

Session 407: Participatory Budgeting: how more resident input means better decision-making



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BEYOND THE BLUEPRINT
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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What is Participatory Budgeting (PB)?

- A democratic process in which community members decide how to spend part of a capital budget.
- Gives ordinary people real decision-making power over real money.



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PB across the globe



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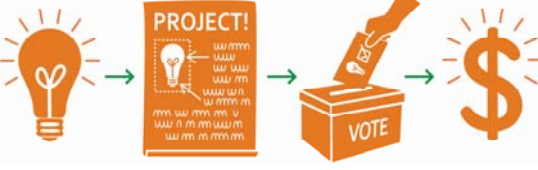
PB at Toronto Community Housing

Since 2001, Toronto Community Housing residents have had the opportunity to participate in Participatory Budgeting.




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The PB process



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The PB process: how it works

Planning

Last fall planning happens before PB activities start in Toronto Community Housing neighbourhoods. A local monitoring committee oversees the PB process to make sure that it is transparent and allows for strong communication between residents and staff.

Five PB monitoring committees (Central, East, West, South, Toronto) meet with staff to share ideas and help prepare for the PB process. Committee members include Tenant Representatives and resident leaders.

Brainstorming (Phase 1)

Tenant Representatives and resident leaders work together to identify possible projects in their community. All residents are encouraged to attend these workshops.

Building meetings (Phase 2)

Residents choose the projects that will go forward to an allocation meeting. Residents also choose one voting delegate and one alternate delegate to represent their community at the allocation meeting.

Allocation meetings (Phase 3)

Delegates from all communities attend allocation meetings to vote for the projects that should receive funding. All residents are welcome to attend an allocation meeting. However, only delegates are allowed to vote.

✓ PB funding can be used for major building improvement projects

- stairwells
- hallways
- playgrounds
- exterior lighting
- wheelchair ramps
- lobbies
- laundry rooms
- building collectors
- liquor stores (that including washers and dryers)
- community garden projects

✗ PB funding cannot be used for regular maintenance and repair work such as:

- pest management
- building interiors, roofs, etc.
- window cleaning
- security cameras

For regular maintenance requests, you can call the Client Care Centre at 416-963-0339 (24 hours a day, seven days a week). I want more about Participatory Budgeting at torontohousing.ca/pb

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What's in it for everyone?

The outcomes

- More civic engagement
- Broader political participation
- New community leaders/more active citizens
- Stronger relationships between government, organizations and residents
- Fairer, more effective spending

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A PB example: OUI allocation day



Request for \$12,000 for the foundation of a playground



Request for \$170,000 to remove carpets

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Resources

Toronto Community Housing
• torontohousing.ca/PB

Participatory Budgeting Project
• participatorybudgeting.org

City of Toronto pilot
• toronto.ca/PBToronto

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Discussion

Questions?

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Thank you!

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