Participatory Budgeting Process Guide

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DAVE BIGGERS FOR MAYOR

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Participatory Budgeting Process Guide

How Louisville Residents Will Directly Control $15 Million Annually

Investment: $15,000,000 annually (about $577,000 for each of the 26 Metro Council districts)
Your Power: YOU propose. YOU debate. YOU vote. YOU decide.

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WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?

Traditional budgeting: Politicians decide how to spend your tax dollars behind closed doors.

Participatory budgeting: YOU decide directly. Real democracy, real power, real results.

How It Works in Louisville

EACH of the 26 council districts gets about $577,000 to spend on community projects.

YOU propose ideas → Experts cost them out → Community debates → YOU vote → City implements winning projects

What Makes This Different?

 Binding Vote – Not advisory. If you vote for it, we build it.
 Real Money – $15M annually, guaranteed in the budget
 Full Transparency – Every proposal, every vote, every dollar tracked online
 Universal Participation – Anyone 16+ who lives, works, or goes to school in the district and is here lawfully can vote
 Digital + In-Person – Vote online, by phone, or at community centers

Proven Results

New York City: residents vote directly on how part of the city budget is spent (since 2011)

- Playgrounds, street improvements, technology upgrades, community gardens
- Residents across the city take part each year

Boston: residents in several districts vote on how part of the budget is spent (since 2021)

- Youth sports facilities, public art, park improvements

Louisville will be the largest city in Kentucky to implement participatory budgeting.

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LOUISVILLE’S 26 COUNCIL DISTRICTS

$15 million a year, divided equally among all 26 Metro Council districts, about $577,000 each, for the district’s residents to spend however they see fit. The residents decide by binding vote; the district’s council member runs the vote and delivers what it chooses, and answers for it at the next election.

Neighborhoods apply through their council district, and the district’s residents run the process below.

Total Annual Investment: $15,000,000

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ANNUAL TIMELINE & CYCLE

Participatory budgeting operates on a 12-month cycle aligned with the fiscal year.

PHASE 1: IDEA COLLECTION (July – August)

Duration: 8 weeks
Activities:

- Online proposal portal opens on Digital Democracy Platform
- Community brainstorming assemblies in each district (4 meetings per district)
- Door-to-door outreach by District Council members
- Social media campaigns highlighting past successful projects
- Multi-language support (Spanish, Arabic, Swahili, others)

Goal: Generate 50-100 project ideas per district

Support Available:

- Staff at every community wellness center to help draft proposals
- Online tutorial videos showing how to submit
- Technical assistance for feasibility questions
- Translation services for non-English speakers

PHASE 2: PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT (September – October)

Duration: 8 weeks
Activities:

- City staff review all proposals for technical feasibility
- Cost estimates prepared by relevant departments (Public Works, Parks, etc.)
- Similar proposals combined with submitters' consent
- Community workshops to refine proposals
- Proposers can revise and resubmit

Goal: Finalize 15-25 ballot-ready projects per district

Criteria for Ballot Inclusion:

- Must cost between $25,000 – $500,000 (ensures variety)

- Must be capital project (one-time spending, not ongoing operational costs)
- Must be on city property or city-controlled infrastructure
- Must benefit the public broadly (not private individuals)
- Must be feasible to complete within 2 years

PHASE 3: COMMUNITY DELIBERATION (November)

Duration: 4 weeks
Activities:

- Public expos showcasing all proposals (2 per district)
- Project advocates present their ideas (5 min each)
- Q&A with city experts on feasibility and impact
- Neighborhood meetings for deeper discussion
- Online forums on Digital Democracy Platform
- Media coverage of proposals

Goal: Informed electorate ready to vote

Accessibility:

- All events in multiple locations (libraries, community centers, schools)
- Childcare provided at in-person events
- Live streaming with interpretation
- Written materials in top 5 languages
- Closed captioning and ASL interpreters available

PHASE 4: VOTING (December 1-15)

Duration: 2 weeks
Activities:

- Digital voting on website and mobile app
- Phone voting via hotline (multilingual)
- In-person voting at 20+ locations per district
- Paper ballots available for those without technology access
- Ballot information booklet mailed to every household

Goal: Maximum democratic participation

Voting Rules:

- Any resident, worker, or student 16+ in the district who is here lawfully can vote

