

# Participatory Budgeting

Real Money, Real Power



Marti Brown, Councilmember, City of Vallejo



# What is participatory budgeting?

A democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend a discretionary portion of a budget (usually public).

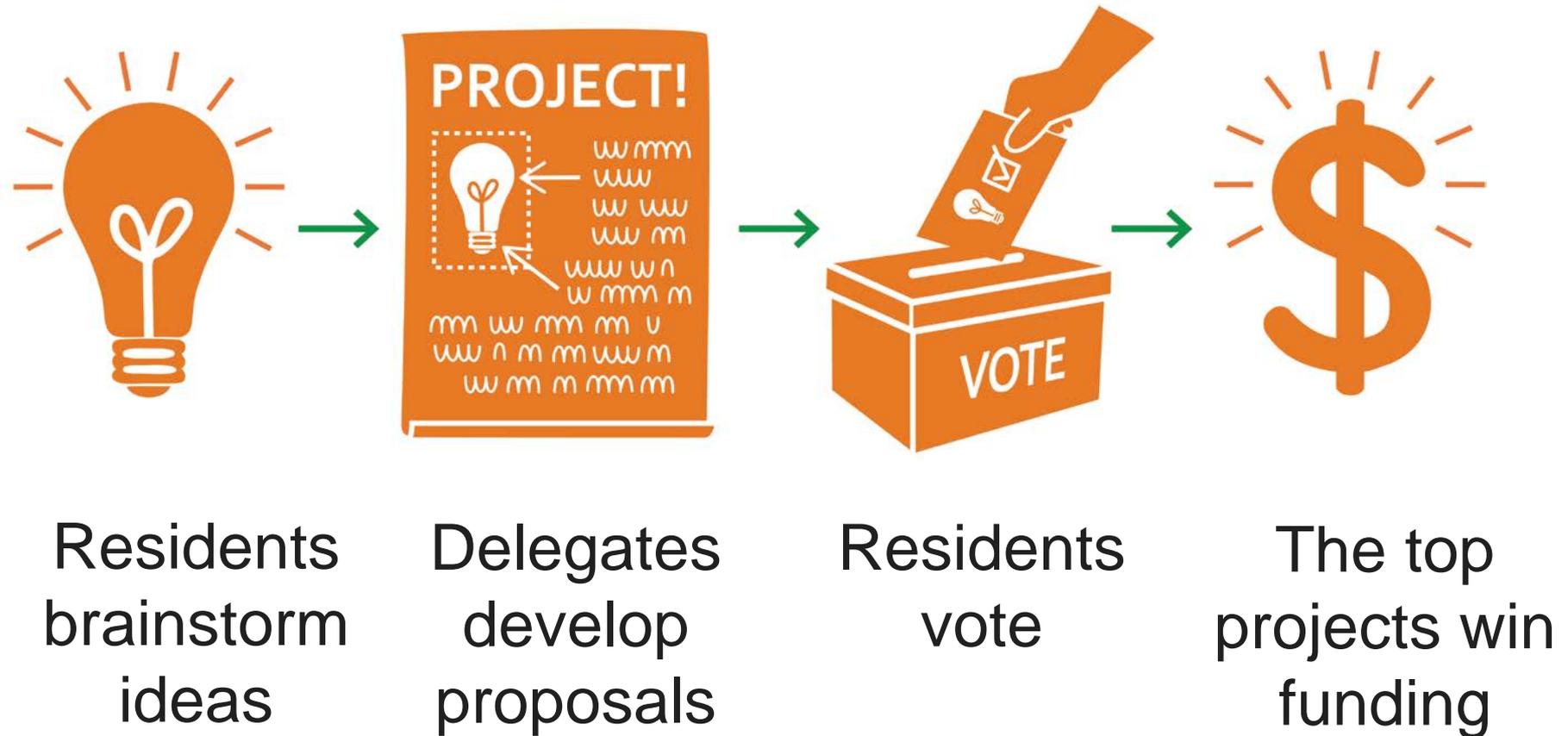


# What is participatory budgeting?

- Making **real decisions about real money**  
(NOT a consultation)
- **An annual cycle**  
(NOT a one-off event)
- Usually for **part of a budget**  
(NOT the whole budget)



