

Office of Participatory Budgeting

External Oversight Board - Meeting #22

- 6:00 pm: **Agenda Overview**
 - *Motion to adopt meeting minutes*
 - *Board Meetings Schedule*
- 6:10 pm: **Idea Collection Recap**
- 6:25 pm: **Data Analytics - Initial Findings**
- 7:15 pm: **Workflow Updates and Process Clarification**
- 7:25 pm: **Visioning Forums and Online Engagement**
- 7:35 pm: **Comments from Jim Kennedy, EOB Co-Chair**
- 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 12, 2024 (Virtual)	<i>Idea Collection Recap Data Analytics Initial Findings Concept for Visioning Workshops</i>
September 19, 2024 (Virtual)	<i>Community Priorities Visioning Forums</i>
October 3, 2024 (Virtual)	<i>Visioning Forums Updates/Coordination</i>
October 17, 2024 (Virtual)	<i>Visioning Forums Debrief Initial Evaluation Findings</i>
October 30, 2024 (Virtual)	<i>Visioning Forums Debrief</i>

Idea Collection Recap



Idea Collection Results



Ideas were collected through multiple channels, including:

- City-sponsored workshops (**312 ideas**),
 - *About 200 participants submitted*
- Individually organized community meetings (**98 ideas**), and
- Individual submissions (in person and in portal) (**828 ideas**)

Total ideas collected: 1238!

Detailed Breakout:

- PB Corners- Library (**52 ideas**) + City Hall (**15 ideas**)
- PB Phone Line (**3 ideas**)

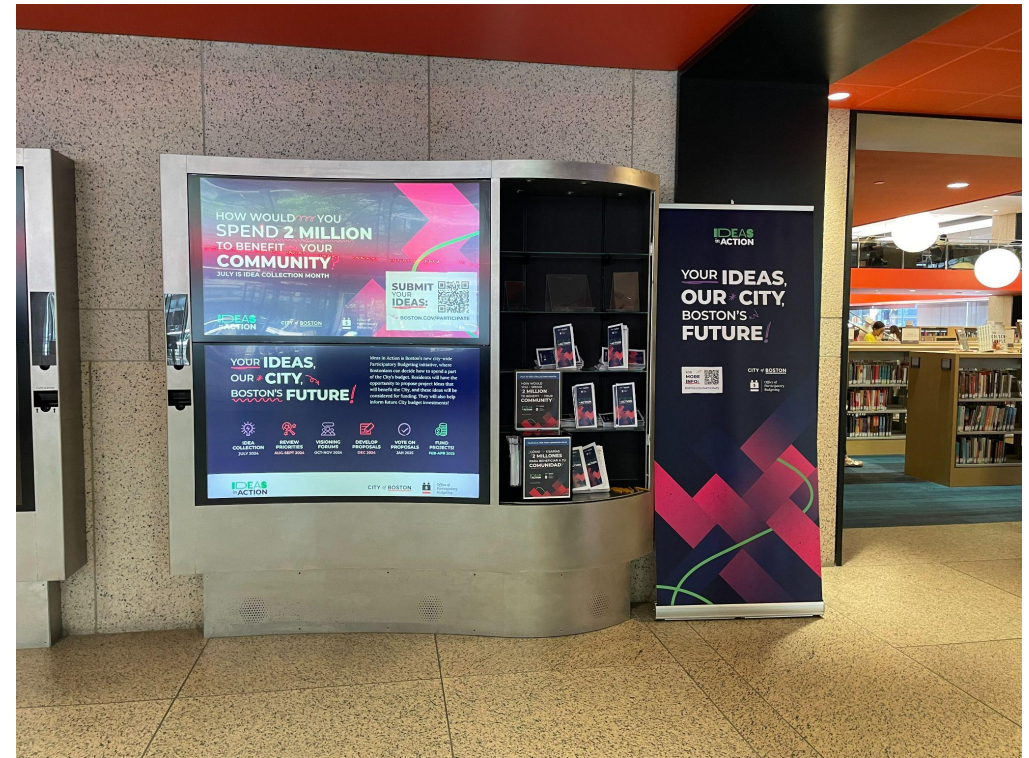


Idea Collection Workshop hosted by Union Capital Boston

Idea Collection- Overview



- PB Cycle One, **789 Boston residents** participated in submitting ideas from *July 1, 2024 through August 15, 2024*
- On average, Boston residents submitted **1.65 ideas per person**
- Out of the total ideas, approximately **64% were city-wide** ideas and **36% were location specific**



PB Corner at BPL Central

Idea Collection- Overview



Where did submissions come from?

