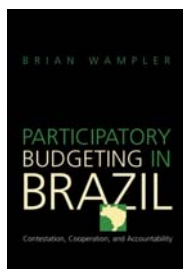


Participatory Budgeting – Proposed Pilot

Governance and Priorities Committee
December 3, 2015



Background

Participatory budgeting is a democratic process in which the municipality allocates an amount of money for residents to propose and decide upon community projects for implementation.

In 2014, City Council directed staff to develop a participatory budgeting pilot as part of two year evolution of financial planning process.

Reinforced in City of Victoria Strategic Plan: to design a participatory budgeting process.



Background

Participatory budgeting started in Brazil and has spread globally

Early processes focused on investment in public infrastructure (South America)

Social elements such as poverty and housing soon followed (United Kingdom)

North American cities have recently started to include participatory budgeting in annual budgets

- San Francisco \$100,000
- St. Louis \$100,000
- Chicago \$ 1.3 million
- Boston \$ 1 million
- New York \$ 1 million/13 neighbourhoods
- Toronto \$450,000
- Guelph \$125,000
- Tofino \$ 20,000



Proposed Model for Victoria

Pilot a process for first year

Allocate \$60,000 within the Neighbourhoods Capital Budget

Process and deliverables to include:

1. Education on participatory budgeting
2. Establish citizen body, governance, and metrics
3. Identification of community priorities
4. Deliberation
5. Consensus-based decision-making
6. Implementation
7. Evaluation and monitoring



Proposed Model for Victoria

The participatory budgeting pilot commence upon approval of the 2016 financial plan.

The citizen-based committee would be made up of neighbourhood representatives who would determine shared community priorities and opportunities

City staff support the process but do not play role in the decision-making

A facilitator with experience might be considered for added support to the citizen committee

Process will be evaluated throughout to report back to Council quarterly, and prior to consideration of future participatory activities.



“My Great Neighbourhood” Fund

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Proposed Neighbourhood Fund

To encourage and simplify process for citizen-initiated enhancements to public space.

Best practices research indicates that citizen-led projects in public spaces can engage citizens in working together, create greater ownership and pride within their neighbourhoods, and beautify and animate under-utilized community spaces.



Proposed Neighbourhood Fund

During meetings with each neighbourhood association over the summer of 2015, there was extensive discussion about opportunities for placemaking and public space enhancements.

Strong desire for simpler processes and staff support for determining City considerations such as utilities, safety, sight lines and liability.



Proposed Neighbourhood Fund

\$120,000 is proposed for community projects in public space or on public lands.

The program would be open to submissions from not-for-profit organizations such as Victoria neighbourhood associations, schools, community centres, and other not-for-profits.

Applications should demonstrate how the community was engaged in the process and the community's in-kind and financial contributions.

The fund would facilitate citizen-initiated projects up to \$5,000 that leave a positive physical legacy in the public space.

Projects might include crosswalk art, murals, information kiosks, banners, interpretative signage, and parklets. It would not apply to operating funds, performances, or events.

Intake would happen after approval of 2016 Financial Plan.



Recommendation

Council direct staff to:

1. Prepare for a participatory budgeting process to commence upon approval of the 2016 Financial Plan.
2. Develop a policy for a "My Great Neighbourhood Fund" and application guidelines for introduction upon approval of the 2016 Financial Plan.

