

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING – TOWARDS THE MAINSTREAM



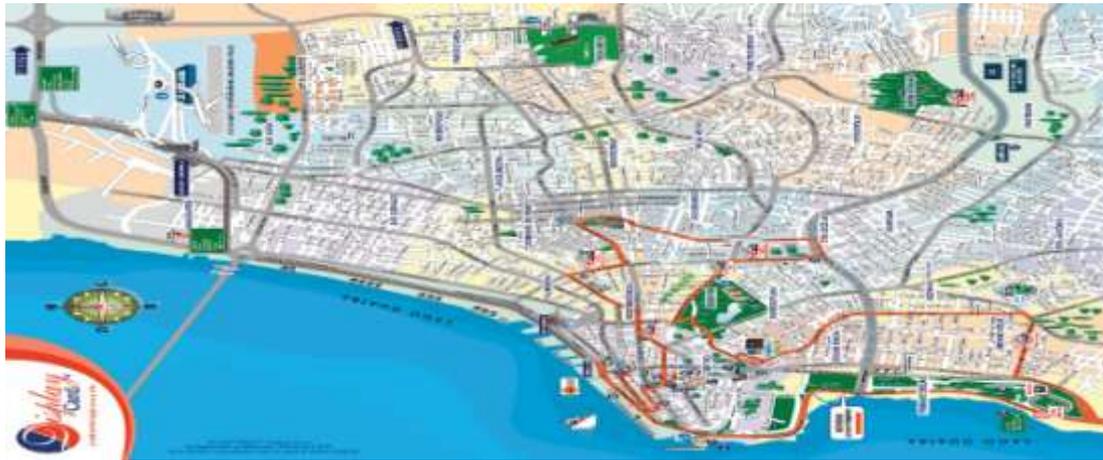
A City decides– PB in Porto Alegre



- Community members identify spending priorities and select budget delegates
- Budget delegates develop specific spending proposals, with help from experts
- Community members vote on which proposals to fund
- The city or institution implements the top proposals



A city decides



- Neighborhood budget committees have authority to determine the citywide budget, not just the allocation of resources for their particular neighbourhood

The figures

200 million dollars per year on construction and services subject to participatory budgeting. Annual spending on fixed expenses, such as debt service and pensions, is not subject to public participation.

Around fifty thousand residents of Porto Alegre now take part in the participatory budgeting process (compared to 1.5 million city inhabitants),

The Budget Matrix

Geographic Area	Priority total	Need total	Population total	Total Score	% of total city score	Resource available (£41,200)
Area A	6	6	9	21	12.9%	£5,314
Area B	3	9	6	18	11%	£4,544
Area C	12	12	6	30	18.4%	£7,581
Area D	3	2	2	7	4.3%	£1,772
Area E	12	2	2	16	9.8%	£4,038
etc	~	~	~	~	~	~
Total for all areas of the city				163	100%	£41,200

Deliberative open budgets and building budgets



SHETLAND: Building Budgets – now in year 3:

- Entire Council budget made available to resident scrutiny – recommendations included ringfencing budgets for youth provision, disabled care, services for the elderly.
- Can be organised/delivered ‘face to face’/online or combination of both.



PB as part of neighbourhood or community planning



- Residents work with Council Officers, elected members and partners to develop a local action plan – through appropriate consultation processes – such as Charrettes or ‘planning for real’.
- Ideas prioritised through this process are assessed – with resident input – in terms of ‘deliverability’ – some can be addressed through small scale community projects. Other projects might need to be commissioned from the Council/partners



Community commissioning



- **Western Isles:**
- £500k budget to commission bus services decided by residents through PB process:
- Consultation with residents – information passed to Bus Companies to inform tendering process
- Residents considered and chose from competing tenders – covering timetables, costings, fares, fleet capacity, social and environmental impact.

‘Brilliant. I have no problem with any of these decisions.’

Transport Manager, Western Isles Council



Community commissioning



- Identify areas within existing budgets most amenable to PB approach
- In 2016 in West Lothian and Shetland, workshops have been held with heads of Infrastructure Services (Lead Officers with overall responsibility for road maintenance, refuse collection, environmental improvements etc.)
- The purpose of these meetings was to try and identify areas of ‘low hanging fruit’. That is, specific budgets within the service areas that might be most easily opened up to a PB process.
- This method might be applicable to eg the SNP’S aspiration to allocate 1% of LA budgets via PB



Pooled Budgets and Streamlined Participation



- Public bodies, eg Health Authorities, the Police, Transport providers, Housing Associations and Local Authorities, pool a percentage of their budgets to be allocated through local PB processes
- One ‘community consultation’ process on an annual basis, rather than organisations collecting info independently – (creating ‘consultation fatigue, duplication etc)

PB AT SCALE IN OTHER COUNTRIES



NEW YORK:

"In four years participatory budgeting has exploded from four to 27 New York City Council districts. With over 51,000 voters casting ballots last cycle to allocate a total of \$32 million dollars to projects across the city, New York's experiment in direct democracy has quickly become the largest of its kind in North America."

- Colin O'connor, Gotham Gazette October 2015.

ICELAND



Following the financial crash of 2008 –

- bankers being charged with crimes such as insider trading and market manipulation and being sent to prison for terms of up to five-and-a-half years.
- Limits on movement of capital

The Citizens Constitution



- 950 Citizens initially involved
- Constitutional experts drafted 700 page guidance document
- 25 residents elected to finalise content in consultation with wider resident population



The Citizens Constitution

Key points of Constitution:

- human rights at the heart of democracy,
- recognise the rights of nature
- give citizens the right to call referendums, block legislation, table bills and present issues for consideration providing they can get enough support.

67% voted to adopt Constitution in follow up national referendum.

PB in Iceland.



- 300 million ISK (about £1.4m) is allocated each year for ideas from citizens on how to improve 10 different neighbourhoods in the capital city of Iceland each year.
- Citizens submit their ideas for projects they think will improve their neighbourhoods and City of Reykjavik evaluates the costs and feasibility of each project.
- Citizens vote on the ideas. Tens of thousands of citizens have participated and over 300 projects have been delivered in the last three years.



PB in Iceland.



- Then citizens vote on the ideas. This voting helps citizens understand the realities of public budgeting. Tens of thousands of citizens have participated and over 300 projects have been delivered in the last three years.



www.pbnetwork.org.uk

www.PBScotland.scot