



Participatory Budgeting  
**San Antonio**

design +  
implementation  
brief

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## About Participatory Budgeting

Participatory Budgeting is a grassroots process through which district residents vote directly to allocate 1-15% of the city budget toward proposals developed by the community to meet local needs. Through a series of public meetings, residents work with elected officials throughout the year to identify neighborhood concerns and craft proposals to address them. Residents then decide which proposals to fund through a public vote. By removing traditional barriers to civic engagement – including youth, immigration status, and language ability – this process enfranchises and embraces the full diversity of our city.

*“To advance participatory budgeting in the United States, the White House will work with communities, non-profits, civic technologists, and foundation partners to develop new commitments that will expand the use of participatory budgeting in the United States.”*

- President Barack Obama

PB Profile: Mexico City, Mexico

Population: 8,851,000

1st PB Process: 2011

Current PB Cycle: 7th

PB Budget: 3% of City Budget





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## PB San Antonio

Participatory Budgeting in San Antonio has recent examples of success by way of its implementation in Palo Alto College. The community made up of university employees, educators, and students have participated in a process that answered to a variety of concerns and aspirations of the Palo Alto College community.

Other efforts are now being explored with the implementation of Participatory Budgeting in District 9, which is being led by City Councilman John Courage. The model applied will be enhanced and replicated in other districts, towards the goal of a city wide PB.

San Antonio is a region which admires self reliance and adheres to strong community and family values. Participatory Budgeting enhances the cultural and historic qualities of San Antonio and its residents.

PB Profile: Medellin, Colombia

Population: 2,464,000

1st PB Process: 2004

Current PB Cycle: 13th

PB Budget: 5% of City Budget



## Why PB?

### 1. Expand and Diversify Civic Participation:

Ensure that all community members have a voice in the development and improvement of their city, especially marginalized communities, reticent voters, and people with limited opportunities to engage in the political process.

### 2. Have Meaningful Social and Community Impact:

Use PB as a tool to effect meaningful social change in the community. PB in San Antonio should be mission driven and results oriented, and focused on generating the most good for the greatest number of people.

### 3. Promote Sustainable Public Good:

Make sustainable decisions that promote the long-term future and wellbeing of San Antonio residents.

### 4. Create Easy and Seamless Civic Engagement:

Enable the community to be involved without barriers or frictions. Create a welcoming space for residents to become engaged, fostering a “contagious” civic environment.

### 5. Promote Civic-mindedness:

Help residents imagine themselves as civic actors and educate each other about their needs and lives. Provide youth with the opportunity and experience to become life-long voters and community leaders.

## PB Profile: Paris, France

Population: 2,244,000

1st PB Process: 2014

Current PB Cycle: 4th

PB Budget: 5% of City Budget





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## PB Process

### 1) Planning

- Insure PB is run in a transparent and open form.
- Consider offline locations and online platforms on which citizens can propose, evaluate, and vote for ideas.
- Assesses Quality of Life Index and other statistical resources by neighborhoods and districts to know where resources are most needed.
- Start a steering committee made up of citizens and public officials to supervise the participatory budgeting process.
- Create a rule book for running the PB, design a public relations and outreach campaign, learn and share the budget funds restrictions, and other planning responsibilities.
- Residents and organizations learn about PB, join a committee and volunteer as budget delegates, and consider ideas for proposals.

### 2) Idea Collection

- The public will share ideas during public events, through an online mapping tool, or by email, mail, or phone.
- Anyone is welcome to propose project ideas.

### 3) Proposal Development

- Collect and assesses citizen ideas.
- Budget delegates made up of the public, volunteer experts, and city officials evaluate, and visit proposed project sites.
- The budget delegates reply come to citizens with a selection of final proposals and feedback about their ideas.
- Participants can volunteer as budget delegates if they are at least 14 years old. Youth under 14 can serve as delegates if they are partnered with a parent who is also a delegate; and are residents of the district, or affiliated with people who work in the district, own a business in the district, attend school in the district, or are parents of children who attend school in the district.
- All must attend a delegate orientation session.
- Each budget delegates will join a committee to discuss and develop project proposals for a certain issue area.
- Issue committees may include but are not limited to: Culture & Community Facilities, Education, Public Health & Public Safety, Parks & Recreation, Streets & Sidewalks, etc.



- All budget delegate committees will have 1-2 trained facilitators.
- Budget delegates will consider criteria such as community need, project need, impact, and feasibility when prioritizing projects.
- Each committee will send its project proposals to city officials for review before the public vote. The city officials will review projects to ensure they meet the legal requirements and offer cost estimates and corrections. The proposals will also be presented at an event in a local library or gymnasium so the public may ask questions about the project.