- One person, one vote per district
- Must verify district residency (online via address, in-person via ID/utility bill)
- Rank choice voting (rank up to 5 projects)
- Projects funded in order of votes until the district's allotment (about $577,000) is exhausted

PHASE 5: RESULTS & CELEBRATION (Late December)

Duration: 1 week
Activities:

- Live results announcement at district celebration events
- Winners posted on Digital Democracy Platform in real-time
- Media coverage of winning projects
- Winning proposers recognized publicly
- Implementation timeline published immediately

Goal: Transparency and community excitement

PHASE 6: IMPLEMENTATION (January – June of following fiscal year)

Duration: 18-24 months (depending on project complexity)
Activities:

- City departments begin procurement and contracting
- Community oversight committees monitor progress
- Monthly progress updates on Digital Democracy Platform
- Quarterly site visits open to public
- Photo/video documentation throughout

Goal: Deliver winning projects on time and on budget

Accountability Measures:

- Every project gets dedicated webpage with timeline and budget
- Monthly status updates (not started / design / procurement / construction / complete)
- Community oversight committee (3 volunteers per district) monitors spending
- If project delayed, city must explain why and propose solution
- Completed projects get ribbon-cutting with proposer recognized

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HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT PROPOSAL

Anyone in your district can propose a project. Here's how:

STEP 1: Check Eligibility

Your project must:

- □ Cost between $25,000 and $500,000
- □ Be a one-time capital expense (not ongoing operational costs)
- □ Be on city property or public right-of-way
- □ Benefit the public (not private individuals or businesses)
- □ Be feasible to complete within 2 years
- □ Serve people in your district

Examples of ELIGIBLE projects:

- Playground equipment at neighborhood park
- Street repaving or sidewalk repairs on public roads
- Public art installation in community space
- Technology upgrades at library branch
- Security cameras in high-crime areas
- Community garden infrastructure
- Athletic field improvements
- Pedestrian crosswalks and traffic calming
- Public WiFi installation in underserved areas

Examples of INELIGIBLE projects:

- Ongoing programs requiring annual staffing (use regular budget process)
- Projects on private property
- Costs over $500,000 (too large for single district)
- Projects benefiting only specific group without public access
- Maintenance/repairs already in city's responsibility (use 311 to report)

STEP 2: Submit Your Idea

Three Ways to Submit:

A) Online (Recommended)

- Go to rundaverun.org/participatory-budget

- Click “Submit a Project Idea”
- Fill out simple form:

  – Your name and contact info
  – Project title (10 words max)
  – Project description (250 words max)
  – Location (address or intersection)
  – Who benefits and how
  – Upload supporting photos/documents (optional)

- Submit anytime July 1 – August 31

B) In-Person

- Visit any community wellness center in your district
- Staff will help you complete proposal form
- Available in multiple languages
- Walk-in hours: Monday-Friday 9am-7pm, Saturday 10am-4pm

C) By Mail

- Download proposal form from website or request by phone
- Mail to: Participatory Budgeting, [Your District] District Council, [Address]
- Must be postmarked by August 31

STEP 3: Get Technical Support

After you submit, city staff will contact you within 5 business days to:

- Confirm your proposal was received
- Ask clarifying questions
- Explain next steps
- Offer technical assistance for costing and feasibility

You can request help with:

- Engineering assessments
- Cost estimates
- Site surveys
- Permitting requirements
- Combining similar proposals with other residents

STEP 4: Refine Your Proposal

In September-October, you'll have the opportunity to:

- Review the city's cost estimate
- Modify your proposal based on feedback
- Meet with other proposers working on similar ideas
- Prepare presentation for community expos

Staff support includes:

- PowerPoint templates for expo presentations
- Talking points and FAQs
- Mock presentation practice sessions
- Media training if your project generates news interest

STEP 5: Advocate for Your Project

Once proposals go to ballot (November), you can:

- Present at community expos (5 minutes per project)
- Share on social media with hashtag #Louisville[YourDistrict]Budget
- Create flyers or yard signs (campaign must be truthful, no attacks on other proposals)
- Talk to neighbors and community groups
- Write letters to local media

City provides:

- Equal space on Digital Democracy Platform for each proposal
- Proposal summaries mailed to all households
- Neutral Q&A sessions with experts
- Media contact list

Important: Advocacy is encouraged, but misinformation is prohibited. All claims about your project's benefits must be factually accurate.

