

# IDEAS *in* ACTION

*External Oversight Board Meeting*

*May 7, 2026*



Office of  
Participatory  
Budgeting

CITY of BOSTON

# AGENDA

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6:00 pm: **Welcome and Meeting Overview**

→ *Meeting Minutes, Upcoming EOB Meetings, Office Updates (Fellowship)*

6:10 pm: **Selection of New External Oversight Board Chair**

6:15 pm: **Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget**

6:25 pm: **Evaluation Findings Presentation**

6:55 pm: **Rulebook Updates and PB Cycle Preparations**

7:10 pm: **Updates on Awarded Projects**

7:20 pm: **Public Comment**

7:30 pm: **Closing**

# UPCOMING BOARD SCHEDULE

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DATE	DETAILS
<b>May Email Update</b>	<i>Final Report Review + Feedback from EOB</i> <i>Updates on PB Cycle Planning</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Final list of contract partners</i></li><li>• <i>Communications &amp; Evaluation Approach</i></li></ul>
<b>Thursday, June 18th</b>	<i>Approve Annual Review Report for FY26 PB Cycle</i> <i>Idea Collection Planning and Logistics</i> <i>Approach for Data Analysis (Aug.-Sep.)</i>
<b>July Email Update</b>	<i>Idea Collection Update</i>
<b>August Email Update</b>	<i>Brief Recap of Idea Collection</i> <i>Data Analysis Update</i> <i>Approach for Proposal Development Forums (Oct. -Nov.)</i>
<b>Thursday, September 17th</b>	<i>Idea Collection Outcomes</i> <i>Planning for Proposal Development Forums</i>
<b>October Email Update</b>	<i>Updates on Proposal Development Forums</i>

# **External Oversight Board Chair**



# FY27 Budget Update



# FY27 RECOMMENDED BUDGET OVERVIEW

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- **OPB FY27 Recommended Operating Budget: \$1,891,561**
  - Total decrease of \$242,690 compared to FY26: Downgrade of Chief of Staff role to a Coordinator position and reduction of the Special Appropriation line.
  - 62% of operating budget supports PB projects through the Special Appropriation line.
- **PB Special Revenue Fund:**
  - As authorized by the PB ordinance, prior year balances in OPB's operating budget have been rolled into a separate, continuing fund.
  - Using accumulated balances in the fund, OPB can award **\$2 million** worth of projects in the FY27 cycle.

# FY27 RECOMMENDED BUDGET OVERVIEW

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<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>FY26</b> <i>(Appropriation)</i>	<b>FY27</b> <i>(Recommended)</i>	<b>FY26 vs FY27</b>
<b>Personnel Services</b>	381,656	338,967	(42,690)
<b>Contractual Services</b>	151,440	372,440	221,000
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials</b>	6,900	7,700	800
<b>Current Charges &amp; Obligations</b>	21,000	-	(21,000)
<b>Equipment</b>	800	-	(800)
<b>Special Appropriations</b>	1,572,454	1,172,454	(400,000)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,134,250</b>	<b>1,891,561</b>	<b>(242,690)</b>

