

IDEAS *in* ACTION

External Oversight Board Meeting

November 20, 2025



Office of
Participatory
Budgeting

CITY of BOSTON

AGENDA

- 6:00 pm: **Meeting Overview**
 - *Motion to adopt meeting minutes*
- 6:10 pm: **Introduction to new EOB member**
- 6:15 pm: **Upcoming EOB Meetings and Timeline**
- 6:25 pm: **Recap of Proposal Development Phase**
- 6:40 pm: **Draft Proposals for the PB Ballot**
- 7:10 pm: **Evaluation Updates and Voting**
- 7:25 pm: **Public Comment**
- 7:30 pm: **Closing**

MEETING MINUTES

- Sent to External Oversight Board members to review in advance of this meeting

Note: Minutes are posted in OPB's website, www.boston.gov/participatory-budgeting

**WELCOME NEW
BOARD MEMBER**

CLAIRE TEYLOUNI



UPCOMING SCHEDULE

Date	Details
Early-Mid December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and incorporate public feedbackRefine Proposals with DepartmentsSign off and approval from CFO/ Mayor's Office
Week of Dec 22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none">EOB Email update w/ final proposals
Tuesday, Jan 6th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">EOB Meeting (Virtual)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review Final Project ProposalsPB Voting outreach and logistics
Thursday, Jan 15th to Sunday, Feb 15th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">PB Cycle Two Voting
Thursday, Feb 20th	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In-Person EOB Meeting to Announce Winning Projects!

**RECAP
PROPOSAL
DEVELOPMENT
FORUMS**



RECAP- OCTOBER PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FORUMS

October Forums: Narrow the list project ideas

Part 1: Residents collectively selected their top six subcategories of ideas

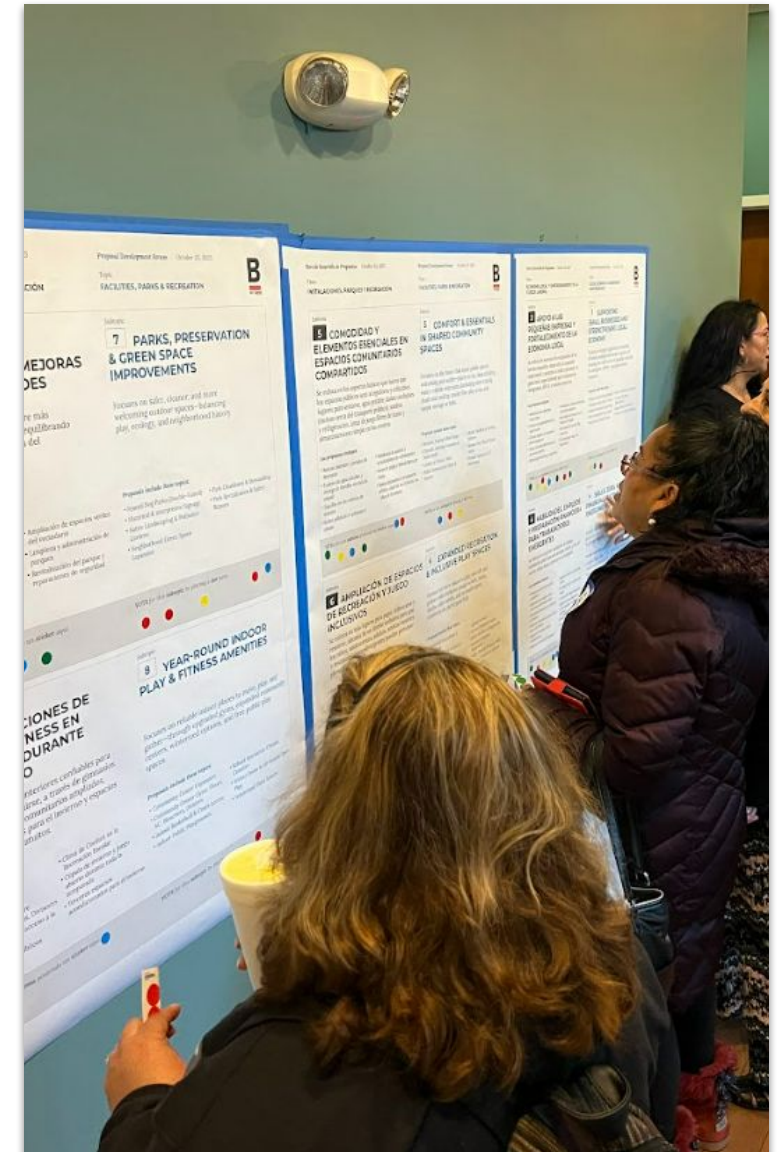
Part 2: Residents **reviewed and discussed** ideas under their assigned subcategory with an **equity and community impact** lens