Submitter Neighborhood	Percentage
Dorchester	23.31%
East Boston	12.23%
Jamaica Plain	10.91%
Brighton	9.59%
Roxbury	6.20%
Hyde Park	5.29%
Allston	4.55%
Downtown	4.46%
Roslindale	4.05%
Mattapan	3.31%
Charlestown	3.14%
South End	2.31%
South Boston	2.07%
Fenway	1.74%
Mission Hill	1.16%
Chinatown	1.07%
North End	1.07%
Back Bay, West Roxbury, West End, Beacon Hill, South Boston Waterfront, Longwood, Leather District	All < 1%

Which neighborhoods were proposals targeting?

Proposal Neighborhood	Percentage
Citywide	63.14%
Dorchester	6.03%
Brighton	4.96%
East Boston	3.31%
Allston	2.73%
Roxbury	2.56%
Charlestown	2.31%
Hyde Park	2.15%
Mattapan	2.07%
Back Bay	1.40%
Jamaica Plain	1.32%
Fenway	1.07%
Roslindale, Beacon Hill, Downtown, Chinatown, West Roxbury, South End, West End, North End, South Boston, Mission Hill, Longwood, South Boston Waterfront, Outside of Boston	All < 1%



Participatory Budgeting Community Priorities



Preliminary Overview and Insights

External Oversight Board Meeting - September 12, 2024

THE PROJECT TEAM

OFFICE OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING



RENATO CASTELO
Director



CYNTHIA LIN
Chief of Staff



BLANCA TEIXEIRA
*Finance & Grants/Contracts
Manager*

ANALYTICS



HOPE RUSE
Data Analyst



JOEY HEADLEY
Data Analyst



JOHN SAAD
Data Engineer

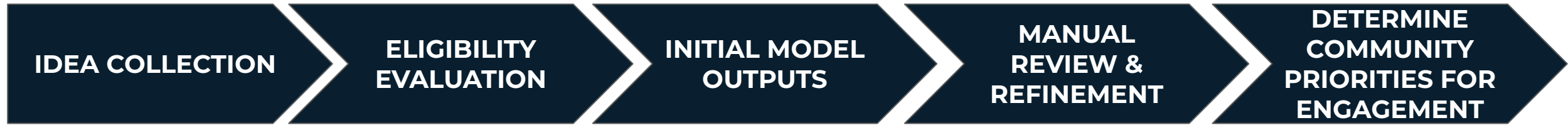


JEFF LAMBERT
*Director of
Analytics*

OVERVIEW

- ✓ **Review Topic Modeling Process:** *Understand how ideas go from resident submissions, through the topic model, all the way to categorized ideas.*
- ✓ **Preliminary Topic Model Results:** *Explore preliminary topic assignments and associated submissions.*

TOPIC MODELING PROCESS



Current Step

PRELIMINARY RESULTS



Number of Ideas & Participants Across Initial Topics

DRAFT

22
Total Topics



■ Number of Ideas ● Number of Participants

* The model also returned an additional catch all topic for outlier ideas.



EXAMPLE MODEL RESULTS

DRAFT

Enhancing Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Infrastructure - 206 ideas

Connect Grew ave and Mansur Street to Hyde Park Ave for pedestrians. Design a pedestrian overpass or underpass and an easement through the industrial property to connect these streets to Hyde park ave.

Improve Kenmore Square for pedestrians and bicyclists. Kenmore square is a major square is a major and historic square with a T station that marks the branching off/ meeting point of three green line branches and a bus hub. Yet it is auto oriented with a massive amount of space dedicated to cars. Do a redesign of the whole square with pedestrian and bike safety and creating new public spaces as the priorities.