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PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

City staff evaluate proposals using objective criteria to ensure feasibility:

TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY (Must Pass)

Legal Compliance:

- Does the project comply with zoning laws?
- Are necessary permits obtainable?
- Does it violate any state or federal regulations?
- Is the property actually owned/controlled by city?

Engineering Feasibility:

- Is the project physically possible to build?
- Are there utility conflicts underground?
- Does it require environmental remediation?
- Are materials and labor available in the market?

Timeline Feasibility:

- Can the project be designed, procured, and built within 2 years?
- Are there seasonal constraints (e.g., can't pave roads in winter)?
- Do permits typically take more than 6 months?

Safety & Liability:

- Does the project meet safety codes?
- Does it create liability risks for the city?
- Does it require ongoing maintenance the city can afford?

COST ACCURACY (Must Be Verified)

City staff prepare detailed cost estimates including:

- Design and engineering fees (10-15% of construction cost)
- Permitting fees
- Materials cost (with 10% contingency for price increases)
- Labor cost (prevailing wage if required by law)
- Inspection costs
- Project management overhead (5%)
- Contingency for unforeseen issues (10%)

Cost Estimate Template:

Item	Estimated Cost
——	————-
Design/Engineering	$XX,XXX
Permits & Fees	$X,XXX
Materials	$XX,XXX

Labor	$XX,XXX
Inspection	$X,XXX
Project Management	$X,XXX
Contingency (10%)	$X,XXX
TOTAL	**$XXX,XXX**

COMMUNITY BENEFIT (Evaluated, Not Disqualifying)

Staff assess but don't score:

- How many people will benefit?
- Does it serve underserved populations?
- Does it address documented community need?
- Does it align with city's comprehensive plan?
- Does it improve equity across districts?

Important: These factors inform voters but don't disqualify projects. The community decides what benefits matter most.

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Staff flag but don't reject proposals that:

- Serve areas with historically low public investment
- Benefit low-income residents
- Improve accessibility for people with disabilities
- Address environmental justice concerns
- Serve immigrant or refugee communities

Voters receive this information to help prioritize equity.

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COMMUNITY DELIBERATION PROCESS

Before voting, residents participate in structured deliberation to make informed choices.

COMMUNITY EXPOS (2 per district)

Format:

- Science fair style with booths for each project
- Project proposers present their ideas

- City staff available to answer technical questions
- Large posters showing renderings, cost breakdowns, timelines
- Interactive voting demonstrations

Typical Expo Schedule:

- 5:00 PM – Doors Open, Browse Projects
- 5:30 PM – Welcome & Instructions
- 5:45 PM – Project Pitches (5 min each, max 20 projects = 1h 40min)
- 7:30 PM – Q&A with City Experts
- 8:00 PM – Small Group Discussions
- 8:30 PM – Closing & Voting Instructions
- 9:00 PM – Event Ends

Accessibility:

- Free childcare with activities for kids
- Free dinner provided
- Translation services available
- ASL interpreters
- Materials in large print
- Wheelchair accessible venues

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS (Week 2-3 of November)

Smaller gatherings for deeper discussion:

- Hosted by District Council members or community leaders
- 20-30 people per meeting
- Facilitated discussion of tradeoffs
- Group ranking exercises
- Values clarification (e.g., “What matters most to you?”)

Sample Discussion Questions:

- Which projects address the most urgent needs in our district?
- Which projects will benefit the most people?
- Should we fund one large project or several small ones?
- How do we balance urgent needs vs. quality-of-life improvements?
- Which projects support our long-term vision for the neighborhood?