# How does it work?



# Public assemblies

Brainstorm ideas and select delegates



# Delegate meetings

Develop proposals



# Vote on proposals



# Implement projects



# Where has participatory budgeting worked?

**1,500+ PB processes in the world!**

North America

Europe

Asia

Latin America

Africa

**Cities,  
States,  
Counties,  
Public housing,  
Schools,  
Community organizations**

Porto Alegre, Brazil



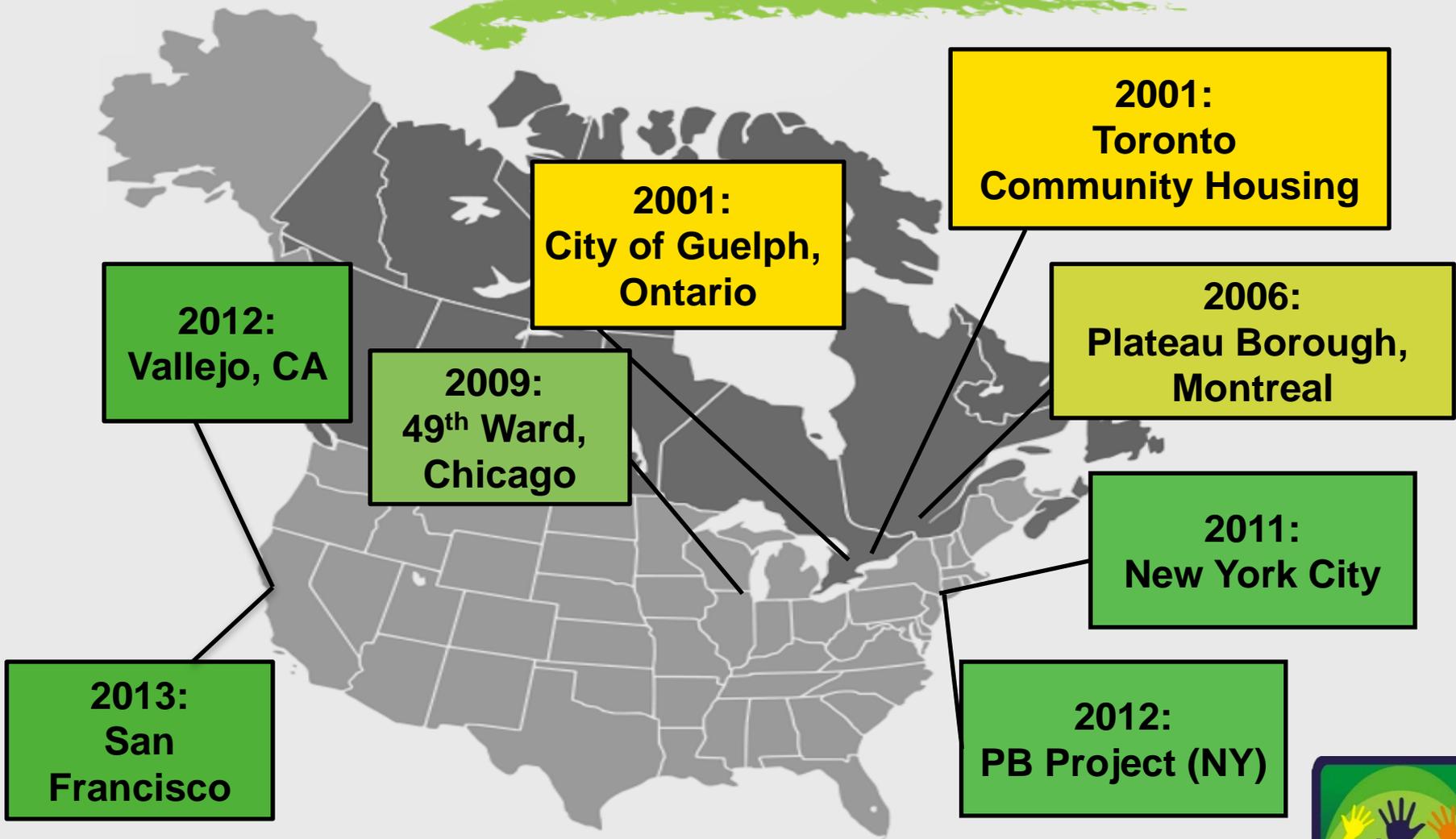
# Porto Alegre, Brazil

1989

- **1.5 million residents**  
(50,000 participants per year)
- Decide as much as **\$200 million** in spending per year (20% of budget)
- Key victories:
  - **Doubled sanitation** coverage
  - Doubled the number of **students in schools**
  - **Expanded bus service** to neglected areas