# **FY26 PB Cycle Evaluation Findings**



# **Rulebook Updates and PB Cycle Preparations**



# Rulebook Updates

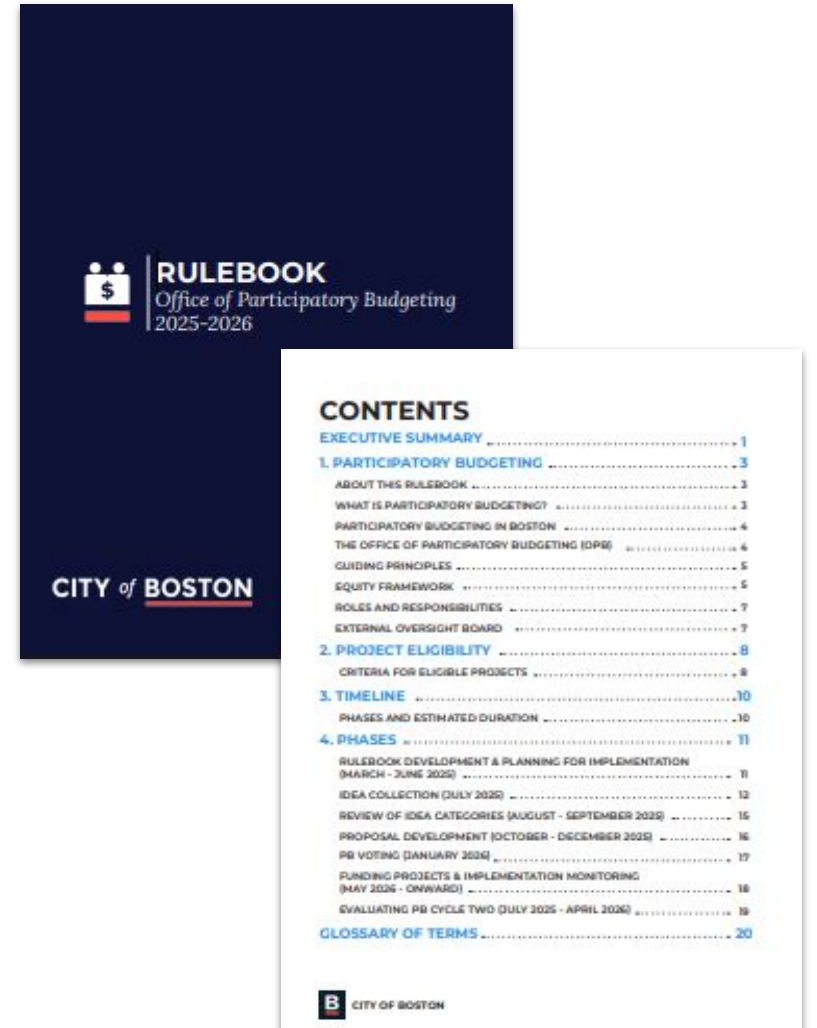
## 1. More defined activities for contracted community partners

(Page 11)

Last PB Cycle, contracted community partners (CPs) were able to propose a wide range of activities to collect ideas from residents. We learned that activities such as tabling at events, door knocking, phone calls, etc, were not as effective as in-person and online workshops.

As such, **we're specifying that Contract Partners conduct only workshops** (in-person or online) as part of their Idea Collection efforts.

CPs can still use a variety of outreach and engagement approaches to recruit community members to attend these events.



