



# Greensboro Participatory Budgeting

## Handbook 2015-2016



PARTICIPATORY  
BUDGETING PROJECT



## Participatory Budgeting

Lets community members engage with government and improve their cities by deciding how to spend public budgets.

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# ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This booklet was developed by the Greensboro Participatory Budgeting (GPB) Steering Committee with assistance from the Participatory Budgeting Project. While participatory budgeting (PB) is inspired by experiences elsewhere, we want the Greensboro process to reflect the special characteristics of the local community. The Steering Committee thus generated these guidelines and rules based on our understanding of community needs, issues, and interests.

This handbook is only a starting point, and we intend for it to remain a work in progress. We will produce additional guidelines and materials as necessary, and continue developing and improving the process as it unfolds in the current and future years, together with other community members.



## Making History

Greensboro is the first city in the south to implement a participatory budgeting process!

## WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget. PB gives ordinary people real decision-making power over real money. The process was first developed in Brazil in 1989, and there are now over 3,000 participatory budgets around the world, most at the municipal level.

# ABOUT GREENSBORO PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

In 2011, after a presentation by the Participatory Budgeting Project to the Greensboro community, residents began organizing to bring PB to Greensboro. Over the next few years of community organizing, outreach, and research, the community group - Participatory Budgeting Greensboro, worked with Greensboro City Council and city staff to draft a resolution to bring participatory budgeting to the Greensboro city budget. Council passed the resolution in October 2014 allocating \$500,000 for Greensboro's PB process where each of the five Greensboro council districts will receive \$100,000 for residents to decide upon capital projects. Greensboro is the first city in the south to implement PB.



# GREENSBORO PB STEERING COMMITTEE

Formed in 2015 to design and support Greensboro’s city-wide participatory budgeting process, the Steering Committee is comprised of volunteer community members representing all council districts and a variety of community groups and organizations. A public call for nominations from Council was opened in September and from the pool of nominees, each sitting Council Member appointed two Greensboro residents to serve on the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee rules will be filed with the City of Greensboro, in line with standard processes.

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Co-Chairs** – Anita Cafiero, Kevin Williams

### **DISTRICT 1**

Dhruv Pathak  
Amina Tahirou  
Dorian Thompson  
Lisa Johnson-Tonkins

### **DISTRICT 2**

David Horth  
David Reed  
Kevin Williams  
Vanessa Martin

### **DISTRICT 3**

Erin Pearsall  
Ann Stringfield

### **DISTRICT 4**

Wayne Abraham  
Anita Cafiero  
Andrew Egbert  
Kenneth Klase

### **DISTRICT 5**

Esther Idassi  
Lawrence Mann  
Katheleen Sullivan

# GOALS: WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH WITH PB?

We believe we can improve our city through PB. While there are many benefits to doing PB, the main goals we strive to achieve are:

## **EQUITY**

We hope to achieve equity through this process. By this we mean fair distribution of funds for each district and within districts. We also want to see resident participation in each district that reflects the demographics of district residents.

## **EMPOWERMENT**

We want to achieve more inclusion through our process. Greensboro is a city that is widespread and there are people who are excluded from participating fully in other processes. We want to engage those residents who are normally not, specifically along traditional elections and voting, in this process. We'd like to see engagement efforts of Greensboro PB lead to higher participation in other things like traditional voting.

## **COMMUNITY BUILDING**

We want to strengthen democracy in Greensboro by helping to create more community leaders through civic education and the hands-on experience of the PB process. Five years from now we want to see an expanded civic leadership come from PB in Greensboro. We want to see an increase in community relationships. Participants should have fun and enjoy the process.

# GOALS: WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH WITH PB?

## TRANSPARENCY

We want a research and evaluation of the process to help us measure the diversity and change in diversity of participants in the process. We want to build a sustainable bridge of ideas through PB, a bridge that connects us across neighborhoods and districts and breeds collaboration. We want to have consistency in our process. This is important to consider as some districts will have residents with higher capacities for outreach and participation and we want to make sure to provide more resources and capacity building training to districts/neighborhoods with lower capacity.

## KEY PRINCIPLES

- We want to empower people to use their voices by participating in civic life.
- We want to have an accessible process including differences in language, age, mobility and other ways so that everyone feels comfortable participating.
- We want to have a focused commitment to process integrity. This means operating with consistency, discipline, transparency, and accountability.
- We want to be able to let Greensboro residents know that “what they see is what they get” with this process.

We ask everyone involved to work with us to achieve these goals.

# TIMELINE: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN?

The PB process involves a series of meetings and decisions that feed into the city's annual budget cycle and fit into four main phases. This cycle will take place over the next eight months beginning in the fall of 2015 and ending in the spring of 2016.



