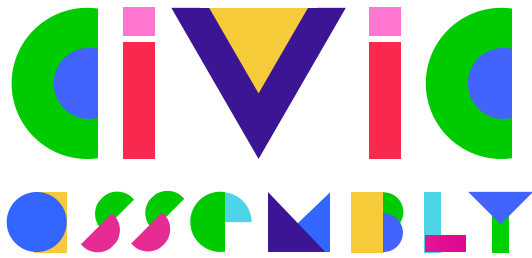


Culver CITY



ON INCREASING
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

PARTICIPANTS' REPORT



A PROJECT OF:
**CENTER FOR NEW
DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES**

CULVER CITY CIVIC ASSEMBLY ON INCREASING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE BUDGET PROCESS **PARTICIPANTS' REPORT**



Center for New
Democratic Processes

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CONTENTS

1. Introduction	4
2. Project Overview & Partners	8
3. The Participants	12
4. Learning Program	28
5. Challenges	41
6. Opportunities	50
7. Actions	57
8. Determining Success	85



WITH OUR THANKS

We at the Center for New Democratic Processes would like to preface this report by thanking those who commissioned, supported, and contributed to this project.

We must first express our gratitude to the City of Culver City for embarking on the Civic Assembly and selecting the Center for New Democratic Processes (CNDP) to implement this process. City leadership and staff enabled us to collaboratively design but independently run the Assembly so that residents could do the work put forward to them without undue bias or external pressure. Culver City is the first city in the U.S. to undertake a civic assembly to explore how to increase public participation in the budget process, and we all had our work cut out for us!

We also wish to thank the presenters, including the City of Culver City's Leadership Team and City Manager's Office, the City Attorney's Office, Fire Department, as well as Police Department. We also wish to thank the numerous community groups that agreed to serve as on-call resources.

We would like to share our genuine appreciation for all of the Culver City residents who volunteered to join the two Assemblies. Most importantly, we want to thank the seventy residents of Culver City who served on the Civic Assemblies as both alternates and full participants. Their willingness to take a risk, join the process, and work with one another on behalf of their neighbors on a topic as complex as the City budget process speaks for itself. We are very honored that we were able to work with, learn from, and laugh with you all during our time together. Thank you for taking a chance on us by joining the Civic Assembly!

Kyle Bozentko

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CNDP

Sarah Atwood

HEAD OF RESEARCH & ENGAGEMENT, CNDP

INTRODUCTION

The Culver City Civic Assembly on Increasing Public Participation in the Budget Process brought together sixty residents over two Civic Assemblies to learn and deliberate about how the City can increase public participation in its budget process.

On October 27, 2025, the City of Culver City, CA, City Council approved a motion to authorize a civic assembly. A civic assembly is a deliberative democracy methodology (also known as a “mini-public”) that brings together a randomly selected cross-section of a community together for multiple days to learn, deliberate, and make recommendations about a particular topic under consideration. Participants are randomly selected via lottery and compensated for their time. Assembly participants hear from a range of subject matter experts and community members who share their perspectives about the topic at hand. Participants then produce recommendations that are delivered to the commissioning sponsor.

Funding for the Culver City Civic Assembly on Increasing Public Participation in the Budget Process was allocated by the City of Culver City during the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year. On December 1, 2025, the City Council approved a professional services agreement with CNDP to design and implement the civic assembly following a competitive selection process. CNDP worked with City staff and an Ad Hoc Committee of City Council members to develop the demographic categories (used for the random selection process) and the Assembly remit. The demographic categories were approved by the City of Culver City City Council at the January 12, 2026 meeting. The City of Culver City City Council unanimously approved the Assembly remit (“How might the City of Culver City increase public participation in the budget process?”) at the March 16, 2026 meeting.

The original Civic Assembly plan was to convene a single group of thirty, randomly-selected Culver City residents to meet for a total of six days. On April 22, 2026, the City announced an updated timeline for the Civic Assembly as the City was simultaneously shifting to a priority-based budgeting process and needed to ensure that staff time could be adequately dedicated to delivering the 2026-27 proposed budget. In order for City Staff to also have the capacity to contribute to the Civic Assembly, CNDP was directed to convene two separate cohorts of residents in May and July 2026. The May and July Assemblies' work was interconnected, with results from the May Assembly serving as the foundation for the July Assembly's activities and deliberations.

The Civic Assembly recommendations will inform the City of Culver City's ongoing work to engage residents in decision making about the budget and budget process in future budget cycles.





PROJECT OVERVIEW

Assembly participants were tasked with learning, deliberating, and making recommendations about how the City of Culver City might increase public participation in the budget process.

The first Civic Assembly was held in May, 2026. Thirty Culver City residents, stratified and randomly selected (using Panelot, a system for randomly selecting panels) to reflect the approved demographic profile of Culver City, gathered for three days. May Assembly members learned and deliberated about the City's governance, structure, budget, budget process, as well as how City departments determine needs and develop budget requests. Participants then identified and prioritized challenges and opportunities related to bringing more residents into the City's budget process. May Assembly participants also surfaced actions that could be taken by the City to encourage residents and other stakeholders to meaningfully contribute to the development of the budget. An interim update on the Civic Assembly process, including participant remarks, was presented to the City Council on June 22, 2026.

The second Civic Assembly in July brought together a new group of thirty stratified, randomly selected Culver City residents (once again using Panelot). This group built upon the May Assembly's work, further reviewing and refining actions that could be taken by the City. July Assembly participants heard from a panel of May Assembly members as well as ten Culver City-based community organizations / City department representatives who shared additional ideas for increasing awareness of, and participation in, the City budget process. The community organization roster was composed of groups nominated by May Assembly participants and City Council members. July Assembly participants then reviewed, added to, and prioritized actions the City could take in order to address the most significant challenges and take advantage of top opportunities for increasing public participation in the budget process.

This report represents the collective work and recommendations of both the May and July Assemblies. It is not meant to be an exhaustive recounting of their work together, but rather a summary document that establishes participant priorities and their key recommendations for City Council, City Staff, and the broader Culver City community. Assembly participants' work shines light upon the top challenges and top opportunities for increasing public participation in the budget process along with concrete steps for making progress towards that goal.

