

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECT

Shari Davis
Co-Executive Director
@shari_davis1



PARTICIPATORY
BUDGETING PROJECT

www.participatorybudgeting.org



**“Just 19% [of Americans]
say the government is run
for the benefit of all.”**

–PEW RESEARCH CENTER NOVEMBER, 2015



PARTICIPATORY
BUDGETING PROJECT

Who We Are

HISTORY

Founded in 2009, we have led, supported, or inspired almost every PB process in North America.

MISSION

To empower people to decide together how to spend public money.

WHERE WE WORK

Across the US and Canada, with staff in New York City, Oakland.

WHAT ARE WE UP AGAINST?

Gentrification. How can we promote development without displacement?

Austerity. How can existing resources be used to reinvest in people and places?

Gig economy. How can we share wealth, provide dignity and security?



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THE PROBLEMS WITH PARTICIPATION

UNEQUAL



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THE PROBLEMS WITH PARTICIPATION

POWERLESS

je participe
tu participes
il participe
nous participons
vous participez
ils profitent



*I participate
You participate
He participates
We participate
You all participate
They decide*

(French student poster)



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A LADDER OF BUDGET PARTICIPATION

Participatory
Budgeting

Citizen
Boards Or
Councils
Focus Groups &
Town Halls

Online Games

Hearings &
Deputations

Full
Participation

Limited
Participation

Consultation

Informing

Listening



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Another world is possible

Participatory Budgeting and Planning

- PB is democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a budget (could be for a town, city, nation, business, or organization)
- Participatory Planning = transparent, involving all stakeholders



SHARE YOUR IDEAS TO
**EMPOWER
KENTUCKY**

Empower Kentucky Plan

Post-coal KY plan, developed through a 2-year process with more 1200 participants

Kentucky (statewide)



Participatory Budgeting in NYC

31 council districts, +\$40 million in capital funds. 100,000 voters.

New York City, NY (citywide)

PB at a national scale

Portugal recently became the first country to do PB with its national budget

Portugal (nationwide)

...and so much more

- Community Land Trusts
- Free, Open-Source, Libre Software
- Restorative Justice
- Mutual Aid Networks
- Solidarity Health Clinics
- Timebanking
- Land banks
- Limited Equity Housing Cooperatives
- Permaculture
- Intentional Communities
- Tool Libraries
- Complementary Currencies
- Credit Unions
- Creative Commons
- Media Democracy
- Community Networks
- Blockchains
- Zero Waste
- Community Solar
- Debt Relief
- Revolving Loan Funds
- Public Banks
- Collectives and Unions
- and the list goes on