# Participatory budgeting in North America





# PB Vallejo



# Vallejo, CA

2012



- 117,000 residents
- First citywide process in U.S.
- \$3.2 million (sales tax revenue)
- \$200,000 allocated for implementation of process
- Funds for capital projects and programs & services
- 20-member Steering Committee



# Vallejo, CA

**1. Steering Committee (SC)**  
(July-September 2012)  
SC develops rule book

**2. Assemblies**  
(October-December 2012)  
identify community needs,  
recruit budget delegates

**6. Implementation & Monitoring**  
of projects

**3. Delegate Meetings**  
(December 2012-April 2013)  
develop proposals

**5. Community & Council Vote**  
(May 2013)

**4. Project Expos**  
(April 2013)  
get community feedback

# Vallejo, CA

***“Whenever possible, err on the side of inclusion”***

Pelton Stewart, PB Steering Committee Member

- All residents over 16 can vote, regardless of immigration status
- Special assemblies for youth, seniors, Spanish speakers
- Delegate committees for youth and Spanish speakers
- Targeted outreach workers



# Ideas.pbvallejo.org

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**Reviewed Ideas** [➤](#)

**PROJECT DETAILS**

- About the Project [➤](#)
- How It Works [➤](#)
- Participatory Budgeting Vallejo [➤](#)
- The City of Vallejo [➤](#)
- PB Vallejo Facebook [➤](#)
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**CONTRIBUTORS**

All Time Active Users

**1** Karen W12 **486**

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# Vallejo, CA

## *Outcomes to date:*

- **809** participants at assemblies & online
- **829** project ideas generated
- **115** volunteer budget delegates
- **60** project proposals submitted for vetting
- **502** attended Project Expos
- **33** projects on final ballot





Why  
**participatory**  
budgeting?



# Stronger and more engaged communities



# Spending that more fairly reflects the communities interests

**LET ALL CHILDREN PLAY!**  
Vote for a park that includes the disabled

**WHY A DISABLED PARK?**  
LARRY OF A PARK - IN CHU 13 AND OTHERS THE QUESTION IS  
THE ANSWER IS YES. WE WANT TO SEE A PARK THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL OF US. WE WANT TO SEE A PARK THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL OF US. WE WANT TO SEE A PARK THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL OF US.

**CHALLENGES STANDARDS ASSOCIATION** - In this day and age you would never choose to make any one wheelchair accessible. You would make all of them accessible. This right should be extended to all children. It is not just for children who are in wheelchairs.

**WELLS ABOVE CHU 13** - we welcome the integration of communities, bring all children together. Help to address resources - to provide resources - to build caring - to help children from living in the shadows.

**WAITING FOR A PLAY GROUND CHU 13**

**MAKING CHU 13 PLAY GROUND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL**  
This is not just a playground. It is not just a park. It is not just a place where children play. It is a place where children who are in wheelchairs can play. It is a place where children who are in wheelchairs can play. It is a place where children who are in wheelchairs can play.