Part 3: Residents voted for their top 5 ideas at the end of each forum

- 15 pre-selected ideas total from the three forums

Highlights

- **More than 130** residents attended the three October forums
- **15 Community Partners** helped to recruit residents
- **Languages:** English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole



OCTOBER FORUMS

Forum #1: Mattapan Public Library

Tuesday, October 14th



- **Community Partners**
 - True Alliance Center
 - Union Capital Boston
 - Center for Independent Living
 - ACEDONE
 - Center to Support Immigrant Organizing
- **Languages**
 - English
 - Haitian Creole
 - Spanish

Forum #2: Maverick Landing

Thursday, October 23rd



- **Community Partners**
 - Maverick Landing Community Services
 - Eastie Coalition
 - Agencia ALPHA
 - NUBE
- **Languages**
 - English
 - Spanish

Forum #3: Charlesview Community Center

Monday, October 27th



- **Community Partners**
 - Allston Brighton Health Collaborative
 - Brazilian Women's Group
 - Sociedad Latina
 - Eastie Coalition
- **Languages**
 - English
 - Spanish
 - Portuguese

NOVEMBER FORUMS: CITY DEPARTMENT COORDINATION

Coordinated with 10+ City Departments on the selected 15 project ideas.

- Identified appropriate city departments
- Initial review and discussion of project ideas
- Coordination on 1-page briefing document for each idea, which provided residents with:
 - Background/ context
 - Supporting data/ research
- Guidelines for forum participation
- Coordination on next steps post November forums

B

**PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM
DEPARTMENT BRIEF**

CENTER FOR WORKING FAMILIES

1. COMMUNITY IDEA

Financial Literacy for Young Adults
'Financial Boot Camp' for youth (ages 14-24) focused on understanding credit, student loans, and basic banking."

2. BACKGROUND

Students in Massachusetts currently are not required to participate in any formal financial education, which has lasting negative effects on their personal financial health.

- 2024 Bank On Boston focus group of Boston youth workers found that 100% of youth wanted to know more about managing their income
- [2023 survey](#) found that Gen Z places strong value on having emergency funds, budgeting, and avoiding debt by the age of 19

Bank On Boston provides direct financial education and non-predatory banking access to youth workers in Boston's Summer Youth Employment Program, futureBOS.

- Youth workers have the opportunity to learn more about managing their income and open their own non-custodial checking account as part of their summer job experience.
- In 2025, Bank On Boston taught the Basics of Banking to more than 1,200 youth workers and helped 250+ youth open their own bank account.
- Primarily, youth served work and live in historically underserved neighborhoods: Dorchester, Roxbury, Hyde Park, East Boston and Chinatown.

**IDEAS
in ACTION**

STARTING DATA/ RESEARCH

18 - 24 year olds who participate in personal finance courses have **credit scores 25 points higher** than peers

Massachusetts scored an **"F"** on the 2023 National Report Card on High School Financial Literacy

73% of youth workers in City of Boston employment programs report **contributing to their household expenses**.

The majority of youth workers in City of Boston employment programs are **lower income youth of color**.

Youth disparity in generational wealth. **Is of color are likely to have less savings, assets, and wealth than white households.**

"The Effects of High School Personal Financial Education Policies on Financial Behavior." Economics of Education Review, vol. 78, no. 101786, Mar. 2020, p. 101786.
"2023 National Report Card on State Efforts to Improve Financial Literacy in High Schools." Center for Financial Literacy, Dec. 2023
"The Color of Wealth." Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, 25 Mar. 2015.

RECAP: NOVEMBER PROPOSAL DRAFTING FORUMS

Residents drafted proposals with City staff

- **Part 1:** Participants shared why ideas are important to them and their community
- **Part 2:** Departments provided relevant context and data on the pre-selected project ideas (issue education)
- **Part 3:** Residents drafted proposal language in collaboration with City Departments
 - Proposal Template: Who, What, Why, How?