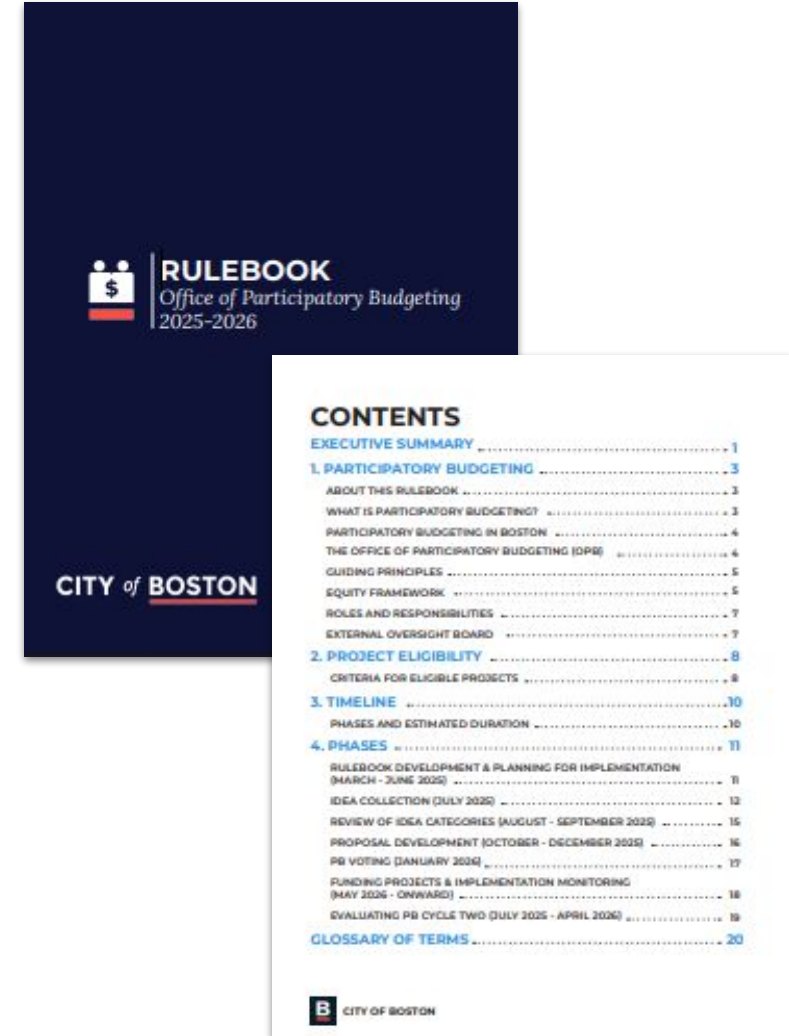
# Rulebook Updates

## 2. Office's Equity Framework (page 6)

OPB proposes removing the term 'Priority Populations' to ensure the process does not appear exclusive. No other changes are made to this section, and the rulebook continues to emphasize our commitment to incorporating diverse voices.

**Equity Guidelines (Updated):** Priority: Projects will engage all Boston residents, including those who (1) cannot or do not participate in local government decision-making; (2) have been historically excluded or underrepresented; and (3) live in historically underserved neighborhoods.

**Original language:** 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.



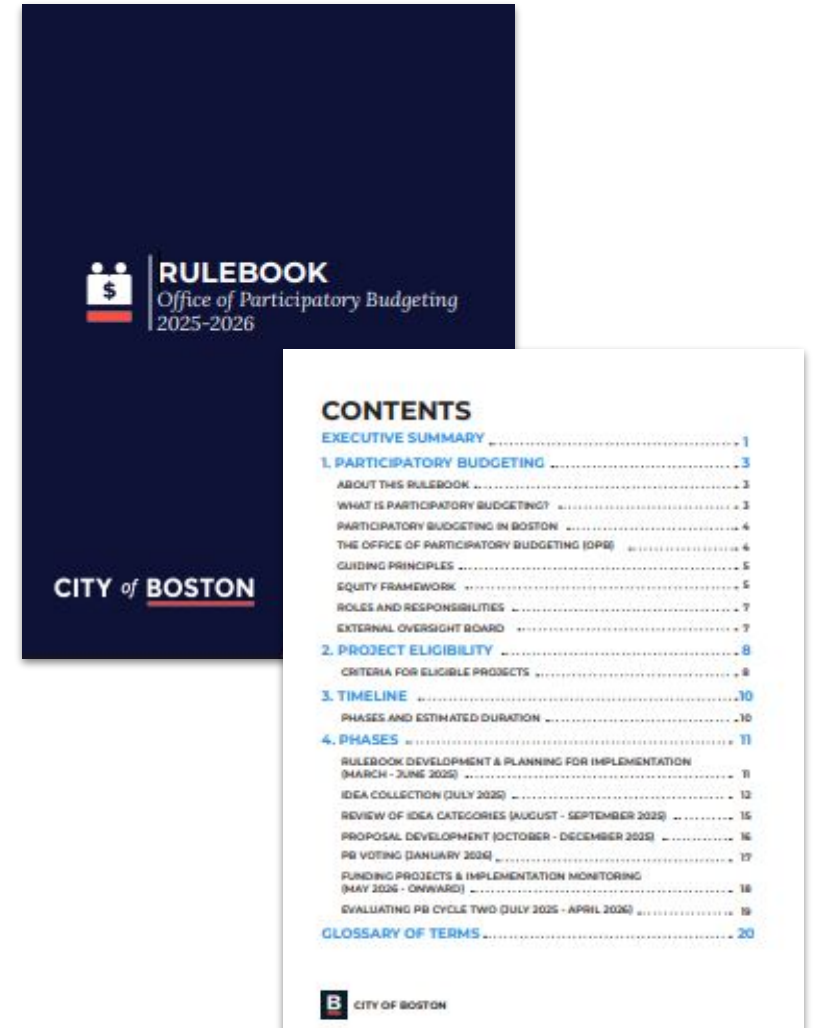
# Rulebook Updates

## 3. Clarify the Proposal Development Phase (Pages 10 & 13)

We were proud of the refinements made during this past Proposal Development forums, and have reviewed the description of this phase in the Rulebook for clarity. This is one of the most complex pieces of our process, and we'll continue to find ways to improve it year after year.

## 4. Propose expanding PB voting methods (Page 13):

At the request of last Cycle's Community Partners, we'll develop a mechanism to allow contracted organizations to use paper ballots for voting at community events. We tested this approach during this past cycle with great effectiveness and some lessons learned. We'll present an approach to you in the coming months, ensuring that we continue to have a "one person, one vote" outcome.