Astute readers will find that many Assembly participants volunteered with the express desire to support the City in its effort to engage the community, and the vast majority of Assembly members had never attended a City budget meeting in the past. They had a range of personal and professional backgrounds, and the majority were employed either part-time or full-time. They were caretakers, students, and professionals from a variety of fields. Above all else, Assembly members were a diverse cross-section of the city with various perspectives and a wide range of lived experiences. Their love for Culver City was evident in their determination to take on a challenging topic, and their collective work is the culmination of over 1,500 hours of participant time invested on behalf of their fellow Culver City residents.



PROJECT PARTNERS

The City of Culver City, California commissioned the Center for New Democratic Processes (CNDP) to conduct the City of Culver City Civic Assembly on Increasing Public Participation in the Budget Process.

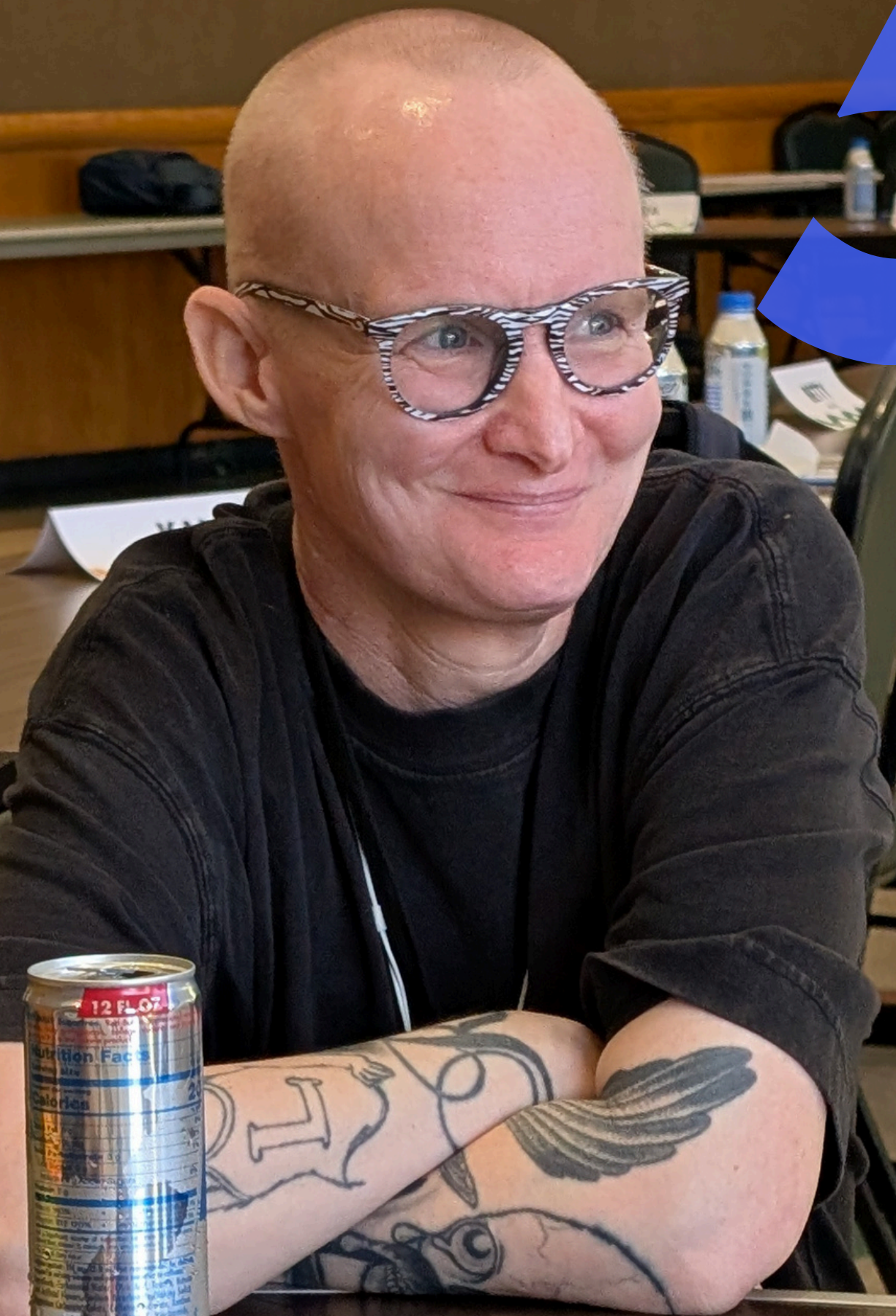
Culver **CITY**

The City of Culver City, California commissioned the Center for New Democratic Processes to conduct the Culver City Civic Assembly on Increasing Public Participation in the Budget Process. Culver City, CA, known as “The Heart of Screenland,” is an independent municipality (incorporated in 1917) with a population of 40,779 (according to the 2020 U.S. Census) located in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area.



The Center for New Democratic Processes (CNDP) is a non-partisan, nonprofit civic engagement and research organization. CNDP has been designing and delivering mini-publics (citizens’ juries, civic assemblies, etc.) in the United States and globally since 1974 and has conducted more juries and assemblies than any other organization in the U.S. CNDP is committed to involving the public in addressing complex problems through deliberative public engagement initiatives.

3





THE PARTICIPANTS

MAY 2026

Volunteer applicants for the May Civic Assembly were recruited through 10,000 postcards sent to random Culver City households, along with supplemental outreach. When the City modified the Assembly timeline, recruitment was opened to any Culver City resident aged 18+ (including those who did not receive a postcard).

Over 200 residents volunteered to join the May Assembly. Respondents were stratified and randomly selected to include a broadly representative mix of Culver City based on demographic categories reviewed and approved by the City Council.

MAY Assembly SNAPSHOT

Catchment Area

Culver City, CA

Recruitment Method

random mailer
& supplemental outreach

Volunteers

200+

Selection Process

stratification
& random selection



MAY Participant DEMOGRAPHICS

Age Cohort	Target Range	Actual
18 - 34	6 - 10	6
35 - 64	13 - 17	17
65 +	4 - 8	7
Gender		
Female	13 - 18	15
Male	11 - 16	13
Non-binary / Transgender	1 - 3	2
Education Level		
High School or Less	1 - 3	3
Some College or Associate's	5 - 9	11
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	14 - 18	16
Employment Status		
Full Time	12 - 17	12
Part Time	4 - 9	8
Not in Labor Force	6 - 11	10
Homeowner / Renter		
Homeowner	14 - 18	14
Renter	12 - 16	16
Party Affiliation		
Democratic Party	17 - 21	19
Republican Party	1 - 3	3
Independent / Other Party	5 - 10	8

MAY Participant DEMOGRAPHICS (continued)

Race / Ethnicity	Target Range	Actual
American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, some Other race alone, 2 or more races / Other	2 - 5	5
Asian / Asian American	4 - 8	4
Black or African American	2 - 5	4
Hispanic or Latino	4 - 8	4
White / European-American alone	12 - 16	13





THE PARTICIPANTS

JULY 2026

Like the May Assembly, volunteer applicants for the July Civic Assembly were recruited through 10,000 postcards sent to random Culver City households, along with supplemental outreach. Residents aged 18+ were invited to volunteer, regardless of whether or not they received a postcard.