**THREE BIG POINTS:**

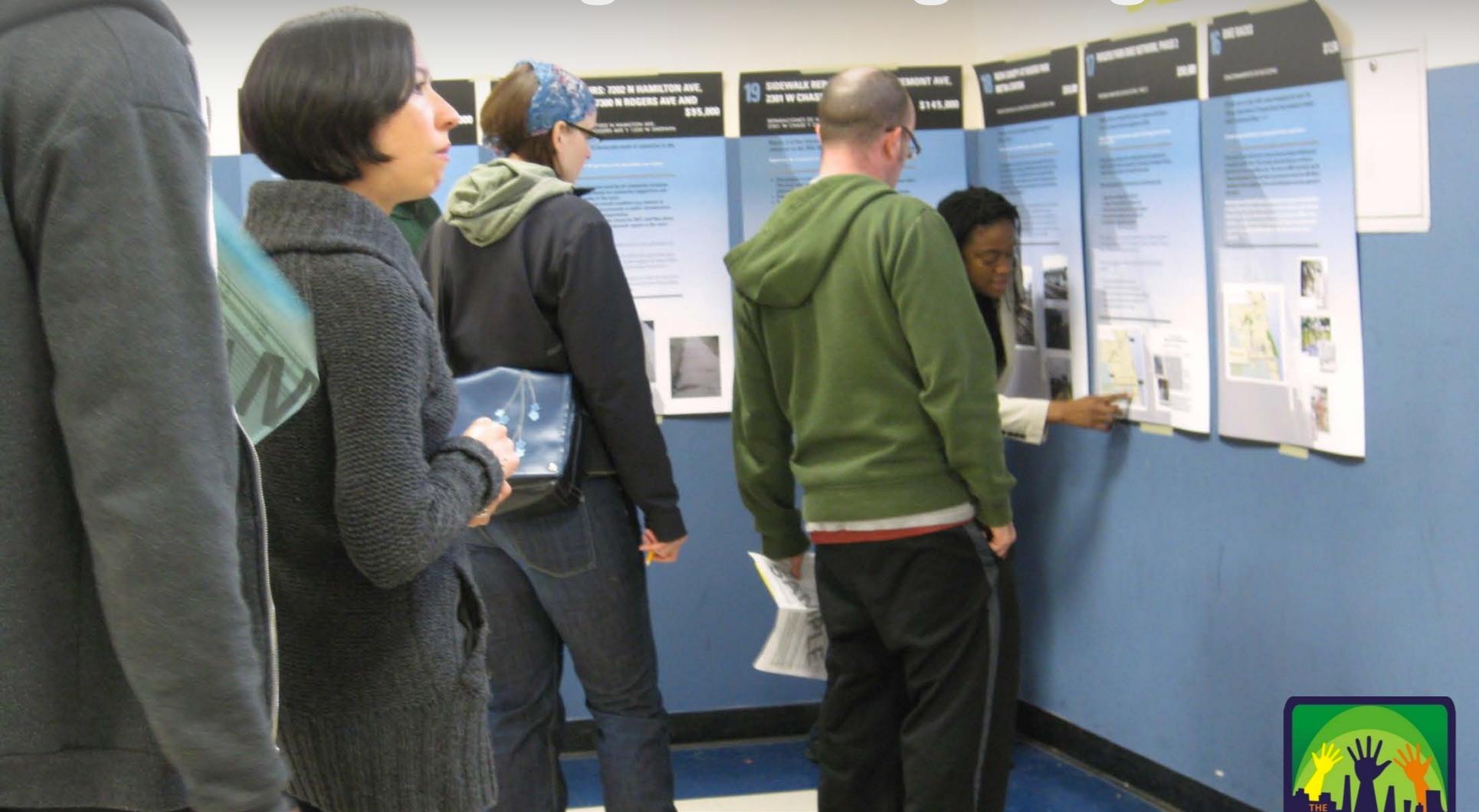
1. TO BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY
2. TO BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY
3. TO BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY

**STAPLES**

**THE PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECT**



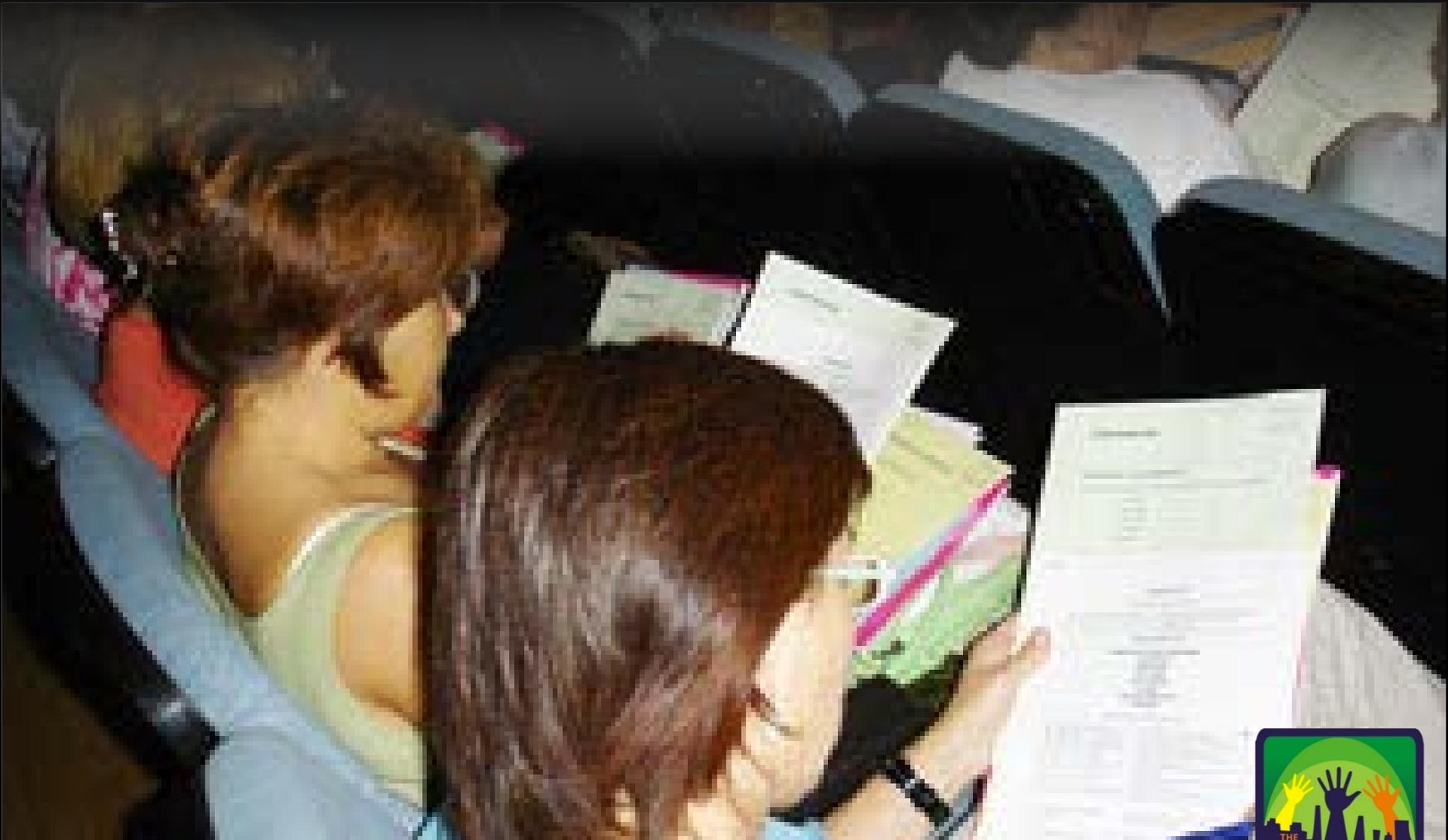
# Public education and Greater Understanding of Budgeting



# More informed decisions



# Accountability and transparency





# What can **participatory** Budgeting do for the Water Plan?



# All of the above!



s.t.e.a.m.

$$A^2 + B^2 = C^2$$

Science  
Technology  
Engineering  
Mathematics

This project will help expose  
Technology, Engineering,  
Mathematics (STEAM) to  
Vallejo middle school students  
prepare students for future  
opportunities after school  
funds will be used to provide  
school with needed supplies  
a robotics club



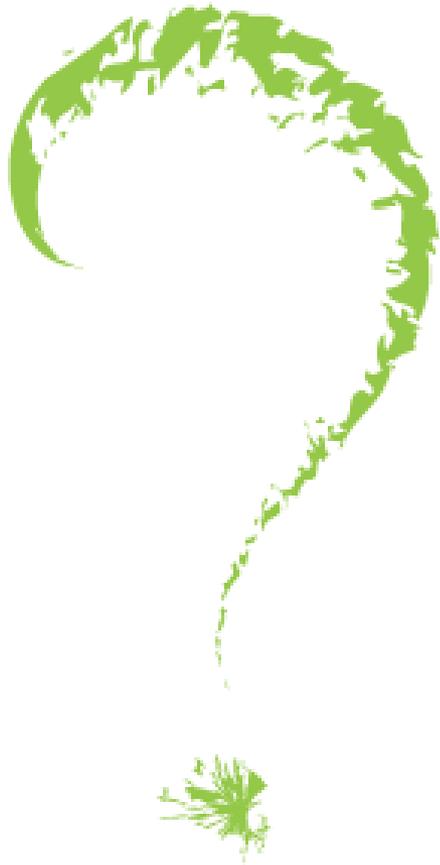
ISAIAH





**What  
types of projects  
would come out of a  
Water Plan PB process?**

# Maybe....



## Committees:

- Stormwater Treatment and Capture
- Floodplain Management
- Low Impact Development (LID)

## Projects:

- Rainwater Capture Systems
- Increasing Low Impervious Surfaces
- “Green” Streets
- Rooftop Gardens
- Urban Forestry
- Restoring natural waterways

# Questions?

