You can use the write-in option to add more details or if you identify with another group not listed.

<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native	<input type="checkbox"/> White
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer
<input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American	<input type="checkbox"/> Race or ethnicity not listed here
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino/-a/-e/-x	<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in:
<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	

7. What was your household income in the past 12 months? Choose one:

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$14,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 to \$74,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 or more
<input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 to \$34,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000 to \$99,999	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know
<input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000 to \$49,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 to \$149,999	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer

**IDEAS in ACTION**  **DATA+SOU L** RESEARCH

Thank you for filling out this survey!  
Please fold and place in the ballot box.



**PUBLIC COMMENT**  
**15 minutes, 3 minutes per person**

