

# Engaging Citizens in Budget Decisions

## Higher Ground Leadership In Transitioning Times



Janette Loveys

April 1, 2017

**“People’s participation is becoming the central issue of our time...People today have an urge – an impatient urge – to participate in the events and processes that shape their lives”.**

United Nations Development Program

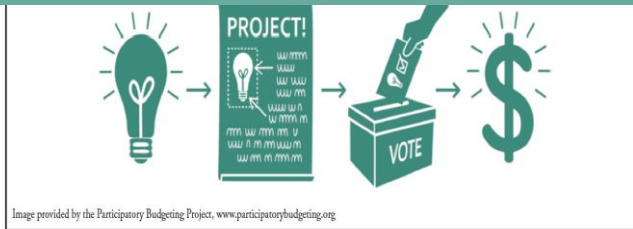


# Engaging Citizens in Budget Decisions

- The beginning of the story....
- 1989, City of Porto Alegre, Brazil.
- Numerous movements in Latin America and Europe.
- 1997 Guelph, Toronto and building of networks in North America.
- Growth, evolution and a deeper international awareness.
- ...today, many have joined in the story creating new chapters along the way.

# PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Difficulties and Field results achieved during the implementation of the PBP in three Local Units **Dejona Mihali** Project Cordinator



## Participatory Budgeting: A Roadmap for Municipal Government



Participatory Budgeting: A Roadmap for Municipal Government  
2014 National Student Thought Leadership Award  
Gwen Hughes, Ryerson University, Master of Public Policy & Administration  
66th IPAC National Annual Conference, Edmonton, AB

## Participatory Budgeting in Canada

Josh Lerner - September 10, 2005



Alternatives Days Forum - Montreal



## Participatory Budgeting: The Practice and the Potential

*Abigail Friendly*

## PB Outreach Toolkit

*A Guide to Engaging Underrepresented Communities in Participatory Budgeting*



### The Corporation of the City of North Vancouver City Manager's Department Media Release

**SUBJECT:** City of North Vancouver Selected for Innovative Research Project on Participatory Budgeting

**DATE:** July 30, 2004

The City of North Vancouver is taking part in an innovative research project on participatory budgeting.

A collaboration between the University of British Columbia and Community-University Research Alliance (CURA), the five-year project studies how citizen and community participation in civic budgeting and decision making can lead to enhanced local governance.




PARTICIPATORY  
BUDGETING PROJECT

PUBLIC SECTOR  
GOVERNANCE AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY SERIES

# PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Edited by ANWAR SHAH





# Participatory Budgeting (PB)

- PB is a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making, and a type of participatory democracy, in which ordinary people decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget. Participatory budgeting allows citizens to identify, discuss, and prioritize public spending projects, and gives them the power to make real decisions about how money is spent.
- PB processes are typically designed to involve those left out of traditional methods of public engagement, such as low-income residents, non-citizens, and youth.



# Participatory Budgeting (PB)

- It often results in more equitable public spending, greater government transparency and accountability, increased levels of public participation (especially by marginalized residents), and democratic and citizenship learning.
- Most broadly, all participatory budgeting schemes allow citizens to deliberate with the goal of creating either a concrete financial plan (a budget), or a recommendation to elected representatives.

