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Participatory Budgeting Vallejo · 555 Santa Clara Street · Vallejo · CA · 94590 · 707.648.4041 · [www.pbvallejo.org](http://www.pbvallejo.org)

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**Vallejo Residents Cast Historic Vote on how to Spend Over \$3 Million to Improve their City; Streets, Lighting, Parks, Garden Upgrades and Small Business Get Top Votes**

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Vallejo, Ca, May 21, 2013: On Sunday evening, after a weeklong voting process, the results of Vallejo's historic participatory budgeting (PB) process were revealed. The top vote getters include: street repairs, lighting upgrades, park improvements, community gardens, small business grants and college scholarships. For the full list visit [www.pbvallejo.org](http://www.pbvallejo.org).

In 2012, the Vallejo City Council passed a resolution enabling residents to help decide how to spend 30 percent of Measure B sales tax revenue collected over a 15-month period from April 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Voter-approved Measure B is a one percent sales tax to enhance City of Vallejo services, approved by voters on November 8, 2011.

Last fall, over 500 residents came together during nine public meetings to discuss local priorities and propose ideas for projects that would address the needs of the Vallejo community. During the months of December thru April, over 100 volunteers worked to refine and prioritize project proposals that would eventually go on the ballot. The ballot included over 30 projects related to education, public safety, economic development, parks & recreation, community & culture and streets & transportation.

During the extended week of May 11 thru May 18, nearly 4,000 residents ages 16 and older voted on which proposals to fund. In this special community vote, without support from the Registrar of Voters, the voter turnout far surpassed that of other US cities engaged in PB.

The PB Vallejo Steering Committee will submit the public's priorities to the City Council for consideration at the Council meeting on May 28.

Similar programs are also in place in New York City, Chicago and San Francisco, where PB is used to allocate discretionary funds in certain city districts. Chicago was the first US city to utilize PB, joining with over 1,500 cities around the world which have implemented the process. Recently, the Mayors of San Juan (Puerto Rico) and Boston announced new PB processes in those cities.

Marti Brown, Councilmember, City of Vallejo said: "There is a tremendous need and desire for more 'quality of life' projects in the City of Vallejo as demonstrated by last week's vote. Almost everyone got something they were rooting for. The little wealth we do have in this city was spread around and shared.

And we're a stronger and better community for it. Today, every Vallejoan should be proud of what we've accomplished. And every step of the way I have been inspired by their commitment, dedication and volunteer spirit."

Bob Sampayan, Councilmember, City of Vallejo added: "PB has been an innovative way for residents to have the opportunity to see the budget process firsthand. It transparently allows for the spending of their tax dollars for resident-chosen projects that are of benefit to the entire community."

Joey Lake, Chair of the PB Vallejo Steering Committee said: "This success is due to the people of Vallejo. Their time, energy, and passion alone moved this forward. They have trudged through the doubt and the reticence that defined our once bankrupt city to find that their voice and their spirit were always still there waiting to shine, and shine brightly."

Lynda Daniels, Vice-chair of the PB Vallejo Steering Committee said: "Our goals for PB were to improve our city, meaning to enhance the quality of life by solving real problems, engage our community by giving them a voice, and transform our democracy by empowering residents to shape their city's future! With the community's heart and all of our hard work, Vallejo PB 2013 has proven to me that conviction is a necessary part of completion!"

Ginny Browne, Community Engagement Coordinator for The Participatory Budgeting Project, the non-profit organization responsible for implementing PB Vallejo said: "Unlike traditional elections, participatory budgeting allows us to take the vote to the people. We held voting at transit centers, churches, high schools and grocery stores, making the process as accessible as possible and increasing public participation."

Vilma Aquino, Parks & Recreation committee delegate said: "The PB process has been a learning and growing experience for me. It was a chance to learn more about the people and issues that affect different areas of Vallejo that I would otherwise not have known about."

Jenny Aguiar, Youth committee delegate added: "The whole PB Process is one I would like to go through again. I've learned a lot of new things and have met a lot of new, great people, and so the time and dedication I have put in has been all worthwhile."

Linette Guzman, Youth committee delegate explained: "Participatory Budgeting has made a great impact on my life by giving me the opportunity to help others in my community make our city a better place. The experience has been a magnificent journey because I have always wanted to make a big impact in the community. Being able to be a part of PB was amazing because I was able to turn ideas into reality in our city. "

Pete Peterson, Director of the Davenport Institute at Pepperdine University said: "We have been excited supporters of and consultants to Vallejo's PB process, as it is yet another example of concerned Californians taking the time to participate in the decisions that affect their daily lives."

Larry Rosenthal, UC Berkeley Goldman School of Public Policy said: "The PB Vallejo collaboration provided valuable learning opportunities for faculty and students at Berkeley. No doubt this nine-month PB process in Vallejo - the nation's first to be conducted on a citywide basis - will generate important lessons guiding participatory budgeting in the future."



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Alissa Black, Director of the California Civic Innovation Project at the New America Foundation said: "The number of residents that showed up to vote in PB is very exciting and demonstrates the power of including the public in government decision making processes."

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