



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Andy Cherullo, Finance Director
COPY: Government Performance and Finance Committee; Kathryn Johnston, Budget Officer; Jacques Colon, Tacoma 2025 Strategic Manager; Bucoda Warren, Committee Executive Liaison
PRESENTER: Jared Eyer and Tammy Liddle Lobban, Senior Management & Budget Analysts, Finance - OMB
SUBJECT: Participatory Budgeting
DATE: July 2, 2019

PRESENTATION TYPE:
Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

Based on Councilmember interest in participatory budgeting, Staff recommend a participatory budgeting pilot in Tacoma's Eastside, launching in Fall 2019 and reaching implementation phase in Spring 2020.

BACKGROUND:

Participatory budgeting (PB) is a democratic process where community members vote on how to spend City budget on projects identified from that community. During budget development for the 2019-2020 biennium, a PB pilot was proposed and approved to ensure more equitable spending, greater transparency and accountability, and increased levels of participation from traditionally marginalized communities.

A steering committee of staff from the City Manager's Office, Community and Economic Development, Neighborhood and Community Services, the Office of Management and Budget, and Public Works have been meeting to establish goals, objectives, timeline, and community selection for the pilot.

- The primary goal of PB is to increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.
- This along with two PB pilots run by Tacoma Creates with Tacoma Creates funding will be used as a proof of concept to create a framework for using PB Citywide.
- The timeline of Fall 2019-Spring 2020 was selected in order to have preliminary results in time for budget development for the 2021-2022 biennium for the potential of funding of Citywide PB projects.

The community on the Eastside with the western boundary of the BNSF Railroad, northern boundary of E 56th Street, and eastern and southern boundaries of City Limits was selected with careful consideration. This is an area of low opportunity on the Equity Index, has a high percentage of the population speaking a language other than English at home, and is a historically underserved and underrepresented area of Tacoma.

ISSUE:

Local government budgeting processes can often leave residents feeling like they cannot affect change in their communities and that their specific needs have not been heard.

In the last budget cycle the City of Tacoma targeted budget proposals around City Council priorities and priorities highly rated in the community survey. Additionally, the budget process significantly increased the number of individuals engaged compared to previous cycles.



However, it is difficult to equitably engage communities across the city, specifically those who typically do not engage with the City. It is also challenging to provide a way for community members to participate directly in the process, feel like they affected change, and directly benefit from the changes they wanted to see.

Participatory budgeting is a way to increase community engagement in a more meaningful way than just informing the public, engage communities who do not typically engage the city, and build further trust with communities in Tacoma.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council Government Performance and Finance Committee (GPFC) could decline to move forward with the pilot; GPFC could seek to pilot PB in a community other than the community selected by Staff; GPFC could delay the pilot.

FISCAL IMPACT:**EXPENDITURES:**

FUND NUMBER & FUND NAME *	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
0010 – General Fund: Non-Departmental	651000	5412170	\$20,000
		5412000	\$5,000
		5310100	\$8,800
		5330100	\$100,000
TOTAL			\$133,800

* General Fund: Include Department

FISCAL IMPACT TO CURRENT BIENNIAL BUDGET: \$133,800

ARE THE EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES PLANNED AND BUDGETED? No.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that GPFC approves for Staff to move forward with the participatory budgeting pilot in Tacoma's Eastside. This pilot is included in the 2019-2020 Budget Highlights for Civic Engagement and should be approved for public accountability. Delaying the pilot would result in Staff not having enough information during budget development for the 2021-2022 biennium to make a recommendation on a Citywide PB process.