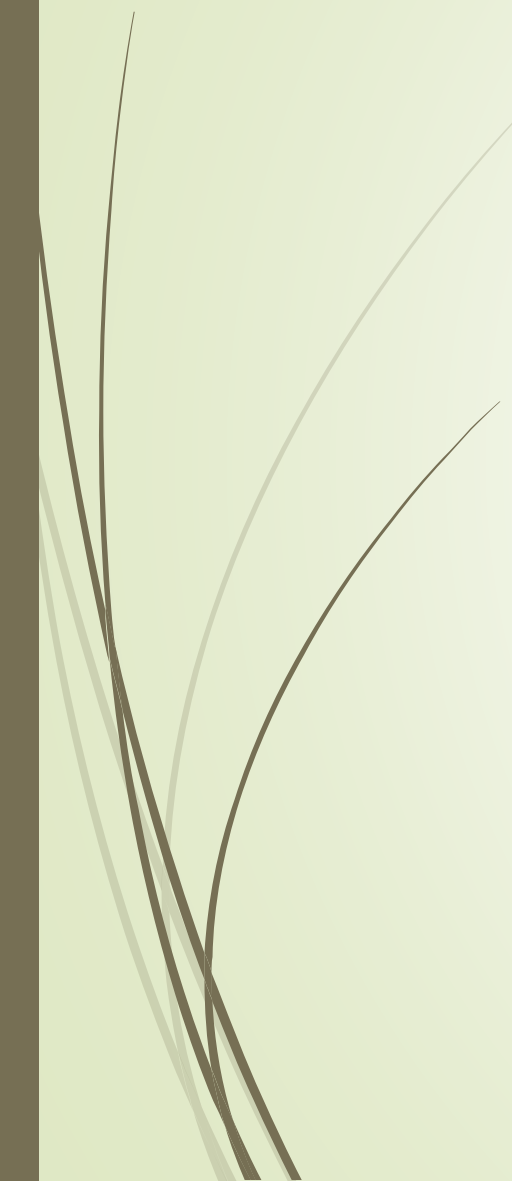


# Participatory Budgeting

- Generally, any PB Framework has the following key steps:
  - 1) Community members identify spending priorities.
  - 2) Budget proposals developed and shared.
  - 3) Community members decide on funding allocations.
  - 4) Implementation, monitoring and reporting.
  
- Evolution of PB continues and there is now more of continuum and context setting required.

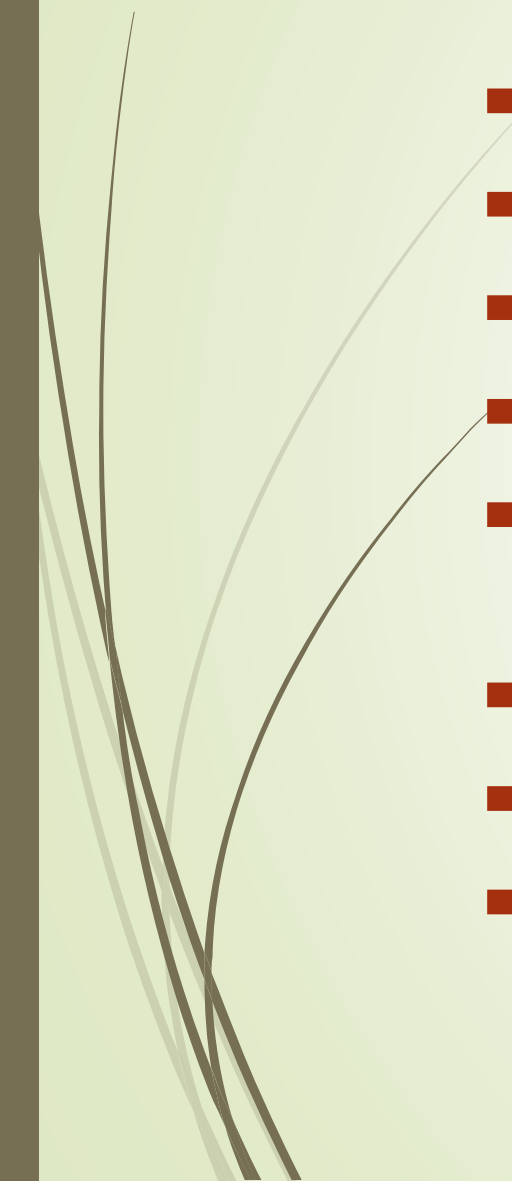


# Fundamental Principles

- Inclusive, transparent, equity through process and community valued.
  - Participants are informed and empowered.
  - Respect for the roles in the process.
  - Respect for a collaborative decision making process.
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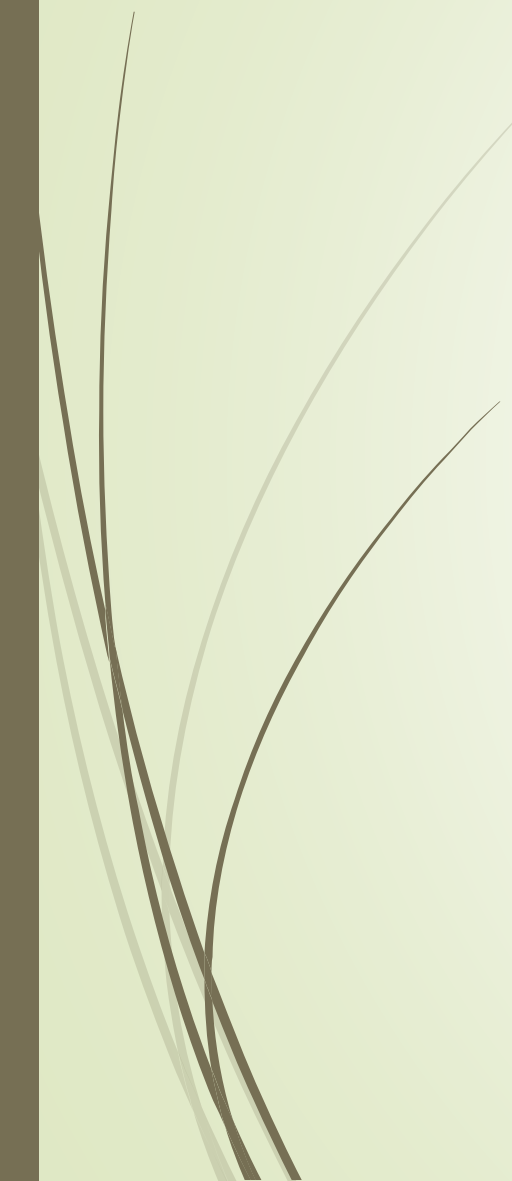
# Role of Local Government