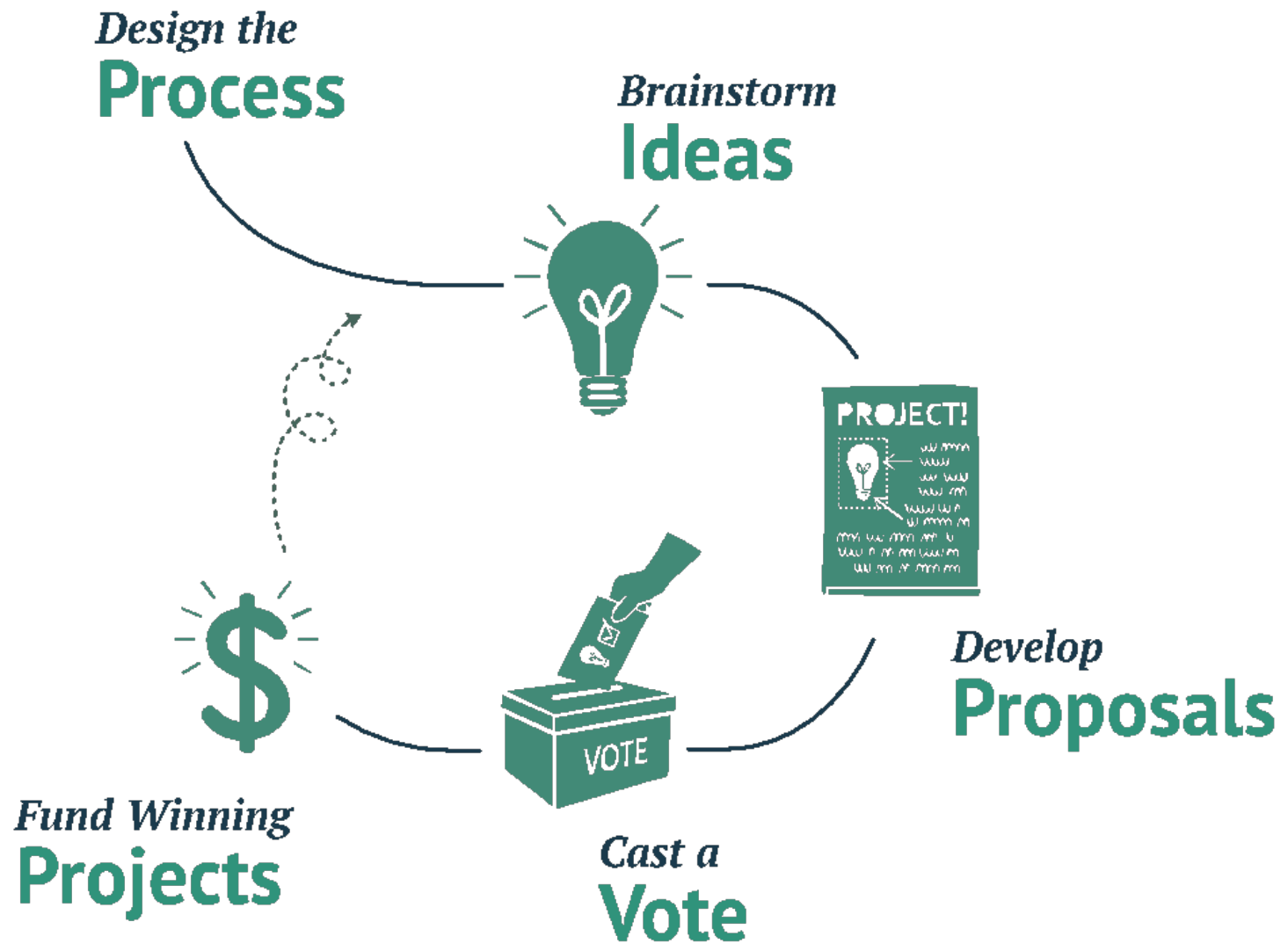
WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?

A democratic process in which **community members directly** decide how to spend part of a public budget.



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How PB Works



DEMOCRATIZE CONVENTIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Special Districts and Assessments - Tax Increment Financing, Business Improvement Districts, Economic Development Corporations

Public Benefit Funds - Community Benefits Agreements, PILOT payments, Anchor Institution (e.g., Hospitals Universities)

Business & Workforce Development Programs - Small business loans, Incubators, Education & Training

Low Income and Workforce Housing - Subsidies, Credits, Fee en lieu (of construction) funds



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WHERE HAS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WORKED?