ONLINE FORUMS (Throughout November)

Digital Democracy Platform features:

- Threaded discussions for each project
- Upvote/downvote comments
- Direct questions to proposers
- City staff responses to technical questions
- Polling on key tradeoffs
- Links to related information

Moderation:

- Comments must be respectful and relevant
- No personal attacks on proposers
- Misinformation corrected by staff
- All comments archived for transparency

BALLOT INFORMATION GUIDE (Mailed early November)

Every household receives:

- Full list of projects on ballot in your district
- One-page summary for each project (location, cost, description, benefits)
- Cost-benefit comparison chart
- Map showing where each project is located
- Instructions for how to vote
- Available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Swahili, others

Digital version includes:

- Video walkthroughs of proposed projects
- 3D renderings or photos of similar projects
- Cost breakdowns
- Proposer contact info
- Links to discussion forums

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VOTING MECHANICS

Voting is designed to be accessible, secure, and fair.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Eligibility:

- Must be 16 years or older (youth voice matters!)
- Must live, work, OR go to school in the district
- Must verify district connection (address, employer, school name)

Why age 16+?
Research shows youth participatory budgeting increases civic engagement and produces projects that benefit young people. Cities with youth PB see higher overall participation.

HOW TO VOTE

OPTION 1: Online (Recommended)

- Visit rundaverun.org/pb-vote
- Enter your address to confirm district
- Create account with email or phone number
- Receive verification code
- Review ballot with all projects
- Rank up to 5 projects in order of preference
- Submit ballot

OPTION 2: Phone Voting

- Call 1-502-PB-VOTE (1-502-728-6833)
- Available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Swahili
- Interactive voice response or speak with operator
- Verify district residency
- Vote for up to 5 projects

OPTION 3: In-Person

- 20+ voting locations per district:

  – All community wellness centers
  – Public libraries
  – Community centers
  – Some schools (after hours)
  – Mobile voting van at high-traffic areas

- Hours: Weekdays 9am-8pm, Weekends 10am-6pm during 2-week voting period

- Paper ballots available
- Staff assistance for those who need help

OPTION 4: Mail-In Ballot

- Request ballot by calling 311 or online
- Ballot mailed to your address
- Complete and return by December 15 (postmark date)

VOTING RULES

Ranked Choice Voting:

- Rank up to 5 projects in order of preference (1st choice, 2nd choice, etc.)
- You don't have to rank 5 – you can rank just 1 or 2 if you prefer
- Your 1st choice gets 5 points, 2nd choice gets 4 points, etc.
- Projects are funded in order of total points until the district's allotment is spent

Why ranked choice?

- Ensures diverse projects get funded
- Prevents one large project from dominating
- Allows voters to express nuanced preferences
- Produces results that reflect community priorities

Example Ballot:

DISTRICT 3: SOUTHWEST LOUISVILLE
Vote for up to 5 projects by ranking them 1-5 (1 = most preferred)

☐ Resurface and stripe Dixie Highway bike lanes ($250,000)
☐ Install security cameras in Chickasaw Park ($75,000)
☐ New playground at Algonquin Park ($150,000)
☐ Pedestrian crosswalk at busy intersection ($50,000)
☐ Public WiFi in Shively community center ($100,000)
☐ Athletic field lights at local park ($200,000)

SECURITY & VERIFICATION

Preventing fraud:

- One person, one vote enforced via verified accounts
- Duplicate detection by name, DOB, address
- IP address monitoring for online voting

- Signed paper ballots for in-person voting
- Random audits of 5% of votes post-election

Voter privacy:

- Individual votes are secret
- Only aggregate results published
- Personal information not shared

Recounts:

- Any project within 2% of funding threshold triggers automatic recount
- Community members can request recount with 100 signatures
- All ballots preserved for 1 year

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IMPLEMENTATION & ACCOUNTABILITY

Winning projects get immediate action. Here's how we ensure delivery:

ANNOUNCEMENT & CELEBRATION

Results Released: December 18 (Live Event)

- Real-time results feed on Digital Democracy Platform
- Live announcement event in each district with food, music, celebration
- Media coverage
- Winning proposers recognized on stage
- Implementation timeline distributed

What You'll See on Results Page:

Project	Total Votes	Points	Cost	Status
———	———-	——-	——	——-
Resurface Dixie Highway bike lanes	4,523	18,945	$250,000	□ FUNDED
New Algonquin Park playground	3,891	17,234	$150,000	□ FUNDED
Public WiFi at community center	2,998	13,556	$100,000	□ FUNDED
Security cameras in Chickasaw Park	2,701	12,009	$75,000	□ FUNDED
TOTAL FUNDED			**$575,000**	**4 projects**
Athletic field lights	3,204	14,892	$200,000	□ Not enough budget left when its turn came
Pedestrian crosswalk	2,334	10,448	$50,000	□ Not enough budget left when its turn came

| Splash pad at Valley Station Park | 2,102 | 9,345 | $300,000 | □ Not enough budget |