## **IDEA COLLECTION: OCTOBER – NOVEMBER**

Residents from across the city are invited to gather to learn about district needs, the budget and share ideas at neighborhood assemblies, meetings and online. In addition to sharing ideas people are asked to volunteer as Budget Delegates.

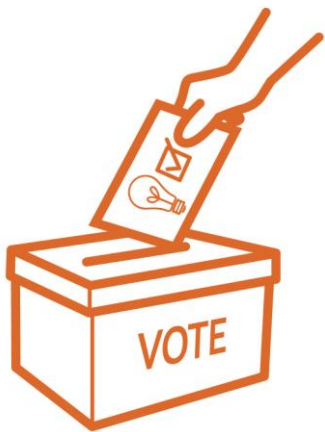


## **PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT: DECEMBER – MARCH**

Volunteer Budget Delegates will work together with City Staff and subject matter experts to take all the submitted ideas from the Idea Collection phase and turn them into concrete, project proposals that can be put on a ballot.



# TIMELINE: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN?



## **EXPOS & VOTING: APRIL – MAY**

Final proposals are presented to the community at Project Expos and then put on the ballot for the Vote. Voting happens over a period of one to two weeks at city offices and various community locations convenient to the public. Projects with the most votes in each district will be funded until the funds expire.



## **IMPLEMENTATION: JUNE - ONWARD**

The projects with the most votes are implemented through the city's usual process of procurement. City staff and the Steering Committee will keep the community informed on the progress of winning projects and may call upon budget delegates to help with any additional community input or outreach.

# RULES: HOW DOES PB WORK IN GREENSBORO?



## IDEA COLLECTION

- Anyone is welcome to attend the Neighborhood Assemblies and propose project ideas.
- Idea Collection will be done, online, at assemblies as well as smaller-scale mini-assemblies at non-PB meetings of community organizations, churches, civic associations. Each district will hold at least five Idea Collection events. Events will be planned with consideration for inclusiveness and engaging underrepresented populations.
- It is recommended that there be at least one event in each of the following timeframes: morning, weekend, and evening. This will allow for the broadest possible attendance considering a variety of work and life schedules.

# RULES: HOW DOES PB WORK IN GREENSBORO?



## PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

- Proposal Development will be a collaborative process between volunteer Budget Delegates, City staff, and community stake holders.
- Anyone at least 11 years of age, who lives in the district, works in the district, has a business in the district, is a student in the district or has children who are students in the district is welcome to serve as a budget delegate.
- City Staff and the Steering Committee will decide which issue committees are created based on the ideas proposed by the community at large. Potential issue committees may include but are not limited to: Transportation, Streets, Public Safety, Parks, Arts, Libraries, and Sustainability.
- If there are enough budget delegates who feel they face major obstacles to participating fully in issue committees, they may form a demographic committee for the district in which they are located. Demographic committees are meant to ensure maximum participation from community members, who might not otherwise participate, not to divide or separate sectors of the community. Potential demographic committees may include but are not limited to: Youth, Seniors, and Non-English Speaking Communities.
- Each project will have a monetary cap of \$30,000 to ensure each district has at least three winning projects.

# RULES: HOW DOES PB WORK IN GREENSBORO?



## EXPOS

- Each district will hold Project Expos, where budget delegates will present their project proposals to the community and get feedback. These events include an opening presentation and a science fair style exposition where committees display their projects in process with visual aids (e.g., poster displays or videos).
- The Steering Committee will determine the number and location of the expos.

## VOTING

- People who live in the district and are at least 11 years of age can vote for projects.
- At the time of voting, voters must present proof they satisfy the eligibility requirements. Examples of acceptable IDs are listed on page 14.
- To facilitate broad participation, each district will hold multiple days of voting, and mobile voting sites.
- There are no city-wide projects. Each district will have its own ballot, and multi-district projects will be represented on their perspective district ballots. For a project to win, it must win on each district ballot in which it is represented.
- Each voter may cast one vote per project proposal, and will receive the same number of votes (determined by district).
- The projects will be ranked by order of highest number of votes to lowest for each district. The \$100,000 will be allocated based on this list until it is expired.

# RULES: HOW DOES PB WORK IN GREENSBORO?



## APPROVAL OF FUNDING

- After the vote, winning projects will be submitted to the City Manager for inclusion in the recommended budget. The City Manager will submit his recommended budget to City Council for adoption. City staff will keep residents apprised regarding project implementation schedules. Staff may confer with the Steering Committee for additional information regarding specific projects.
- City Staff will keep residents updated on implementation progress and may confer with the Steering Committee for guidance on project details.

## AMENDMENTS

- The Steering Committee will review and modify the handbook as needed at the end of each PB cycle, during planning for the next cycle. In the case of urgent issues that cannot wait until the end of the current cycle, the SC may make changes via a quorum vote. Reasonable prior notice of proposed changes will be furnished to the City of Greensboro and budget delegates.