Add pedestrian signals and/or flashing walk signs to make a safer crossing at roundabout and 93 ramps. Although, it would be more ideal to add a footbridge (similar to Storrow Dr) to bypass traffic and connect Columbia Rd to William J Day Blvd. The addition of pedestrian-focused elements at this roundabout will connections and safer pathways to the South Boston parks and beaches for the Dorchester community. This roundabout is very scary for walkers, especially with dogs and strollers. From Savin Hill, you have to cross 8 lanes of traffic before feeling like you can safely walk to the parks and beaches. It should be a top priority and not wait for future development (i.e. Dorchester Bay) to improve the safety and walkability in this area. This roundabout is a constant "accident waiting to happen".

EXAMPLE MODEL RESULTS

DRAFT

Housing Support and Equity Initiatives – 92 ideas

Affordable housing application process redesign. We need to work with major affordable housing developers to redesign their applications. They are far too difficult to fill out and challenge the dignity of applicants. I helped a working class artist friend fill out an application for an income-restricted affordable housing unit. It was, simply put, a horrible experience and I don't know how many people apply and apply "correctly" enough not to rule themselves out on a technicality. You need a high level of education and savvy to fill these applications out, and so low income people with low education attainment are disproportionately impacted. Why is there no Housing option?

More rental subsidies for those unable to find affordable housing, with equity criteria. 65% of Bostonians rent; most Bostonians' annual income is way below the area median income. Boston has one of the 2-top highest rental markets in the nation. Long-time Bostonians must not be forced out of their homes/communities.

Additional resources for home energy audits, energy efficiency upgrades, and asbestos and mold removal for poor people. ABCD, the organization that helps with these things, is very underfunded. It enables poor folks to save money on their electric bills and live in cleaner environments. It also addresses a funding gap, since medium and higher-income people can benefit from similar programs more easily through MassSave

EXAMPLE MODEL RESULTS

DRAFT

Urban Greening and Environmental Equity – 73 ideas

Consider replacing a few curbside parking spots with tree pits to add green space where none exists. This will help extend the tree canopy into an area where it is very lacking at the moment.

Expand the city's process for getting trees and shady areas into Roxbury. This would help prioritize the health and wellbeing of Roxbury residents

I would like to see more trees planted in Brighton. There is a very clear temperature difference between two neighboring streets in Brookline and Boston. Lack of greenery on the Boston side makes it difficult to be outside in the hot summer months

Seed Program. Can you take some of the 2 million and expand the BPL's seed program to all locations but put a new emphasis on edible indoor growing. for example add seeds like alpine strawberries and meyer lemon trees seeds as well as different herbs that can be grown inside in containers. new emphasis on indoor container gardening so the program is more useful to a large group of the residents.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ONGOING REFINEMENT

Overlapping topics

- Youth Development and Educational Equity Programs
- Empowerment Through Education, Job Training, and Economic Development

Including multiple concepts in the same topic

- Neighborhood Safety and Aesthetic Lighting Enhancements
- Inclusive Community Spaces and Recreational Facility Improvements

Level of specificity regarding target group and intended intervention

- Community-Led Youth Mental Health and Support Programs
- Community Engagement and Social Equity Programs for Seniors and Diverse Groups

NEXT STEPS



QUESTIONS



Workflow Updates



PB Process Clarification



**REVIEW OF
COMMUNITY
PRIORITIES**
(Aug. - Sep. 2024)

OPB reviews all the project ideas shared by residents to determine eligibility. Working with the Board in meetings open to the public, OPB will identify the top 10-15 Community Priorities based on the types of ideas submitted.



**VISIONING
FORUMS
& ONLINE ENGAGEMENT**
(Oct. - Nov. 2024)

Residents will engage with OPB and relevant City Departments to review, discuss, and assess the feasibility and impact of ideas collected. Attendees will draft a statement to define what ballot proposals should look like considering Community Priorities. Online option will be available to provide feedback.