Remaining funds (about $2,000): Roll over to next year or fund partial next project with community vote.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Winning projects follow structured implementation:

Month 1-2 (January-February):

- City department assigned as lead
- Design phase kickoff
- Community oversight committee formed (3 volunteers)
- Initial design concepts presented to community
- Proposer consulted on design decisions

Month 3-4 (March-April):

- Final design completed
- Permits submitted
- Procurement/bidding process begins
- Contract negotiations
- Community briefing on timeline

Month 5-12 (May-December):

- Construction begins
- Monthly progress updates on Digital Democracy Platform
- Photos/videos posted weekly
- Community oversight committee conducts site visits
- Problems addressed transparently

Month 13-18 (Next January-June):

- Project completion
- Final inspections
- Punch list completed
- Community walkthrough
- Ribbon-cutting ceremony with proposer

TRANSPARENCY & OVERSIGHT

Every project gets a dedicated webpage showing:

- □ Current status (design / permitting / procurement / construction / complete)
- □ Budget spent vs. allocated
- □ Timeline (original vs. actual)
- □ Photos/videos of progress
- □ Contractor information
- □ Inspection reports
- □ Change orders (if any, with explanation)

Community Oversight Committee:

- 3 volunteers per district elected by District Council
- Monthly site visits to all active projects
- Power to request explanations for delays or cost overruns
- Can recommend corrective action
- Reports published on Digital Democracy Platform

What Happens If Projects Are Delayed?

- City must post explanation within 48 hours
- Revised timeline published with reason for delay
- Community oversight committee reviews and comments
- If delay is city's fault, responsible department leadership must brief District Council
- Chronic delays = accountability issue in next election

Project Completion Rate Goal: 90% within 24 months

SUCCESS METRICS

We'll track and publish:

- Participation rate (% of eligible residents who voted)
- Demographic representation (age, income, neighborhood, and where participants are from: what part of town, what part of Kentucky, or what part of the world)
- Project completion rate and timeline adherence
- Budget accuracy (actual cost vs. estimate)
- Community satisfaction with completed projects
- Impact on identified community needs

Annual Report:
Every March, city publishes comprehensive report:

- All projects proposed, funded, and completed
- Participation statistics
- Demographic analysis
- Spending transparency
- Lessons learned and process improvements
- Photos of completed projects

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SUCCESS STORIES FROM OTHER CITIES

NEW YORK CITY (Since 2011)

Scale:

- Residents vote on how part of the city budget is spent, across all boroughs
- Residents across the city take part each year

Notable Projects:

- School technology upgrades (laptops, smartboards)
- Park improvements (playgrounds, athletic fields)
- Street safety (pedestrian signals, speed bumps)
- Library resources (books, computers, furniture)
- Public art and murals

Impact:

- Highest participation in low-income districts
- Youth participation increased civic engagement long-term
- Residents report feeling more connected to local government

Quote from NYC participant:
“For the first time, I felt like my voice mattered. We got a new playground in our neighborhood that we actually designed. My kids play there every day.”

BOSTON (Since 2021)

Scale:

- Residents in several districts vote on how part of the budget is spent

Notable Projects:

- Community gardens with irrigation systems
- Public WiFi in underserved neighborhoods
- Youth sports facilities
- Street tree planting
- Crosswalk and sidewalk improvements

Impact:

- Increased trust in city government (measured by surveys)
- Higher voter turnout in subsequent elections
- Particularly strong participation from immigrant communities

PARIS, FRANCE (Since 2014)

Scale:

- Residents vote on part of the city's investment budget each year

Notable Projects:

- Urban gardens and green spaces
- School renovations
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Sports facilities
- Community centers

Impact:

- Paris allocates more to PB than any other city globally
- Model for dozens of European cities
- Credited with reducing inequality in public investment

KEY LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL CITIES

1. Start Strong:

- Robust outreach in Year 1 to build participation
- Over-invest in community education early
- Make voting extremely accessible

2. Keep Promises:

- 85%+ project completion rate is critical for continued participation

- Transparency about delays builds trust
- Celebrate completed projects publicly

3. Adapt & Improve:

- Survey participants annually
- Adjust rules based on feedback
- Learn from projects that work best

4. Equity Matters:

- Target outreach in underserved communities
- Provide resources to help residents develop proposals
- Track demographic participation and address gaps

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE PROCESS

Q: Is this really binding, or just advisory?
A: **Binding.** If you vote for it, we build it. This is in the official city budget. Your vote directs city staff to implement winning projects.