Highlights

- **65 residents** attended the November forums
- **10+ Community Partners** helped to recruit residents
- **Languages:** English, Spanish, Portuguese



DRAFT PROPOSALS



DRAFT PROPOSALS

Community Resources

Community Partnerships that Support Immigrant Legal Services

Providing Fresh and Healthy Food for Residents in Boston

Housing Access for Vulnerable Communities

Health and Wellbeing

Bridge to Equity: Voices of Experience

Art Recovery: Healing Through Creative Expression

Education, Youth, Families, and Older Adults

Support Programs for Seniors and Caregivers

Financial Literacy for Young Adults

Arts & Culture

Immigrant Stories Through Art: Weaving Intergenerational Connections

Environment, Sustainability, and Food Access

Community Litter Reduction Campaigns

Streets & Sidewalks

Green my Block

Local Economy and Workforce Development

Workshop Development Programs Focused on Trades

Workforce Training with Integrated ESOL for Immigrant Communities

Entrepreneurship Centers to Support Small Business

Interest-free Loans for Small Businesses

DRAFT PROPOSAL #1

Community Resources

Community Partnerships that Support Immigrant Legal Services

This proposal provides funding for immigration attorney services to support immigrants facing detention, deportation, and legal crises. Low-income immigrant families, detained community members, and immigrant youth will receive accessible legal representation through non-profit organizations receiving these grants. High demand for affordable legal services leaves many vulnerable residents without protection, and this initiative addresses that gap while promoting safety across the city. The program prioritizes those most at risk and directs resources to communities facing the greatest challenges.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #2

Community Resources

Providing Fresh and Healthy Food for Residents in Boston

This proposal establishes accessible food pantries that provide fresh and refrigerated foods to neighborhoods through pop-up markets and community partnerships. By prioritizing marginalized communities, seniors, and residents facing accessibility barriers, the initiative addresses food insecurity, nutritional deficiencies, and health disparities across neighborhoods in Boston. The program will coordinate resource-sharing networks among local organizations to ensure equitable access to healthy food, fulfilling a fundamental need that supports community wellbeing.

** Combined Ideas: Community Fridge Partnership Program + Community Mobile Markets*

DRAFT PROPOSAL #3

Community Resources

Housing Access for Vulnerable Communities

This proposal establishes a flexible funding pool to help Boston residents at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, to secure or maintain housing. The initiative prioritizes low-income individuals, people with disabilities, and those with intersecting marginalized identities who face limited housing options. The program provides funding to organizations to deliver comprehensive housing assistance to disproportionately impacted communities.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #4

Health and Wellbeing

Bridge to Equity: Voices of Experience

This proposal facilitates a pilot program bridging homeless shelters with local high schools to connect people experiencing homelessness, youth, and people in recovery. The initiative empowers homeless individuals to contribute and share their lived experiences with students, removing stigma about homelessness and addiction while demonstrating valuable contributions to younger generations. Participants work with recovery specialists to share their stories in schools, while teachers and schools reciprocate by donating essentials.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #5

Health and Wellbeing

Art Recovery: Healing Through Creative Expression

This proposal brings artists into community spaces to lead healing-focused art workshops for youth and adults facing substance use issues, mental health challenges, and trauma. Recognizing art as a universal language, the initiative offers diverse creative outlets including singing, theater, painting, and music. The program culminates in community showcases hosted at parks, libraries, food pantries, YMCAs, and churches, connecting participants with their neighborhoods through shared creative expression.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #6

Education, Youth, Families, and Older Adults

Support Programs for Seniors and Caregivers

This proposal establishes counseling and education programs for older adults and their caregivers, addressing isolation and resource gaps facing elderly residents. As the aging population grows, this initiative ensures deeper community engagement and access to vital support services. Older adults, caregivers, and healthcare providers will benefit from multilingual information sharing and training opportunities that address diverse needs across gender, age, and health conditions.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #7

Education, Youth, Families, and Older Adults

Financial Literacy for Young Adults

This proposal provides a series of financial literacy workshops delivered in-person at youth job sites and local events at colleges. Targeting youth ages 14-24 in Boston, these sessions will cover banking, credit, investing, budgeting, and paying for college. The initiative empowers young people to grow their wealth and expand their financial skills while addressing the impacts of wealth inequality,

DRAFT PROPOSAL #8

Arts & Culture

Immigrant Stories Through Art: Weaving Intergenerational Connections

This proposal creates public art installations and galleries that showcase immigrant stories and contributions across Boston's neighborhoods. Immigrant residents, tourists, artists, students, and the broader community will access these highly visible, free spaces that celebrate the diverse narratives defining the city. By sharing immigrant experiences and challenging stereotypes, the initiative educates younger generations, fosters community pride, and elevates immigrant artists. The program connects neighborhoods through accessible public art spaces with transparent processes that create opportunities for all communities.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #9