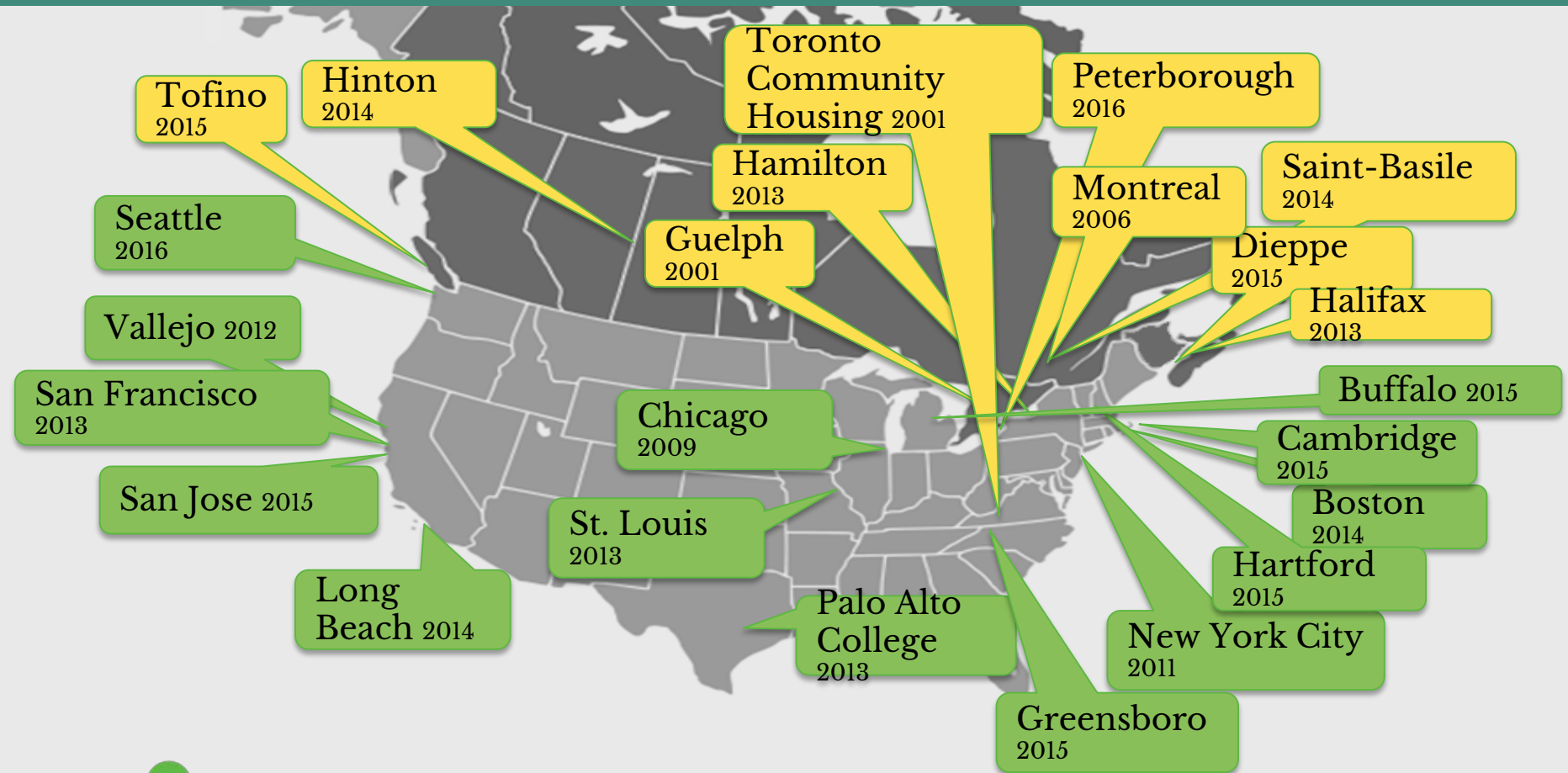
3000+ PB processes around the world

- ✓ Cities
- ✓ States
- ✓ Counties
- ✓ Public Housing
- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Community Organizations



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PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN NORTH AMERICA



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TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING 2001

164,000 TENANTS

As many as **6,000 tenants** per year have allocated
up to **\$9 million** in capital funds per year