Once again, over 200 Culver City residents volunteered. As with the May event, participants were stratified and randomly selected to include a broadly representative mix of Culver City residents according to the same demographic categories.

JULY Assembly SNAPSHOT

Catchment Area

Culver City, CA

Recruitment Method

random mailer
& supplemental outreach

Volunteers

200+

Selection Process

stratification
& random selection



JULY Participant DEMOGRAPHICS

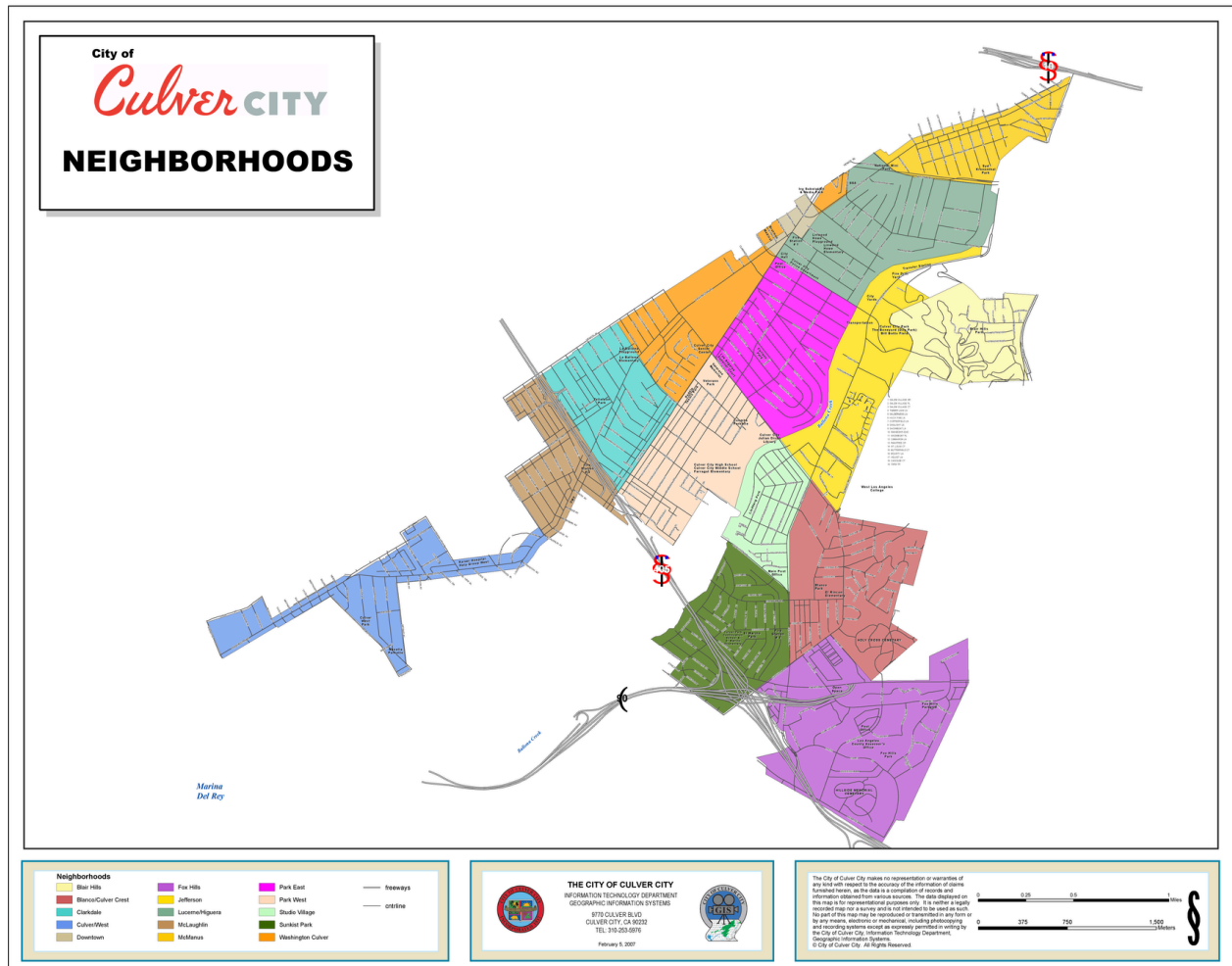
Age Cohort	Target Range	Actual
18 - 34	7 - 9	8
35 - 64	15 - 17	16
65 +	5 - 7	6
Gender		
Female	14 - 17	15
Male	12 - 15	13
Non-binary / Transgender	1 - 2	2
Education Level		
High School or Less	5 - 8	6
Some College or Associate's	6 - 9	6
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	15 - 18	18
Employment Status		
Full Time	13 - 16	13
Part Time	5 - 8	10
Not in Labor Force	7 - 10	7
Homeowner / Renter		
Homeowner	15 - 18	17
Renter	12 - 15	13
Party Affiliation		
Democratic Party	17 - 20	19
Republican Party	2 - 4	3
Independent / Other Party	6 - 9	8

JULY Participant DEMOGRAPHICS (continued)

Race / Ethnicity	Target Range	Actual
American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, some Other race alone, 2 or more races / Other	2 - 4	3
Asian / Asian American	4 - 6	5
Black or African American	2 - 4	4
Hispanic or Latino	5 - 7	6
White / European-American alone	12 - 14	12

