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CITY OF VALLEJO BEGINS SECOND CYCLE OF 'PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING'

VALLEJO, CA – The City of Vallejo officially kicks-off its second cycle of Participatory Budgeting (PB) with an announcement of 10 [Budget Assemblies](#) in February and March. Residents are encouraged to attend a Budget Assembly to learn about the Vallejo's budget, PB, and to share their ideas on how to spend \$2.4 million of Measure B tax revenue.

The Question: How WILL YOU USE \$2.4 MILLION TO CREATE A BETTER VALLEJO FOR ALL?

Last year Vallejo became the first municipality in the United States to implement Participatory Budgeting citywide – a democratic process that elicits project ideas directly from community residents and stakeholders and then proposals with the most votes go before the City Council for consideration.

The first of 10 Budget Assemblies is scheduled for Tuesday, February 4 at Glen Cove Elementary School and wraps up with the final Assembly on Thursday, March 13 at Cooper Elementary School. Ideas will be formulated into feasible project proposals during the spring and summer months, with a public release of the project proposals in September, followed by the public vote in October.

Anyone with an interest in Vallejo –residents, stakeholders, business owners, and students, regardless of age – can attend a Budget Assembly and share their ideas on how to use \$2.4 million for public benefit projects. All assemblies will have refreshments, and select assemblies will have childcare and language interpretation.

Lynda Daniels, newly-elected Chair of the Participatory Budgeting Steering Committee (PBSC) and member of the Vallejo NAACP, is excited to build on the “enthusiasm, dedication and commitment” she saw during her involvement with PB last year. “No longer can we as a community sit back and complain or just talk about what we should have, could have and ought to have happen. We must get up and take an active part to ensure that those changes become reality,” Daniels said. “We are ‘the most diverse City in the US’ and if we are to make that claim, we must always recognize that inclusiveness is necessary to avoid any exclusions.”

The PB Steering Committee, comprised of 21 members representing Vallejo community groups and residents-at-large, is the driving force behind PB, volunteering their time and resources to work closely with City staff.

Joey Lake represents Better Vallejo and was the Chair of the PBSC during the first cycle. He said that while last year was a learning experience, he's proud of how Vallejoans "shared our vision and volunteered to put energy and sweat equity into the process," states Lake. Adding, "The Steering Committee helps retain the spirit and intent of previous PB years while addressing and making decisions on current and evolving issues. The PB Steering Committee should always strive to represent the community as a whole, in make-up and in intent."

In the first cycle of PB, residents met at 10 Budget Assemblies (and online), bringing 829 ideas to the table to share with their neighbors. Budget Delegates, who are resident volunteers, crafted formal project proposals, eventually placing 33 projects on its first [ballot](#). Ultimately 3,917 Vallejo residents ages 16-years and older, voted for their top six projects. The Vallejo City Council approved the top [12 projects](#) which addressed items such as street repair, parks improvements, educational enhancements, and public safety. The City Council also approved the hiring of three new City staff who will implement projects approved during the first cycle and manage the second cycle of PB.

City Manager Daniel E. Keen has already seen the positive impact that PB has had in the Vallejo community, and is optimistic about the second cycle. "I have seen excitement and involvement at all levels of public engagement. PB has brought together community members and City staff in a way that I have never experienced in my 30-year career in public service. The residents are able to engage with staff, ask questions, and get to the heart of real community issues."

More information is available on the City's website, accessible at pbvallejo.org and by following PB on [Facebook](#).

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