VALLEJO, CA 2012

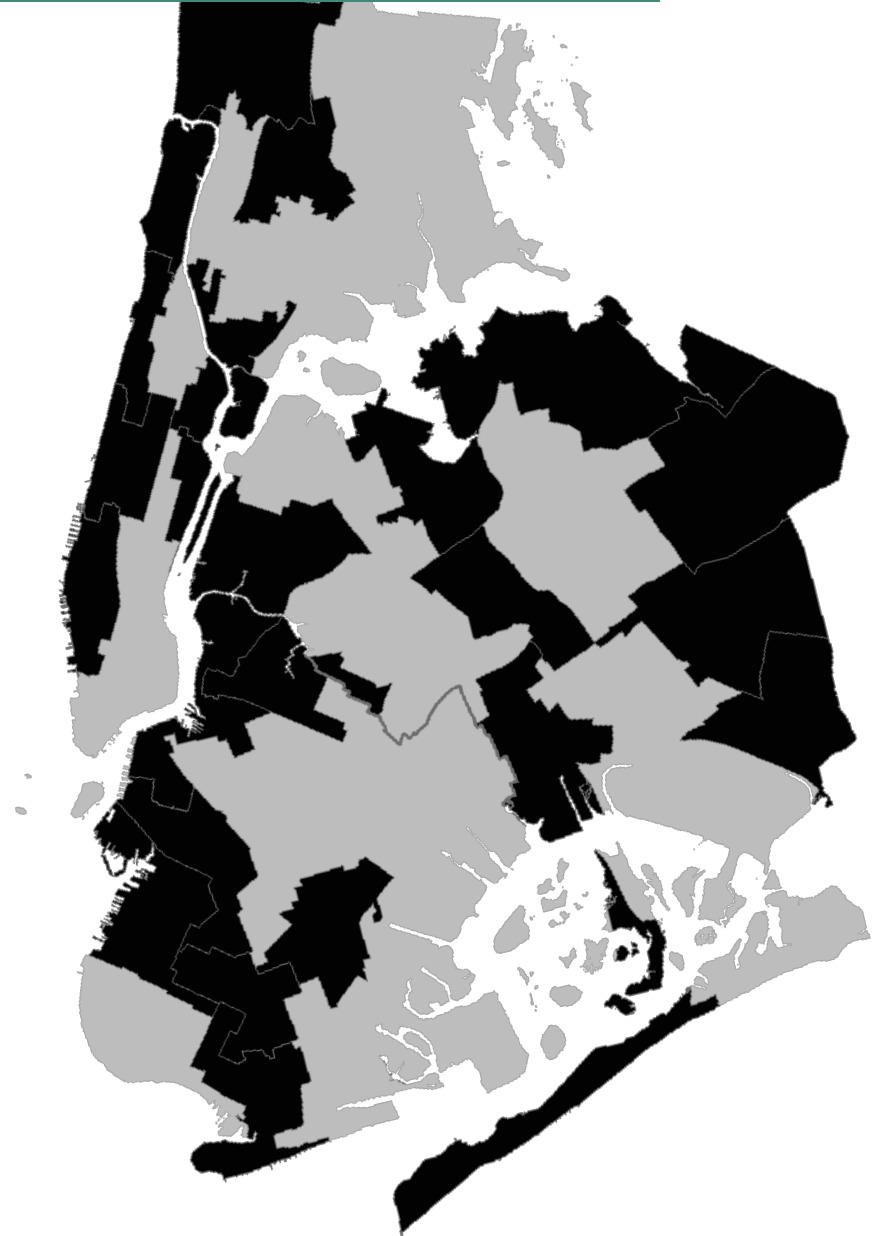
FIRST CITYWIDE PB PROCESS IN THE U.S.

- 117,000 residents
- First citywide process in U.S.
- \$3.2 million (sales tax revenue)
- 4,000 residents voted to fund 12 winning projects



