



Your Dollars. Your Decisions. How Would you Spend \$60,000 in Victoria?

Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2016

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Victoria is starting a participatory budgeting process where the community designs the decision-making process and chooses how the funds are spent. The City implements what the community decides they want for the community.

“Participatory budgeting puts the decision-making in the hands and hearts of the community,” noted Mayor Lisa Helps. “Residents from all corners of the community are empowered to work together in the greatest interest of the greater community. This pilot has been a strategic priority of ours as we seek new ways of involving residents more fully in City decision-making. We are excited to see how the process unfolds and to support the ideas that flow from it.”

Participatory budgeting is a democratic process in which the municipality allocates an amount of money for residents to propose and vote upon community projects for implementation. It was originally introduced in 1989 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and is now common across the globe in varying forms and deliberative processes. In North America, cities including San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, New York, Toronto, Guelph, and closer to home, Tofino, have introduced participatory components to their annual municipal budgets. In terms of financial allocations in other cities, they range from nominal amounts to multi-millions in large cities like Chicago and New York. More localized examples are: Toronto \$450,000 Guelph \$125,000 and Tofino \$20,000.

The \$60,000 funding applies to the entire community and not one specific neighbourhood. It is an important principle of participatory budgeting to reach all demographics and geographic representation across the community. Efforts will be made to reach all neighbourhoods and groups and demographics not typically active in the budget process (e.g youth, seniors, new residents, new immigrants, etc).

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING KICK OFF 101

Thursday, January 12, 2017

5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Foyer of the Atrium Building at 800 Yates Street

Everyone is invited to participate. It’s important there is participation and views from across the city.

The launch event will be facilitated by Participatorybudgeting.org, a non-profit agency based out of New York City that grew out of a 2005 social forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil. They have supported participatory processes that have allocated over \$200 million dollars across Canada and the US.

Projects or investments, cannot cancel or delay projects already planned or underway, and the municipality will require that construction or commencement of the participatory project(s) occur within 12 months of the funding decision.

Visit victoria.ca for more information.

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