→ Goal to host forums in October



**PROPOSAL
DEVELOPMENT**
(Dec. 2024)

A PB ballot with the 15 proposal statements drafted by residents will be finalized by OPB and the Board by reviewing and incorporating relevant online feedback. OPB and City Departments will conduct a final feasibility assessment, determine estimated costs for each ballot proposal, and be certified by the City's Chief Financial Officer.

→ OPB hosting in-person Board meetings in November to review and finalize resident proposals.



VOTE
(Jan. 2025)

Residents will vote for five (5) out of the 15 ballot proposals. Voting will occur online and in-person at City Hall and Public Library branches. Ballot proposals with the most votes will be awarded up to the funding cap for the particular PB Cycle.

Data Analytics

- OPB working with Data Analytics to refine Community Priorities

Coordination with City Departments

- Discuss idea collection findings
- Involvement in Visioning Forums and Proposal Development Phases

Evaluation

- Analyzing evaluation feedback from Idea Collection surveys, Board conversation, and Contract Partner Debriefs
- Present mid-cycle findings in October EOB meeting

Voting Platform

- Working with City Department of Innovation and Technology
- Exploring a contracting opportunity with Decision 21, the same vendor used for voting by NYC's PB process.

Workshops



Center for Teen Empowerment



Mass Senior Action Council



VietAid



Community Partner Debriefs: Initial Takeaways



Workshop Format:

- Consider flexibility for Idea Collection- series of workshops/ pop up events/ canvassing

Workshop Materials:

- Many CP's tailored materials to fit their audience
- Make materials more user friendly, accessible, and visual for participants

Timeframe:

- Advance notice would be helpful for outreach and planning. Also for training staff on workshops.

Compensation:

- Ability to deliver/ value for organization's time and expertise

Feedback to OPB:

- Appreciated City's presence / assistance at workshops

Future Collaboration:

- All CP's would like to stay involved with OPB

Media Campaign Snapshot



Flight dates: 7/8/2024 - 8/15/2024

Earned Media :

- 8 Earned media placements across mainstream and ethnic media outlets (Interviews with Dorchester Reporter, WGBH, WBUR, El Mundo, La Mega, Radio Tele Boston)

Outfront Media:

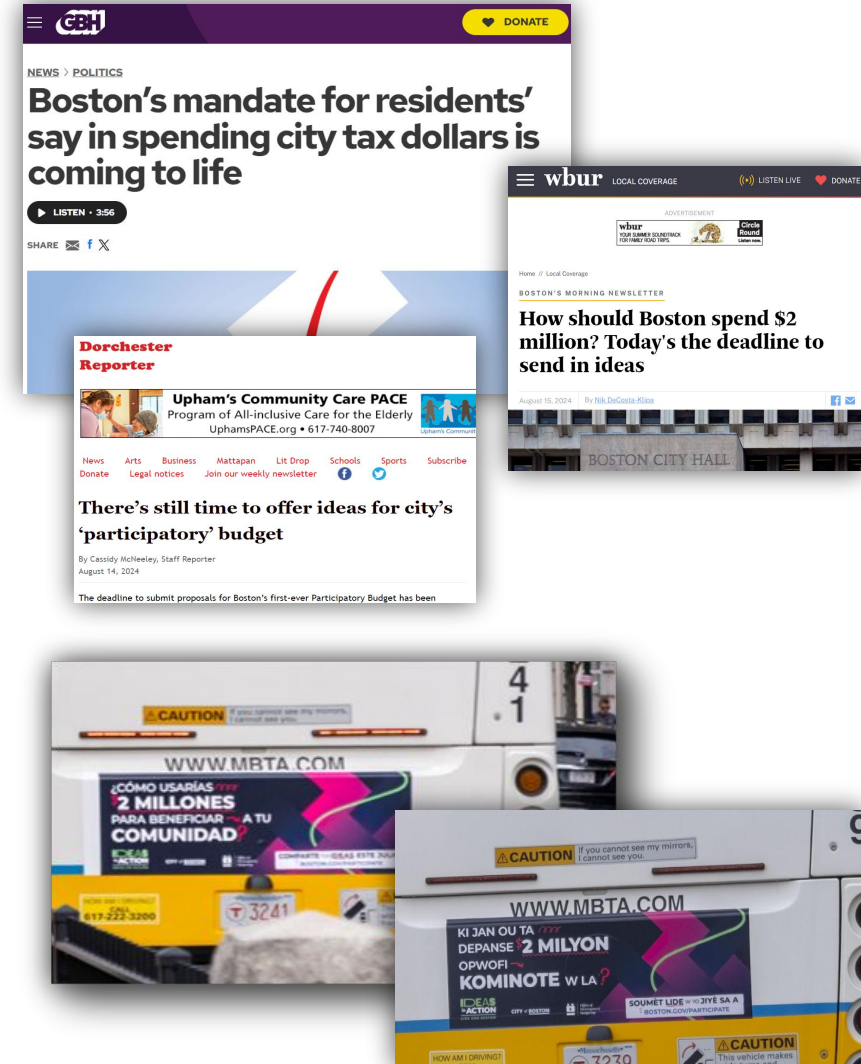
- Transit ad placement targeting Boston proper zip codes (on bus tails, interiors)
- 1,137,535 Mobile Impressions + 2,832 Mobile Clicks