NEW YORK CITY 2011

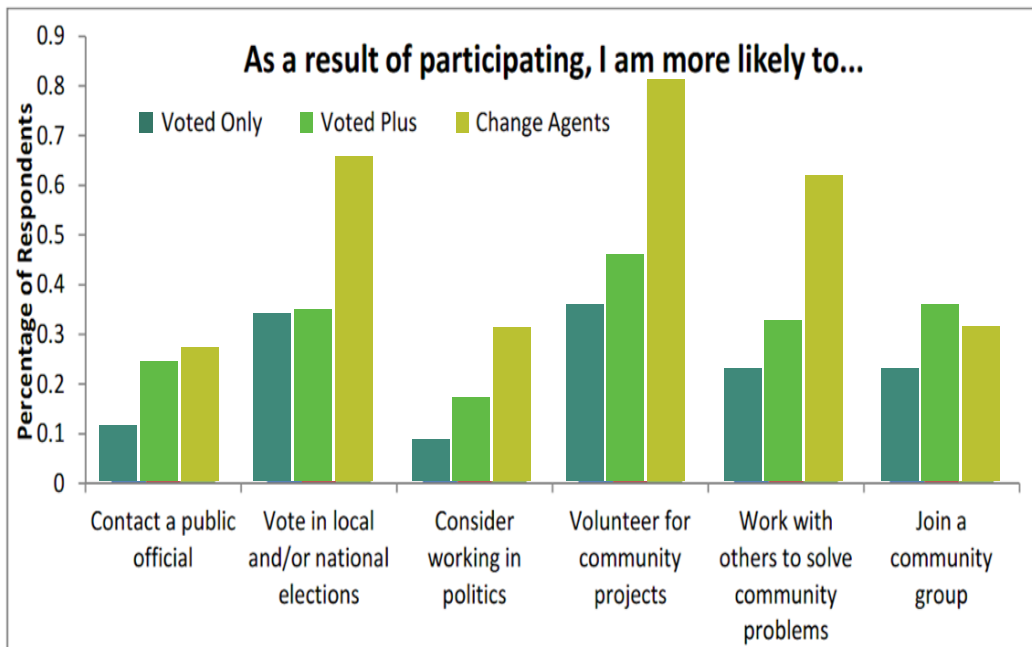
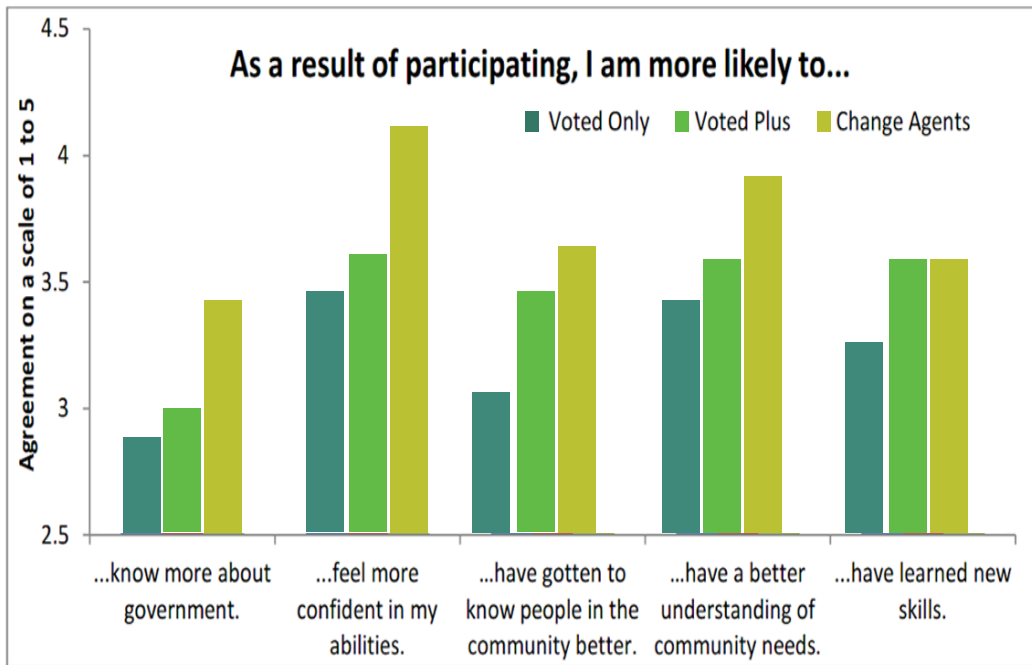
\$37 million reaching over
4.5 million residents in
28 districts



BOSTON 2014

\$1 million decided entirely by **YOUTH** residents
ages 12-25





2018 YOUTH LEAD THE CHANGE WINNING PROJECTS

FANS IN SCHOOLS
PROJECT A - 858
VOTES

YOUTH WI-FI LOUNGE
PROJECT D - 812
VOTES

ADD SOLAR PANELS TO
BUILDINGS
PROJECT B - 718
VOTES

PAST WINNERS

- Informative homeless resources. A digital billboard displaying resources and job opportunities available to the homeless youth.
- Performing and visual arts studio. A space where people of all ages can come together and create all types of art.
- Future media center. A space that would contain recent technology that would otherwise be unavailable to most students.

HOW TO ENSURE EQUITY AND INCLUSION?

- ✓ **Money that matters**
- ✓ **Grassroots leadership**
- ✓ **Inclusive design**
- ✓ **Targeted outreach**
- ✓ **Equity criteria**



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MORE EQUITABLE & EFFECTIVE SPENDING

In NYC, funds are more likely to go to projects in low-income areas in PB than through other discretionary funds.



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BUILDING A BROADER POLITICAL CONSTITUENCY

VALLEJO

20% of PB voters
were ineligible to
vote
in regular elections

NYC

Higher percentage
of low-income
residents voted in
PB (40%) compared
to full population
(34%) & local
elections (29%).



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shari@participatorybudgeting.org

TW: @PBProject | @shari_davis1

FB: /ParticipatoryBudgetingProject

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