Q: What if the city doesn't follow through?
A: You can hold us accountable. Every project is tracked online in real-time. The District Council and community oversight committee monitor progress. If projects aren't delivered, vote me out.

Q: Can the mayor or Metro Council override the results?
A: No. The $15M is reserved in the budget specifically for participatory budgeting. Once residents vote, the city is legally obligated to implement winning projects (unless they become physically impossible, in which case we'd hold a revote).

Q: What happens to money not spent?
A: Rolled over to next year. Districts can accumulate funds for larger projects if desired.

ABOUT ELIGIBILITY

Q: Why can 16-year-olds vote? They can't vote in regular elections.
A: Research shows youth participatory budgeting increases civic engagement. Young people are stakeholders in their community and often propose creative solutions. Cities with youth PB see higher overall participation.

Q: I work in District 3 but live in District 4. Which district do I vote in?
A: You can vote in **both** if you choose. You have stakes in both communities. Just verify your connection to each.

Q: What if I just moved to Louisville?
A: As soon as you establish residency (lease, utility bill, etc.), you can participate. We want all community members engaged.

Q: Can undocumented immigrants vote?
A: Participatory budgeting is for people who live, work or go to school in the district and are here lawfully. The city won't check anyone's immigration papers; each district's residents and council member run their own vote and keep it honest.

ABOUT PROPOSALS

Q: Can I submit more than one proposal?
A: Yes, but we encourage working with others on collaborative proposals rather than submitting many individual ideas.

Q: What if someone already proposed my idea?
A: Great! Reach out to them and co-sponsor it. Stronger proposals have multiple community supporters.

Q: Can nonprofits or businesses submit proposals?
A: Yes, but projects must benefit the public, not private entities. A proposal for "public WiFi sponsored by [business]" is fine. A proposal for "renovations to [business] storefront" is not.

Q: What if my proposal is rejected as infeasible?
A: City staff will explain why and offer suggestions to modify it for resubmission. Common issues:

- Cost too high → Can we scale down?
- Not on city property → Can we find city property nearby?
- Requires ongoing costs → Can we redesign it as one-time capital?

Q: Can proposals benefit just one neighborhood, or must they benefit the whole district?
A: Neighborhood-specific projects are absolutely fine. That's the point – local people decide local priorities.

ABOUT VOTING

Q: Is my vote secret?
A: Yes. Only aggregate results are published, not individual ballots.

Q: What if I make a mistake voting online?
A: You can change your vote anytime before the deadline (December 15). Just log back in and resubmit.

Q: Do I have to rank 5 projects?
A: No. You can rank just 1 project if that's all you feel strongly about. But ranking more gives you more influence over how the money is spent.

Q: What stops someone from voting multiple times?
A: Verification systems prevent duplicate voting. Each person can only vote once per district. Attempts at fraud are flagged and investigated.

ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION

Q: How do I know projects are actually getting built?
A: Check Digital Democracy Platform anytime. Every project has a page showing current status, budget, timeline, and photos. Updated at least monthly.

Q: What if a project goes over budget?
A: If it's a minor overrun (<10%), we absorb it. If major, we pause the project and return to the community with options: (1) reduce scope, (2) get supplemental funds from another source, or (3) cancel and refund the money.

Q: Can I volunteer on project implementation?
A: In some cases, yes! Community labor can stretch dollars further. For example, volunteers can help with tree planting or painting murals. City staff coordinate volunteers for appropriate projects.

Q: What if I'm unhappy with a completed project?
A: Contact District Council or file complaint via 311. If there are defects, the contractor is responsible for fixing them under warranty.

ABOUT THE BIGGER PICTURE

Q: Why only $15M? Why not more?
A: We're starting conservatively to prove the model works. If successful, we can expand. $15M is a serious amount of money to put in residents' hands.

Q: Could this replace the regular budget process?
A: No. Most city spending is for essential services (police, fire, roads, salaries) that can't be voted on piecemeal. Participatory budgeting is for discretionary capital projects.