Radio:

- Six major ethnic radio outlets in the city (La Mega, TNT Radio, Radio Concorde, Planet Compas, Radio Tele Boston and Insuperavel)
- 883,200 Impressions and 400 Radio Spots Aired

Print and Digital

- Print advertisements and digital banners were placed with local publications in the city, including the Dorchester Reporter, SAMPAN and El Mundo.



Visioning Forums & Online Engagement

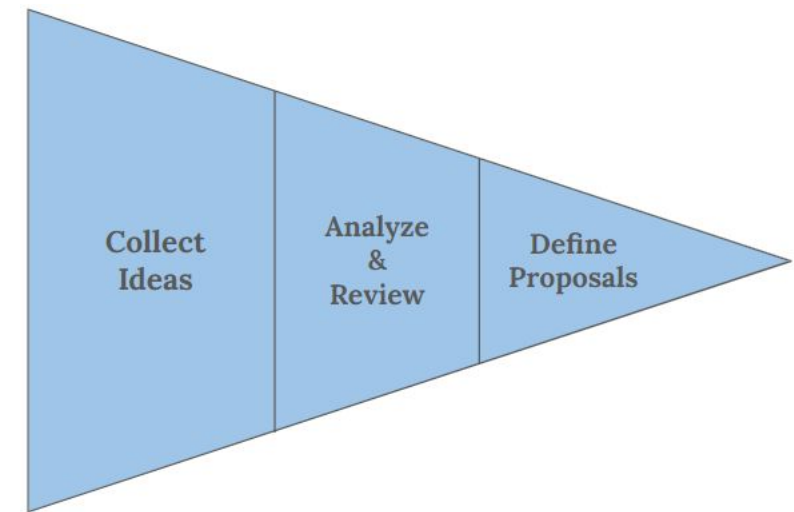


Visioning Forums - Goal and Objective



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, 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.



Visioning Forums- Hosting and Recruiting Logistics



OPB will host **five (5) 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.*

Role of Contract Partners

- **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. The Office of Participatory Budgeting will cover interpretation expenses.*
- **Training:** *Staff/facilitators will be required to attend a prep session with the Office of Participatory Budgeting prior to the Visioning Forum.*
- **Time commitment:** *Up to 3 hours in person*

Visioning Forums Workflow



In- Person Forums

- Starting in mid-October, a Visioning Forums will be held in partnership with Contract Partners across the City.
- Each Forum will focus on **2-3 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.
- **Meetings with the EOB:** OPB and its Board will meet online on 10/17 (to be confirmed) and 10/30 to review and discuss resident proposals. OPB will invite relevant City Departments to discuss feasibility and costs.

Comments from Board Co-Chair, Jim Kennedy



Public Comment

pb@boston.gov