#### 4) Voting

- Citizens vote on the proposals in a district wide vote, which is accessed both online or at a physical location, such as the City Council members field office or local library.
- Voting age is 12 years old and limited to one vote per person living, studying, or working in that district.

#### 5) Implementation

- Budget delegates collect the votes and share the winning projects at a local event, City Council member brings before the City Council for approval.
- Budget delegates and citizens monitor the on-site project implementation.
- The city publishes the allocation of the public spending both offline and online and a year-end report details the project's implementation.





## PB D9

District 9 City Councilman John Courage set aside \$1,250,000.00, which draws from 3 funds, the majority coming from the Mobility Fund. District 9 Councilman, staff, and volunteers, will spend November and December of 2017 designing the PB, which will run from January to June 2018.

The systems under consideration to facilitate a PB in District 9, with a population of 160,000, include the use of 3 systems. This 3 system model is used by the City of Cambridge, MA with a population of 110,000: 1. Idea Collection Mapping: \$2500.00 per year 2. Nationbuilder: \$2000.00 per year 3. Stanford University PB Voting Platform: Free. The total cost of systems per year: \$4500.00. Total cost of PB program including these systems, marketing, food, outreach, and excluding 1 city staff working part time on PB: \$23,000.00 per year for the city of Cambridge, MA (2016 Source: [Michelle Monsegur](mailto:mmonsegur@cambridgema.gov)).

District 9 may run a PB at no cost using just the Stanford University PB Voting Platform and an email to collect idea proposals from the public. The design and start of the PB for District 9 will be shared across the district and media outlets to promote the PB process and invite resident to propose ideas, join the Mobility Committee, and to volunteer.

## PB Profile: District 9, San Antonio

Population: 160,000

1st PB Process: 2018

Current PB Cycle: 1st

PB Budget: \$1,250,000.00





## City-wide PB

The implementation and running of a city wide Participatory Budgeting process will be the largest civic exercise in the history of San Antonio, 10 districts will bring people together in a community building exercise. PB is an inclusive program which gives people the chance to direct the fate of their city, to answer to the needs not seen by government and others, to include the marginalized, children, immigrant, former convict. The implementation of a city wide PB in San Antonio would make it the largest PB in the United States. It would also make of San Antonio a lighthouse for democratic values in a time distinguished by autocratic tendencies.

3 possible options for city wide PB design + implementation:

- A. City government implements PB. Example: places system in Budget Department and promotes with Community Engagement Department's Speak Up.
- B. PB system, staff, & costs placed under a 501c nonprofit Example: pbsanantonio.org
- C. Collaborative model. Example: City government resources and fund raising by 501c cover cost of city wide PB.

The city of San Antonio has the opportunity to grow in an inclusive and sustainable manner and become an example of modern governance.



**2014** Anne Hidalgo is elected Mayor of Paris, France, implements Participatory Budgeting. Citizens vote on how to spend €20 million on 15 possible projects identified by the city.

**2015** a full-scale PB, with €65 million city-wide and citizens generating their own project ideas.

**2016** 158,964 people voted on how to spend nearly €100 million, including €10 million set aside for schools.

**2017-2020** The city has committed to reserving €500 million (about 5% of the city's capital fund) to be spent through participatory budgeting.



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## Community Feedback

Event: PB San Antonio Kickoff

Date: Tuesday, June 6th, 2017 at 6:30 pm

Location: The Brick at Blue Star Arts Complex, 1414 S. Alamo St. San Antonio, TX 78210

Event: PB San Antonio Workshop

Date: Tuesday, September 19th, 2017 at 7 pm

Location: The Brick at Blue Star Arts Complex, 1414 S. Alamo St. San Antonio, TX 78210

Event: Advisory Committee of City Councilman John Courage

Date: Thursday, October 12th, 2017 at 6:30 pm

Location: Brook Hollow Library, 530 Heimer Rd, San Antonio, TX 78232

Event: Neighborhood Associations Presidents of District 9

Date: Tuesday, October 17th, 2017 at 6:30 pm

Location: Urban Ecology Center at Hardberger Park, 8400 NW Military Hwy, San Antonio, TX 78231

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## Resources

Idea Collection & Mapping system: (cost \$2400.00 annually, Cambridge) made by Mjumbwe Poe ([mjumbewu@gmail.com](mailto:mjumbewu@gmail.com), 267-970-0574).

<https://pbcambridgefy19.herokuapp.com/page/guidelines>

PB website, communication, and volunteer system: (cost: \$2K annually, Cambridge)

<http://nationbuilder.com/>

PB voting system (cost: Free)

<https://pbstanford.org/>

Cambridge PB

<http://pb.cambridgema.gov/>

PB Tools and Resources, [sanantoniopb@gmail.com](mailto:sanantoniopb@gmail.com) shared public folder

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B0UPTBwIDTtARXJPeFBUTVpCbDg>