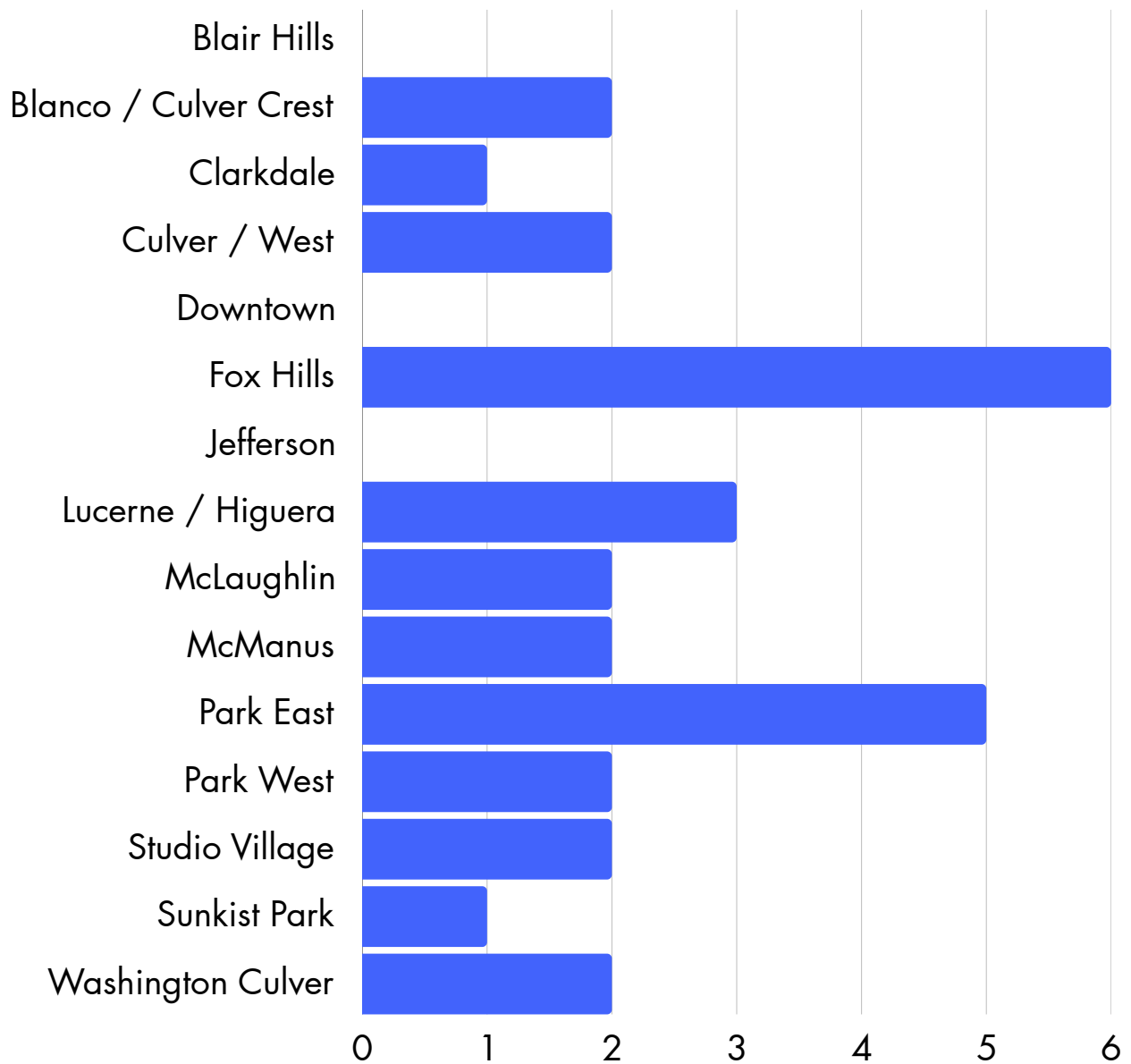


Culver City NEIGHBORHOODS

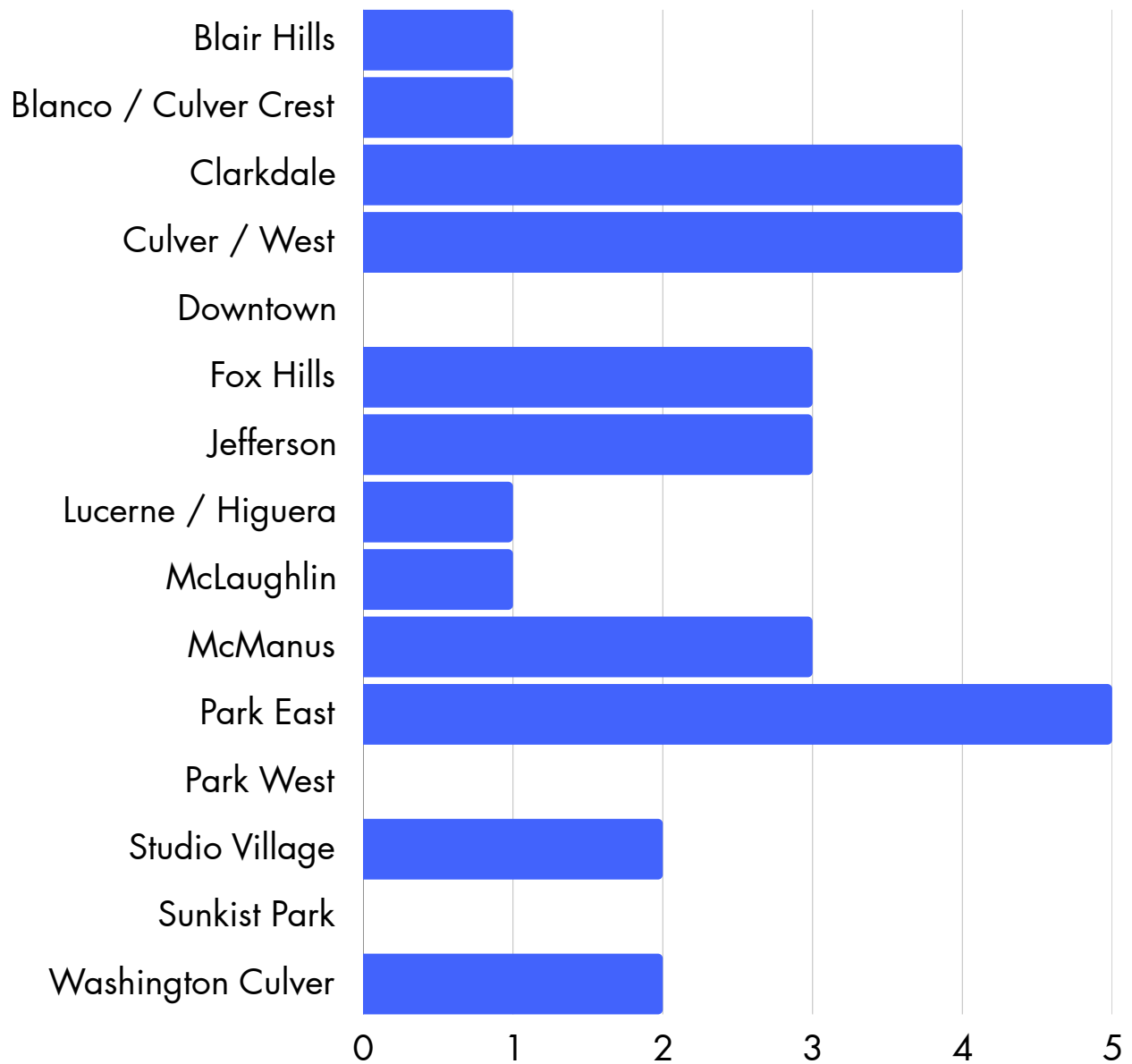


Assembly volunteers were asked to confirm that they resided in Culver City and to identify their neighborhood. Neighborhood of residence was not used as a demographic category for the random selection of Assembly participants (as directed by the City of Culver City City Council).

MAY Participant NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRIBUTION

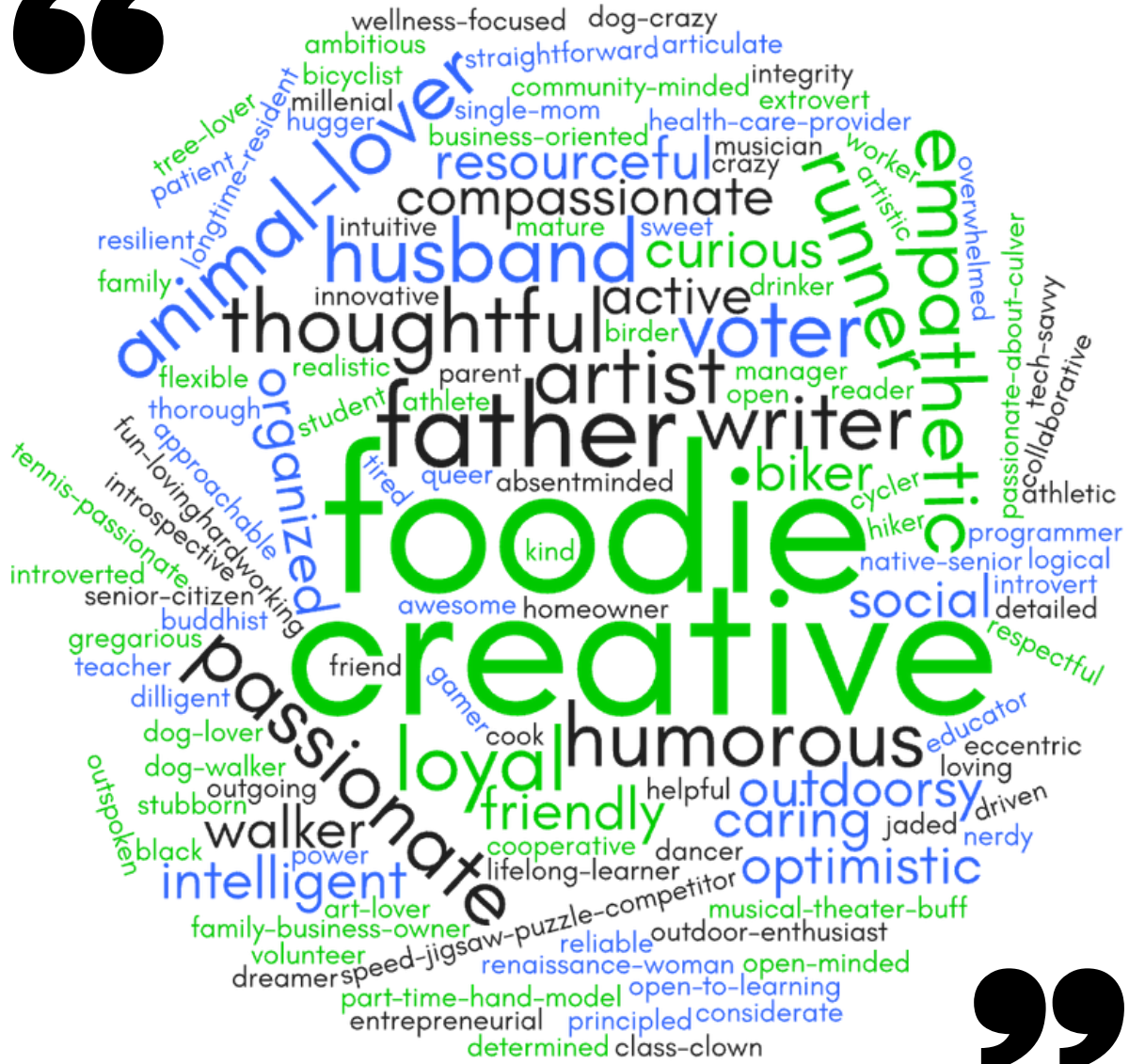


JULY Participant NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRIBUTION



PARTICIPANTS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES:

“



”

ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANT INFO: MAY & JULY

16

average number of years
living in Culver City

From 1
to
50+ years

length of residency
in Culver City

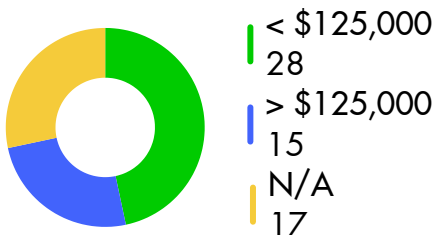
70%

of participants reported that they initially
volunteered to support Culver City

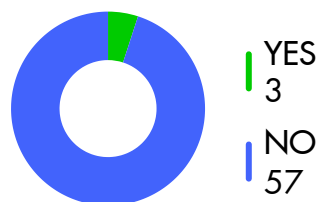
59/60

of Assembly members
would join again

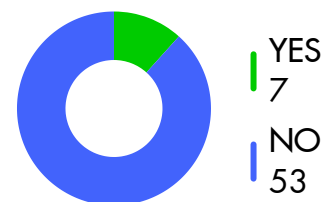
Household
Income



Service on a City Committee
or Commission (ever)