- ▶ Funder.
  - ▶ Focus on process built on principles.
  - ▶ Less control of the outcome.
  - ▶ Facilitator role.
  - ▶ Assisting in creating an environment of change and collaboration.
  - ▶ Policy development.
  - ▶ Can have a role in implementation of decisions.
  - ▶ Leadership, integrity and honesty.
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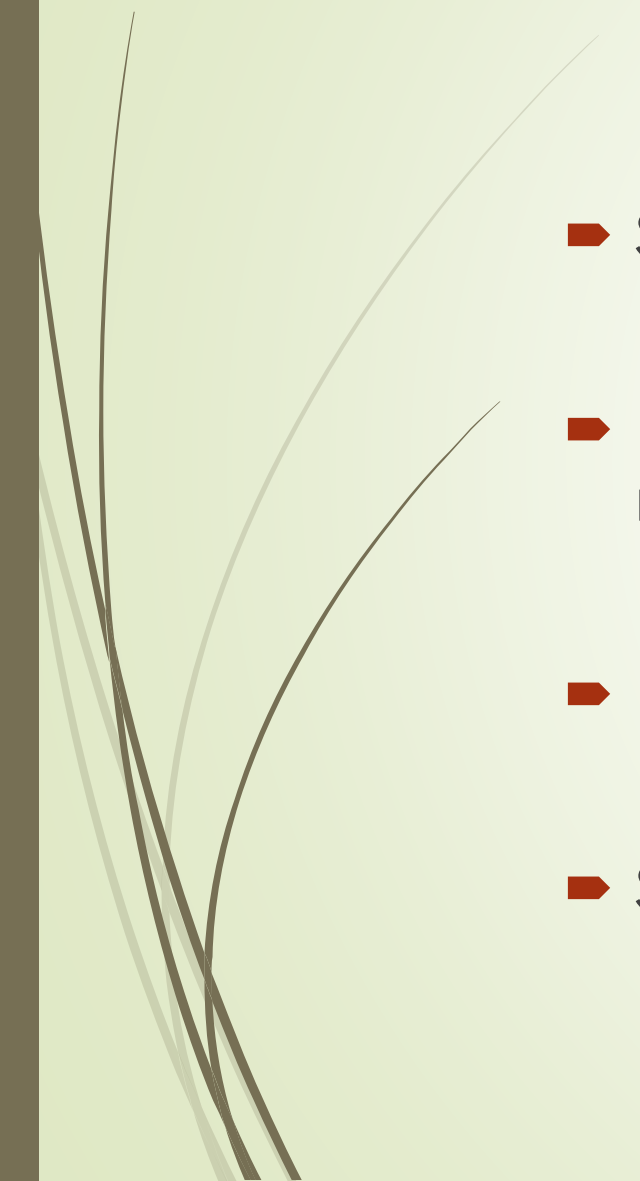


# Question of Sustainability

- ▶ Leadership to flatten the organizational structure and make conscious ethical responsibilities to achieve the democratic goals.
  - ▶ While representation is a cornerstone to participatory budgeting, a group being so large has an effect on the efficiency of the group.
  - ▶ Participatory budgeting may also struggle to overcome existing clientelism.
  - ▶ Other observations include that particular groups are less likely to participate once their demands have been met.
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# Question of Sustainability

- Slow progress can frustrate participants.
  - Lack of clarity of how decisions will be implemented and monitored.
  - Lack of policy integration and transparency.
  - Skills, confidence, access to information and use of language.
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# Resources



- ▶ Josh Lerner and his team at Participatory Budgeting Project.
  - <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/what-is-pb/>
- ▶ International Association of Public Participation (IAP2).
  - <http://iap2canada.ca/>
  - <http://www.iap2.org/>
- ▶ National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation.
  - <http://ncdd.org/>