# ACCEPTABLE VOTER IDS

Voters must prove they live in the district and are of age to vote. In order to facilitate broad participation, voters may present a wide array of proofs of ID, including but not limited to one or more of those below, establishing residency and age:

- A document with name and current address from a local, state, or US government agency such as a state driver's license or non-driver ID, consular ID, passport, EBT card, military ID card;
- Voter registration card;
- Utility, medical, credit card bill with name and current address;
- Current lease;
- Paycheck or paycheck stub from an employer or a W-2 statement;
- Bank statement or bank-issued credit card statement;
- Student ID;
- School ID;
- Employee ID;
- Permanent Resident Card (Green Card) or other Immigration Documentation;
- Residency Letter or Identification issued by a homeless shelter, halfway house, etc;
- Passport or other ID issued by a foreign government;
- Social Security benefit statements or check;
- Employment Authorization Document;
- Medicare or other insurance document with address;
- Tax forms;
- School records (or naming the parents of children attending school and the parents' address);
- Title to any property (automobiles, house, etc.) with address;
- Birth or marriage certificate;
- Union Membership Card.

# **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES: WHO DOES WHAT?**

There is a role for everyone in participatory budgeting, but different people have different roles and responsibilities, based partly on their stake in the community and their time commitment to the process. We encourage every community stakeholder to both participate and encourage others in the community to participate.

## **COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

- Attend a Neighborhood Assembly and/or Project Expo
- Identify local problems and needs
- Propose project ideas
- Volunteer to be budget delegates
- Vote on project proposals
- Encourage friends and neighbors to participate in PBG

## **BUDGET DELEGATES**

- Identify local problems and needs
- Discuss and prioritize initial project ideas
- Consult with community members on project proposals
- Develop full project proposals
- Prepare project posters and presentations
- Conduct outreach to mobilize community members to participate
- Monitor project implementation
- Participate in the evaluation of the PB process

# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES: WHO DOES WHAT?

## STEERING COMMITTEE

- Design and oversee the PB process
- Make decisions about the PB Process
- Distribute promotional materials
- Conduct outreach to mobilize community members to participate
- Support Neighborhood Assemblies and budget delegate meetings
- Facilitate budget delegate orientations
- Approve and help evaluate the PB process
- Review and revise rules to the PB process
- Encourage PB
- Help create a shared catalog of project costs
- Help provide interpretation and translation of materials

## CITY FACILITATORS

- Provide staff support to budget delegates
- Prepare and distribute educational and promotional materials
- Act as liaison with city departments and agencies providing estimates for project proposals and leveraging funds with sister agencies
- Provide feedback and technical assistance on project proposals
- Deliver final PB decisions to the City
- Monitor project implementation

## PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECT

- Prepare educational and promotional materials
- Offer technical assistance on the PB process
- Coordinate evaluation of the PB process
- Prepare written reports and data summaries of the process
- Help provide interpretation and translation of materials
- Help establish PBG online presence and resources



# GLOSSARY OF GREENSBORO PB

Included below are some common terms and definitions that we use during the process.

**BUDGET DELEGATE** – Budget delegates are volunteers from the community that do the work necessary to turn community ideas into project proposals.

**ISSUE/DEMOGRAPHIC COMMITTEES** – Issue/Demographic committees are meant to ensure maximum participation from community members who might not otherwise participate, not to divide or separate sectors of the community.

**MOBILE VOTING** – Voting that happens on location in high traffic areas that are accessible to the community; typically held over short periods of time 2-3 hours.

**NEIGHBORHOOD ASSEMBLIES** – Town hall style meetings that involve presentations and small group brainstorming and take place in various locations throughout the districts.

**PROJECT EXPO** – Community gathering where budget delegates showcase their project proposals for their communities. Often resemble science fair type events with volunteer made visual presentations.

**STEERING COMMITTEE** – Appointed by City Council to coordinate the PB process across all districts in the City of Greensboro.





[www.greensboro-nc.gov/pb](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/pb)  
@GreensboroPB – Twitter  
[Facebook.com/PBGreensboro](https://www.facebook.com/PBGreensboro)  
[pbgreensboro@gmail.com](mailto:pbgreensboro@gmail.com)



PARTICIPATORY  
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For more information on Participatory Budgeting in other cities, please check out [www.participatorybudgeting.org](http://www.participatorybudgeting.org) or contact the Participatory Budgeting Project at 347-652-1478 or [info@participatorybudgeting.org](mailto:info@participatorybudgeting.org). The Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) is a non-profit organization that empowers people to decide together how to spend public money, primarily in the US and Canada. We create and support participatory budgeting processes that deepen democracy, build stronger communities, and make public budgets more equitable and effective.