Environment, Sustainability, and Food Access

Community Litter Reduction Campaigns

This proposal creates neighborhood-based competitions that use athletics, games, and artistic activities to incentivize litter cleanup and environmental stewardship. The initiative engages city residents, students, local businesses, and community organizations in rebuilding civic pride while making neighborhoods cleaner and safer. A visible citywide point system rewards participating neighborhoods, strengthening community bonds and collecting data on how corporations impact local environments.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #10

Streets & Sidewalks

Green My Block

This proposal transforms underutilized spaces in the city's heat-vulnerable neighborhoods through community-led greening initiatives. By engaging neighbors, schools, community groups, families, and churches, the program provides micro-grants for residents to adopt, beautify, and maintain local spaces with native plantings. The initiative prioritizes heat-vulnerable locations, while remaining accessible to all neighborhoods to address environmental, health, and social needs. It fosters community pride and ownership across generations, especially among children and youth.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #11

Local Economy and Workforce Development

Workshop Development Programs Focused on Trades

This proposal expands vocational training in carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, computer skills, and cooking to promote employment opportunities for people of all races and genders. Low-income residents who lack access to expensive training programs will particularly benefit. By providing pathways to better-paying jobs, this initiative supports families and addresses the community's need for skilled workers. Partnerships with middle and high schools will ensure accessible vocational training for underserved populations.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #12

Local Economy and Workforce Development

Workforce Training with Integrated ESOL for Immigrant Communities

This proposal provides contextualized ESOL classes combined with skills training and certifications in childcare, construction, and small business development to help immigrant Bostonians gain employment and grow their enterprises. Immigrant residents of all ages will benefit from this integrated approach that addresses both language barriers and workforce development needs. The initiative tackles economic challenges facing immigrant communities while meeting the city's demand for qualified workers, improving income and reducing poverty.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #13

Local Economy and Workforce Development

Entrepreneurship Centers to Support Small Business

This proposal offers technical assistance in relevant subject matter areas to support small business entrepreneurship across Boston. The goal is to create greater financial stability for the broader business community that ultimately benefit communities citywide. Resources will be made available through local churches, schools, and libraries, with enhanced communication through social media and financial education platforms to reach those who need it most.

DRAFT PROPOSAL #14

Local Economy and Workforce Development

Interest-free loans for small businesses

This proposal establishes an interest-free loan program for small businesses that have been established for at least one year. This proposal prioritizes youth, low-income individuals, and residents without bank access. The initiative creates a community-based safety network that brings financial resources directly to underserved areas, with eligibility determined by business location and demonstrated neighborhood impact.

NEXT STEPS

November 20th to December 4th

- 2-week public comment period for draft proposals

Friday, Dec 5th to Friday, Dec 19th

- Review and incorporate public feedback
- Refine Proposals with relevant City Departments
- Sign off and approval from CFO/ Mayor's Office

Mid December/ Early January

- Refine Proposals with relevant City Departments
- Share final Proposals with EOB / Public

Thursday, Jan 15th to Sunday, Feb 15th

- Cycle Two PB Voting period

PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT - INITIAL REFLECTIONS

- Continue to refine and simplify table activities for residents while strengthening facilitator training.
- Build in more time between October and November Proposal Development Forums to accommodate preparation and coordination, especially with City departments and Contract Partners (*recruitment.*)
- Be mindful of interpretation - slower pace of presentations would help
- By separating the October and November forums, OPB made it easier to choose ideas and develop proposals, creating a more approachable and realistic process for residents. It also helped us bring the right City staff to support residents in the proposal writing process, compared to last cycle.

**EVALUATION
DATA + SOUL**



CYCLE TWO PB VOTING



CYCLE TWO VOTING UPDATE

ONLINE VOTING

Logistics:

- Contracting with Blueberry POP (formerly Decision 21) for Cycle Two PB voting

Voting Time frame:

- Thursday, January 15 to Sunday, February, 15, 2026

Languages:

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

IN-PERSON VOTING

Logistics:

- City Hall ballot voting- Age Strong volunteers
- Exploring partnerships with BPL, BPS, BCYF
- Contracting with Community Partners on voting education and outreach

IDEAS in ACTION

English

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!

Voter Eligibility

I understand that to vote in Participatory Budgeting 2025, I must:

- Be a City of Boston resident
- Only vote one time
- Be at least 11 years old (or at least in 6th grade)

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

NEIGHBORHOOD

☐ By checking this box, I affirm that these statements are true and that I meet the voting eligibility requirements

Confirm ✓

Ideas in Action - Boston's Participatory Budgeting Initiative

Vote for up to five projects that will have the biggest impact on YOUR community!

You must cast at least one vote.

English

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.

Select

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

10 minutes, 3 minutes per person