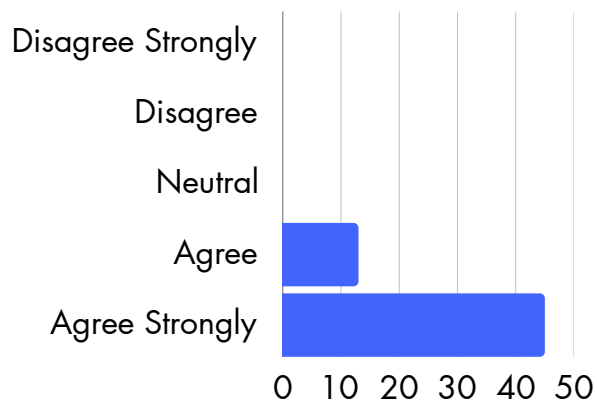


Prior Participation in a
City Budget Event (ever)

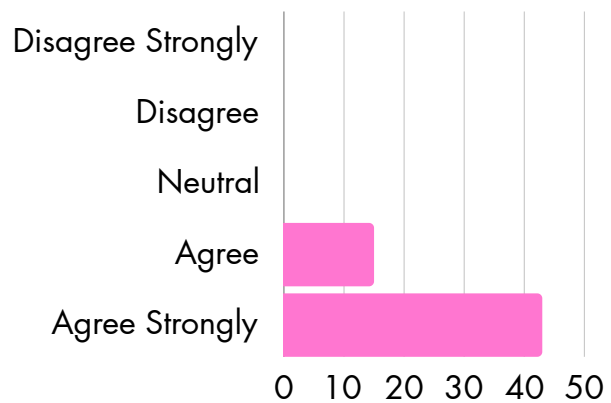


PARTICIPANT EVALUATION: EXPERIENCE & PROCESS MAY & JULY

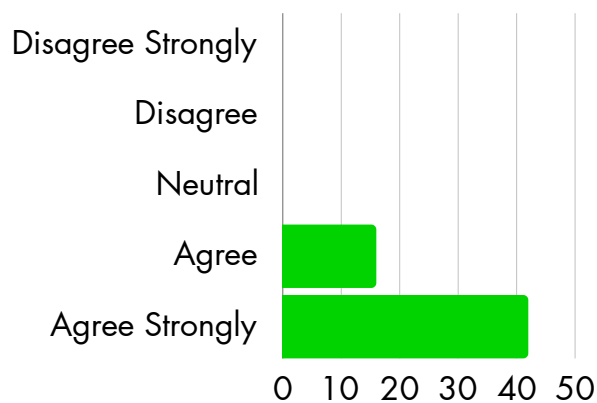
I felt comfortable sharing my opinions.



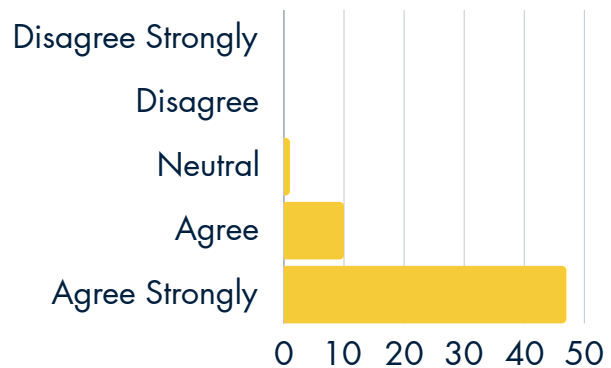
I felt comfortable asking questions.



I had an equal opportunity to participate
in the deliberations.



CNDP encouraged me to think
independently and make up my
own mind.





I think it's important for the community to know that we came together with our fellow residents to do this, and even though none of us knew much about the budget, nor did we have similar backgrounds, we were able to be productive because we were respectful of our different opinions, ready and willing to participate, and willing to look past our own agendas to work for the best interest of the community.

Getting involved is simpler than you'd expect - don't be scared!

- Assembly Participant



LEARNING PROGRAM

Participants at the Civic Assembly heard from and engaged with a range of subject matter experts to inform their deliberations. Presenters provided information regarding their work within the City, their specific department/s (if applicable), and/or the broader Culver City community.

MAY ASSEMBLY

- Introduction to the City of Culver City Government
- Culver City Finance Department & Budget Process
- Departmental Overview: Infrastructure & Innovation
- Departmental Overview: Economic Development, Vitality, & Equity
- Departmental Panel A: City Clerk | Talent Development, Labor, & Inclusion
- Departmental Panel B: City Attorney | Fire | Police

JULY ASSEMBLY

- Introduction to the City of Culver City Government
- Culver City Finance Department & Budget Process
- May Civic Assembly Participant Panel
- Community Organization & City Department Panel A
- Community Organization & City Department Panel B

MAY Expert Witnesses: CITY OF CULVER CITY



Stephen Agostini, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant City Manager, presented on the work of the Finance Department, as well as on the budget process. Chief Financial Officer Agostini presented at both Assemblies.



Dana Anderson, Chief Human Resources Officer, presented on the work of the departments under the Talent Development, Labor, & Inclusion portfolio.



Christina Burrows, Assistant City Attorney, presented on the work of the Office of the City Attorney.



Lea Eriksen, Senior Assistant City Manager, presented on the work of the departments under the Infrastructure & Innovation portfolio. Senior Assistant City Manager Eriksen presented at both Assemblies.

Odis Jones, City Manager of Culver City, provided participants with an introduction to the structure, governance, and operations of the City of Culver City.



Chief Ken Powell, Chief, Culver City Fire Department, presented on the work of the Culver City Fire Department.