Q: What about projects that benefit the whole city, not just one district?
A: Those go through the regular budget process with Metro Council approval. Participatory budgeting is specifically for neighborhood-scale projects.

Q: Is this just a gimmick, or is it real democracy?
A: It's real democracy. You control the money directly, not through representatives. This gives residents direct power over $15M in public spending.

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CONCLUSION: YOUR VOICE, YOUR CHOICE, YOUR COMMUNITY

Participatory budgeting is not just about parks and sidewalks – it's about **fundamentally transforming the relationship between residents and government.**

For too long:

- Politicians made decisions behind closed doors
- Budgets were incomprehensible documents
- Your input was limited to complaints
- Power was concentrated at City Hall

Under participatory budgeting:
 YOU propose the projects
 YOU debate the priorities
 YOU vote directly
 YOU hold us accountable

This is real power. This is real democracy.

What This Means for You

If you're a parent:
Your kids can help design the playground they'll actually use.

If you're a senior:
You can propose the crosswalk that makes your walk to the grocery store safer.

If you're a business owner:
You can advocate for the street improvements that will bring more customers.

If you're a renter:
Your voice counts just as much as homeowners.

If you're an immigrant:
You belong here, and your perspective matters.

If you're young:
You're not too young to have a say. Your future, your voice.

The Promise

I promise that participatory budgeting will:

- Launch in Year 1 (first vote by December 2027)
- Have $15M in the budget every year, guaranteed
- Be accessible in multiple languages
- Be monitored transparently online
- Deliver 90% of projects within 2 years
- Expand if successful

And if we fail to deliver?
Vote me out. It's that simple.

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This is just the beginning.

Participatory budgeting is one tool in a larger vision: **returning power to Louisville residents.**

Combined with District Councils, the Digital Democracy Platform, and transparent governance, we're building a new kind of city government – one that actually serves you.

Your voice matters. Your vote counts. Your community wins.

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Questions? Want to get involved?

Website: rundaverun.org/participatory-budget
Email: dave@rundaverun.org
Phone: 311 (after inauguration) or (502) 555-DAVE

Follow implementation:

- Digital Democracy Platform (live Day 1)
- Social media: @RunDaveRun
- Community meetings in every district

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DAVE BIGGERS FOR MAYOR
Public Safety. Accountability. Community.

Let's build Louisville together – one project, one vote, one community at a time.

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Prepared by: Dave Biggers for Mayor Campaign
October 2025

References:

- NYC Participatory Budgeting: www1.nyc.gov/site/civicengagement/participatory-budgeting
- Boston PB: www.boston.gov/departments/participatory-budgeting
- Participatory Budgeting Project: www.participatorybudgeting.org
- Research: Participatory Budgeting World Atlas (2019), MIT Civic Media Lab

Calculate Your Tax Impact

See how my budget plan affects your family:

How Does My Budget Affect You?

See your personalized impact - zero tax increase, real benefits

 Household Income $50,000 50000
 Children in JCPS 0 0
 Your ZIP Code

Your Personal Impact

How we calculate: Benefits based on average family savings from wellness center access ($800/year), youth program value (after-school + summer jobs), and your specific mini substation timeline. All benefits come from the same $1.13B budget - zero tax increase.

Share your results with friends and family:

 Share My Results

What This Means for YOUR Neighborhood

Every Louisville neighborhood is unique. Enter your ZIP code to see how this policy directly impacts your community:

Find Your Mini Substation

Enter your ZIP code to see when your neighborhood will receive a community police substation.

Find My Substation

63 mini substations across Louisville, at least one in every ZIP code, phased in over 4 years.

Part of my comprehensive public safety plan.

See the Budget Impact

Explore how this policy fits into my comprehensive $1.13 billion budget plan:

How Does My Budget Affect You?

See your personalized impact - zero tax increase, real benefits

Household Income $50,000 50000

Children in JCPS 0 0

 Your ZIP Code

Your Personal Impact

How we calculate: Benefits based on average family savings from wellness center access ($800/year), youth program value (after-school + summer jobs), and your specific mini substation timeline. All benefits come from the same $1.13B budget - zero tax increase.

