



Cast Your Vote: How Would You Invest \$50,000 to Improve Life in Victoria?

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For: Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Starting today, Victoria residents are invited to vote on which community projects should receive funding from Victoria's first Participatory Budgeting process. Eight shortlisted projects are vying for up to \$50,000 in funding.

Twenty-eight proposals were submitted by individuals and organizations this fall. The ideas were vetted to ensure they were viable and worked to improve life in Victoria. Now it's the community's turn to weigh in.

The shortlisted projects are:

- An art and music program for seniors with dementia.
- A pop-up garden and native bee art installation with educational workshops.
- Solar power and batteries for the aquaponics system at the Compost Education Centre.
- An employment training program, connecting vulnerable adults with local employers.
- An arts program for marginalized people in the Victoria area.
- A new electronic community resource board at Victoria High School to serve the Fernwood community.
- A pedal-powered Victoria Bike Music Festival and summer concert series.
- A community learning garden in the courtyard by the Downtown Branch of the Victoria Public Library.

The projects that receive the most votes from the community will receive funding. Vote online at www.victoria.ca/pbvic or in person at City Hall through until January 20th.

The Participatory Budgeting "Street Team" will also be hosting pop-up voting stations in the community. Watch for them at the Fernwood Student Dinner Night on January 10 and at other community events.

Participatory budgeting is a democratic process in which a municipality allocates a portion of its budget for residents to propose and vote on community projects. The Steering Committee, an independent citizen group of volunteers, has been working since May to develop Victoria's participatory budgeting process.

"The Participatory Budgeting Steering Committee would like to thank the many enthusiastic individuals, groups, and community organizations for the thoughtful and diverse proposals we received," said Julien Braun, a member of the Steering Committee. "The creativity of each proposal is a testament to this city having great people with innovative ideas and a drive to make a difference. It'll be a tough choice at the ballot box!"

The winners will be announced in late January and the funding will be distributed in early 2018. To learn more about the Participatory Budgeting process and cast your vote, please visit www.victoria.ca/pbvic.

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