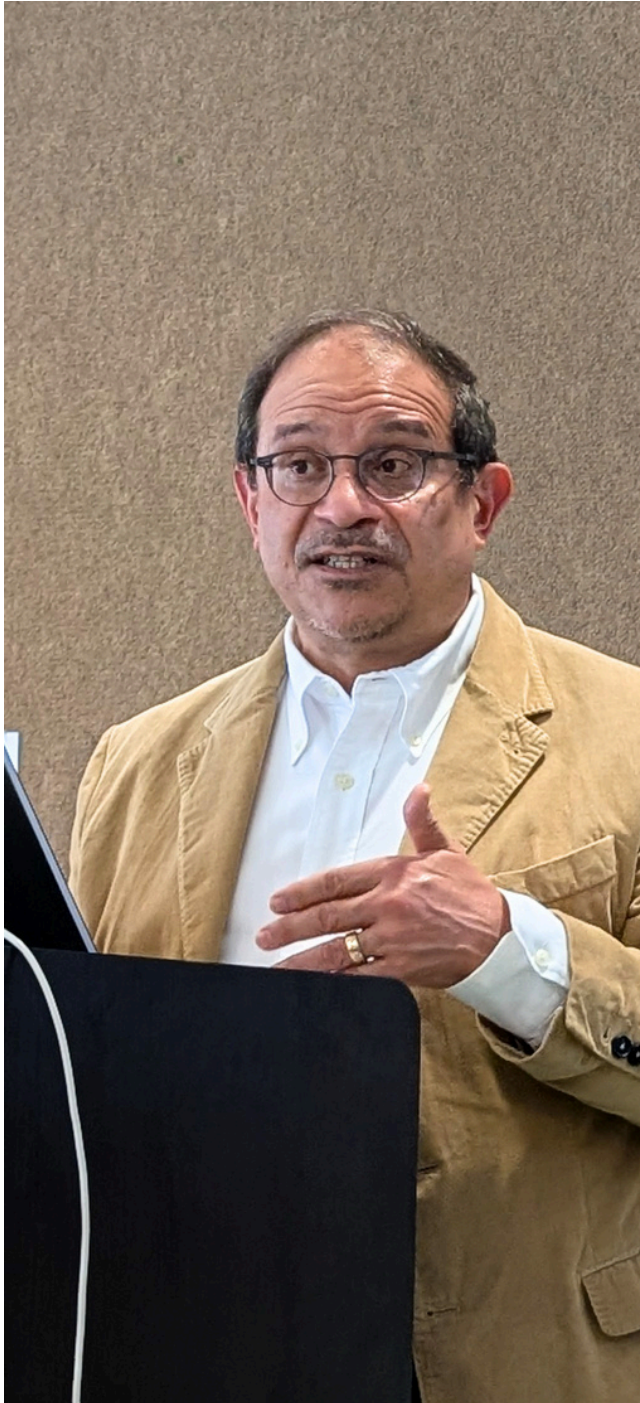


Chief Jason Sims, Chief, Culver City Police Department, presented on the work of the Culver City Police Department.



Adam Troy, Assistant City Manager, presented on the Economic Development, Vitality, & Equity portfolio of departments. Assistant City Manager Troy presented at both Assemblies.



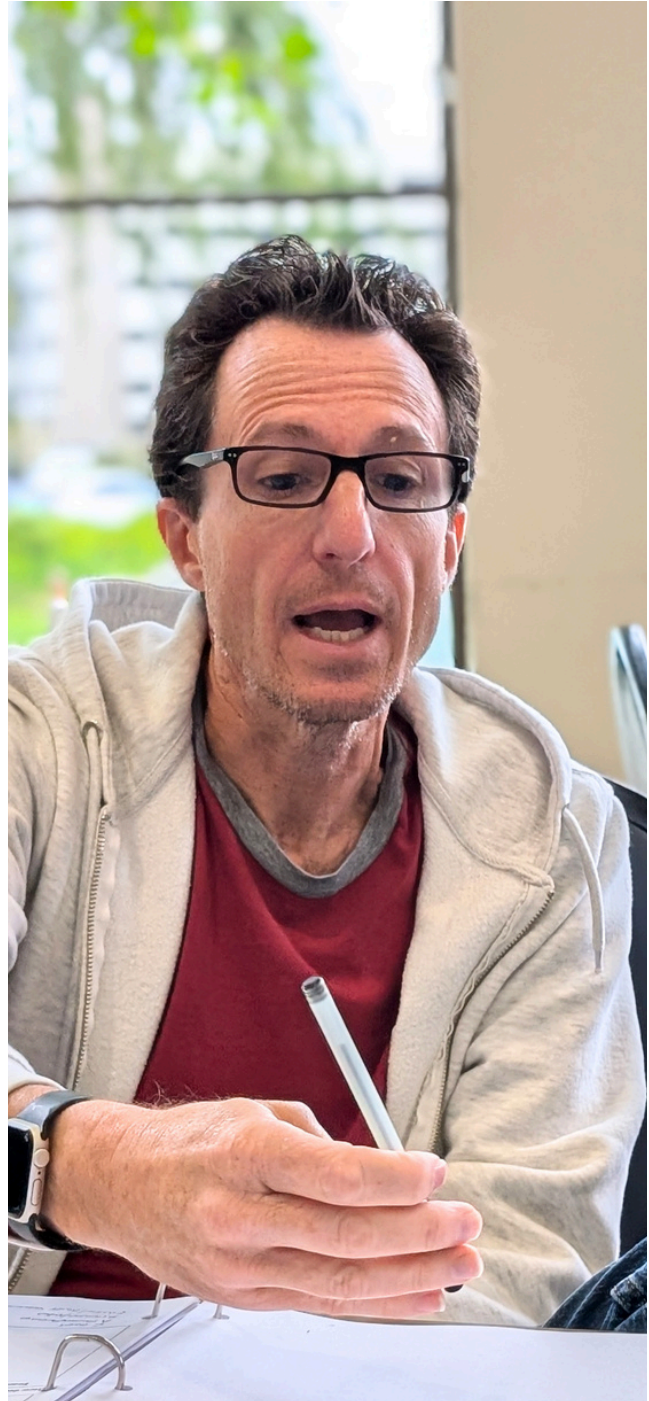


In May, City Staff shared about the governance structure, operations, and services provided by the City. They also introduced participants to the budget, budget process, and discussed how community needs impact and shape the City's budget and budget process.





May Assembly participants engaged with City Staff through extensive question and answer sessions following each presentation in order for participants to receive additional detail and clarification about Culver City's government, budget, and budget process.



JULY Expert Witnesses: MAY CIVIC ASSEMBLY MEMBERS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, & THE CITY OF CULVER CITY



Stephen Agostini, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant City Manager, presented on the work of the Finance Department, as well as on the budget process.



Jeanne Black, Our Culver, introduced the work of Our Culver during a Community Organization / City Department Panel.



Lea Eriksen, Senior Assistant City Manager, presented on the City's structure and contributed to a Community Organization / City Department Panel for the Infrastructure & Innovation portfolio.



Deb Gregory, Ballona Creek Renaissance, introduced the work of Ballona Creek Renaissance during a Community Organization / City Department Panel.

Dustin Klemann, Chief Communications & Public Information Officer, contributed to a Community Organization / City Department Panel.



Darrel Menthe, Culver City Downtown Business Association, introduced the work of the Downtown Business Association during a Community Organization / City Department Panel.



