



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Katie Johnston, Manager – Office of Management & Budget  
**COPY:** Government Performance and Finance Committee, Andy Cherullo  
**SUBJECT:** Participatory Budgeting Approaches  
**DATE:** April 17, 2018

**PRESENTATION TYPE:**

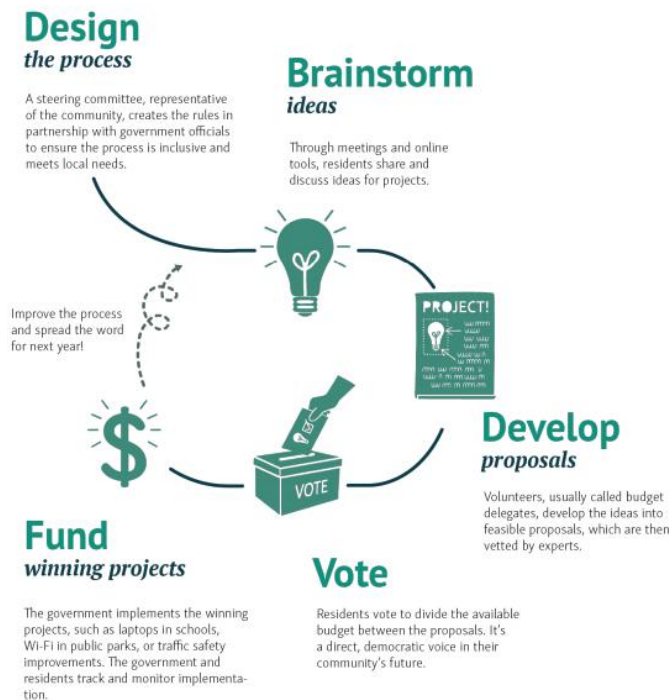
Please select the type of presentation you will be making to the Council Committee.  
Informational Briefing

**SUMMARY:**

Staff will present an overview of participatory budgeting approaches, best practices, and concepts for how this approach could be implemented in Tacoma.

**BACKGROUND:**

Participatory budgeting is a budgeting process that also serves as a community engagement and empowerment tool. The approach is a facilitated and democratic process for community members to decide how to spend part of a public budget. Typically, communities who implement a participatory budgeting approach set aside a portion of their City’s budget specifically for participatory budgeting while still using community engagement tools for outreach on the broader budget. Once the funding is set aside staff works with a steering committee of community members to design the process to ensure the process is inclusive and meets local needs. Below is a graphic from the Participatory Budgeting Project that outlines the general process:





The intent of this approach is to engage many people who are otherwise not traditionally involve in civic activities, develop greater trust in government, improve transparency, make more informed decisions, and build communities.

**ISSUE:**

The approach is used in cities such as Vallejo, CA, Chicago, MA, Cambridge, MA, Hartford, CT, Greensboro, NC, and Seattle, WA. The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department is currently facilitating several projects using a participatory budgeting approach. The City of Tacoma’s Innovative Grant program is similar to a participatory budgeting approach; however, the program would need to be adjusted to align with the intent and design of a participatory budgeting process.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

This is an information briefing only. There are no alternatives presented.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This is an information briefing only. There is no fiscal impact.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is an information briefing only. There is no recommendation.