Share your results with friends and family:

 Share My Results

⚖ Compare This Policy

See how my approach differs from current administration policies:

⚖ My Plan, Category by Category

Pick a category to see what my plan does, how it is paid for, and when it arrives.

 Share This Plan Print This Plan
 Public Safety Wellness Youth Economy Housing Transparency

Public Safety & Policing

My Plan

Community-based mini substations

Approach

- 63 mini substations across Louisville (4-year deployment)
- Officers living and working in communities they serve
- Preventative community policing model
- Year 1: 12 substations in highest-need areas

Timeline Year 1-4 phased rollout
Budget Same $1.13 billion; no new taxes; priorities re-pointed inside the adopted budget
Impact Projected response times: 3-5 minutes (campaign estimate)

Mental Health & Wellness

My Plan

Wellness centers placed by health need

Approach

- I will place 18 Community Wellness Centers by health need (CDC PLACES 2024 plus Census poverty data)
- Mental health counseling, addiction support
- Youth programs, family services
- At least one center in every LMPD division

Timeline 6 centers a year over Years 1-3
Budget $45M a year when fully built (18 centers at $2.5M each), inside the adopted budget
Impact Accessible care within every neighborhood, preventative focus

Youth Development

My Plan

Comprehensive youth investment

Approach

- After-school programs at all substations
- Job training and mentorship
- Arts, sports, and STEM programs
- Youth advisory councils
- Summer employment pathways

Timeline Immediate implementation with substation rollout
Budget $32.5M for youth programs, inside the adopted budget
Impact Accessible programs in every neighborhood

Economic Development

My Plan

Community wealth building

Approach

- Small business incubators at substations
- Local hiring requirements for city contracts
- Neighborhood-based economic zones
- Affordable housing protection
- Living wage standards

Timeline Immediate policy changes, 4-year infrastructure build
Budget Same $1.13 billion; no new taxes; priorities re-pointed inside the adopted budget
Impact Jobs and wealth stay in neighborhoods

Housing & Affordability

My Plan

Housing as a human right

Approach

- Expanded affordable housing trust fund
- Strong tenant protections
- Community land trusts
- Rent stabilization measures
- Anti-displacement policies for existing residents

Timeline Immediate policy changes
Budget Same $1.13 billion; no new taxes; priorities re-pointed inside the adopted budget
Impact Protects residents, prevents displacement

Government Transparency

My Plan

Radical transparency

Approach

- Real-time budget dashboard
- Public data portal for all city metrics
- Community advisory boards with veto power
- Open contracting process
- Regular town halls in all neighborhoods

Timeline Immediate implementation
Budget Low-cost digital infrastructure
Impact Citizens empowered with information and decision-making power

The Choice is Clear

Louisville deserves transformative change, not more of the same. Join us in building a city that works for everyone.

Join the Campaign Read Full Policy Platform

Share This Policy

Help spread the word about my vision for Louisville:

Related Policies You Might Like

How to Vote for Me

I am a write-in candidate: in the race for Mayor, mark the write-in spot and write **DAVE BIGGERS** (the last name, Biggers, is required).

Early voting, no excuse needed: October 29–31 · Election Day: Tuesday, November 3, 6 AM to 6 PM. Registration for the November 3 election closed October 5.

✓ Check My Registration and Polling Place View All Election Dates →

Stay Updated on This Policy

Get notified when this policy is updated or when I speak about this issue in YOUR neighborhood.

* indicates a required field

Email Signup Information
Fax Number (Leave blank)
Name *
Email * We'll send you updates about the campaign
Zip Code 5-digit zip code (optional)
☐ I'm interested in volunteering! We'll send you information about volunteer opportunities
Sign Up

We use your details only to reach you about the campaign. Privacy Policy

Have Ideas to Improve This Policy?

This is YOUR city. If you have suggestions for how we can make this policy better for Louisville, please share them. Every idea is reviewed.

Suggest an Improvement for Louisville

Have an idea for improving Louisville? Share your policy suggestion below. Your voice matters in shaping our city's future.

Policy Title *
Description *
0/2000 characters

Category Select a category...
Your Name *
Your Email *
ZIP Code (Optional)
☐ I agree that my suggestion may be reviewed and potentially incorporated into campaign policy. My email will only be used to notify me about the status of my suggestion.
Submit Suggestion

NOT ME, WE.

Together, we make Louisville better for everyone.