# IDEAS IN ACTION CYCLE FY27

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**IDEA  
COLLECTION**

JULY 2026



**REVIEW IDEA  
CATEGORIES**

AUG-SEP 2026



**DEVELOPING  
PROPOSALS**

OCT-DEC 2026



**VOTE ON  
PROPOSALS**

JAN-FEB 2027



**FUND  
PROJECTS**

SPRING 2027

# IDEAS IN ACTION CYCLE FY27

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- **Continuing the Community Partnership Model**

- ~16 Community Partners for FY27 Cycle
  - *July 2026 - February 2027*
- Idea Collection, Proposal Development Forums, and Voter Engagement

- **Branding and Communications**

- Revising messaging and outreach strategy for FY27 Cycle.
- Focusing on social media and earned media, in addition to City's outreach platforms.

- **Idea Collection Campaign Launching**

- Community Partner Events
- PB Corners (*City Hall, BCYF, BPL Branches*)
- PB Portal Website
- PB Phone Line

- **Evaluation**

- Keeping evaluation as a core component of the City's PB practice.
- OPB embedding surveys and observation as part of our yearly practices.

# Updates on Awarded PB Projects



# FY26 PB Cycle Awarded Projects

IDEAS IN ACTION 2026

## VOTING RESULTS!

Eight Winning Ideas! Votes Collected: 4,841

- 1 IMMIGRANT LEGAL DEFENSE FUND**  
Votes: 3,733 | Funds Awarded: \$400,000
- 2 NEIGHBORHOOD FRESH FOOD ACCESS INITIATIVE**  
Votes: 3,035 | Funds Awarded: \$500,000
- 3 BRIDGING THE GAP: ASSISTANCE FOR HOUSING STABILITY**  
Votes: 2,805 | Funds Awarded: \$200,000

- 4 IMMIGRANT CAREER PATHWAYS: BRIDGING LANGUAGE & EMPLOYMENT**  
Votes: 2,091 | Funds Awarded: \$300,000
- 5 GREEN MY BLOCK**  
Votes: 1,930 | Funds Awarded: \$100,000
- 6 WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON TRADES**  
Votes: 1,661 | Funds Awarded: \$300,000
- 7 YOUTH FINANCIAL LITERACY AND EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOPS**  
Votes: 1,556 | Funds Awarded: \$250,000
- 8 SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE PROGRAM**  
Votes: 1,202 | Funds Awarded: \$150,000

**IDEAS**  
in ACTION

# FY25 PB Cycle Winning Projects

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- **Expand Access to Fresh Foods (Completed):** *The Office of Food Justice utilized PB funds as part of a coordinated city response to the November 2025 SNAP funding delay caused by the federal government shutdown. This initiative was part of a larger Mayoral partnership with the Boston Foundation, which successfully raised over \$3 million.*
- **Rental Assistance for Boston Youth Ages 16-24 (Completed):** *The Mayor's Office of Housing released a “Youth Tenant Stabilization Fund” in July 2025 through trusted community partners working with at-risk youth in the City. A total of 54 households benefited from these resources, receiving an average of \$3,694.67 to cover housing-related expenses such as late rent payments, move-in costs, security deposit, or a broker’s fee.*
- **Programs to Support Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Youth (In Progress):** *The Office of Returning Citizens released a grant application for nonprofit organizations working with impacted youth in early May, 2025. A total of 12 organizations, out of over 40 applications, received grants totaling \$250,000. Implementation of programs is underway!*

# FY25 PB Cycle Winning Projects

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- **Install Benches at High Ridership Bus Stops (In Progress):** The City's Streets team finalized the procurement of 120 benches and is assessing locations based on impact and need. Installation is planned for the fall of 2026, as there were some delays due to the amount of snow we experienced this winter.
- **Rat Prevention Initiatives in Dense Residential Areas (In Progress):** The Boston Housing Authority completed the procurement of upgraded trash, compost, and recycling containers to be installed at BHA's four (4) sites in Brighton (Commonwealth Family, Commonwealth Elderly, Washington Street, and the Patricia White apartments.) A test container is scheduled for installation this summer. The BHA team is planning to collect resident feedback before installing the additional containers in the fall.
- **Community Gardens in Neighborhoods with Limited Affordable Food Access (In Progress):** GrowBoston released a grant application in February 2026 for community groups to apply for funding. The Office is currently reviewing applications, and awarded groups will start working on their community garden projects this summer.

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