Travis Morgan, Livable Communities Initiative, introduced the work of Livable Communities Initiative during a Community Organization / City Department Panel.



Ron Ostrin, Culver City Coalition, introduced the work of the Culver City Coalition during a Community Organization / City Department Panel.



Adam Troy, Assistant City Manager, contributed to a Community Organization / City Department Panel for the Economic Development, Vitality, & Equity portfolio of departments.



Jamie Wallace, Culver City Neighbors United, introduced the work of the Culver City Neighbors United during a Community Organization / City Department Panel.



Andrew Weissman, Culver City Chamber of Commerce, introduced the work of the Culver City Chamber of Commerce during a Community Organization / City Department Panel.



May Assembly Participants returned in July to share about their work serving on the first Civic Assembly on Increasing Public Participation in the Budget Process.



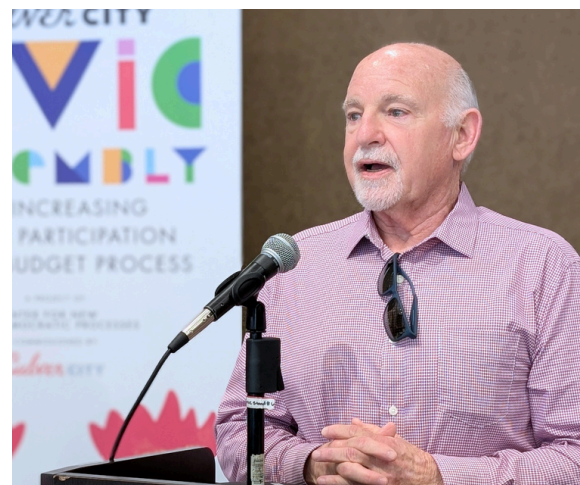


May Assembly members served as panelists during the July Assembly. They shared about their work, their perspectives on and experiences with the City and budget process, as well as recommendations for how the City could work to increase public participation within the process.





The July Assembly selected community organizations and City Departments to serve as resources on two panels. Organizational representatives introduced their work and answered participant questions.

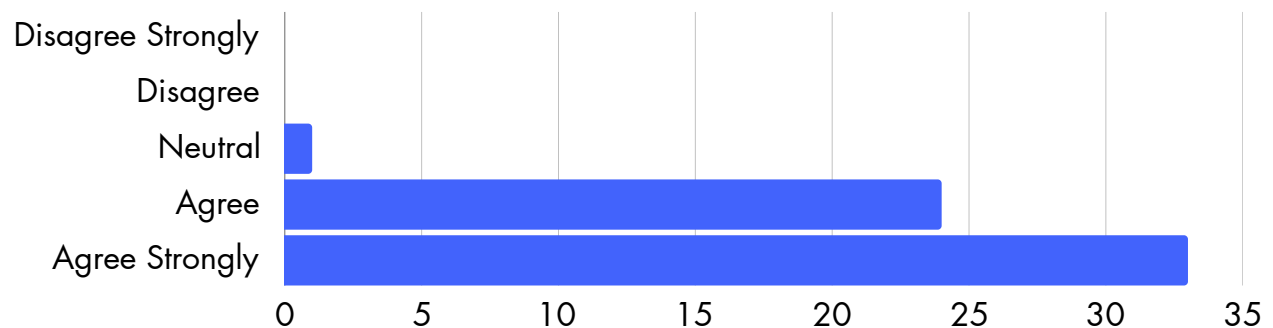




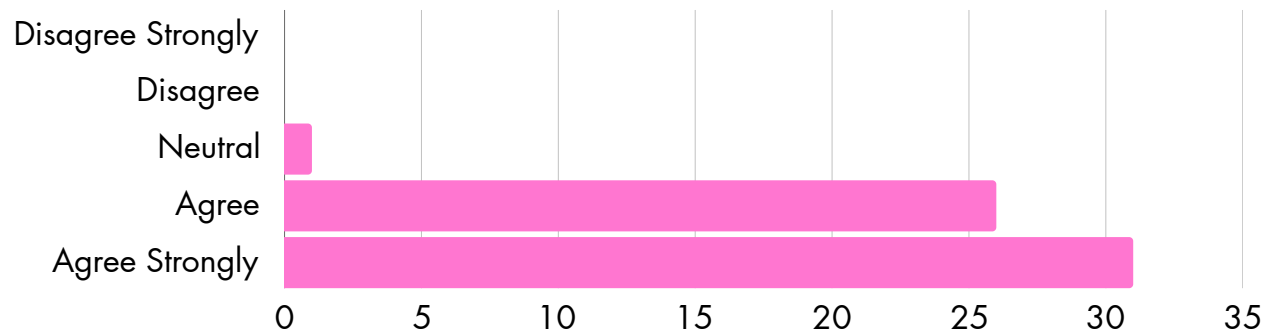
PARTICIPANT EVALUATION: INFORMATION - MAY & JULY

Participants were asked to respond to the following questions about the information they received from panelists at the conclusion of each Assembly.

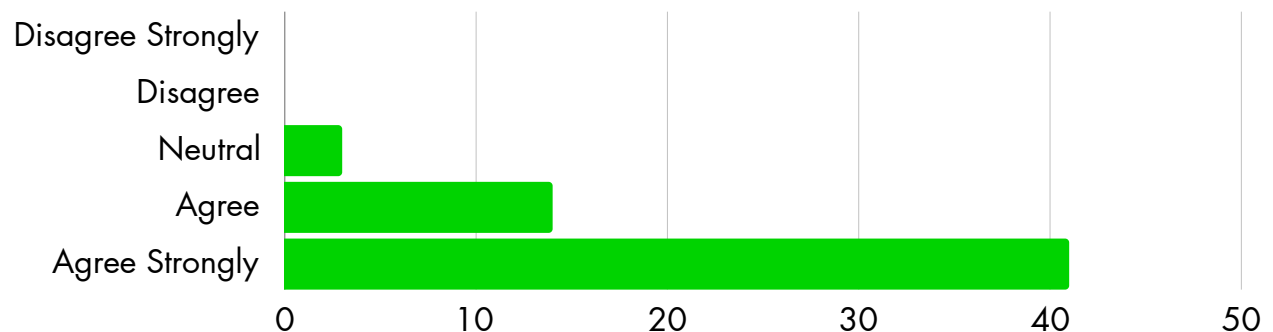
I learned a lot about the budget process and the challenges and opportunities the City faces.



The information I received helped me to participate effectively in the process.



The presenters delivered useful information.



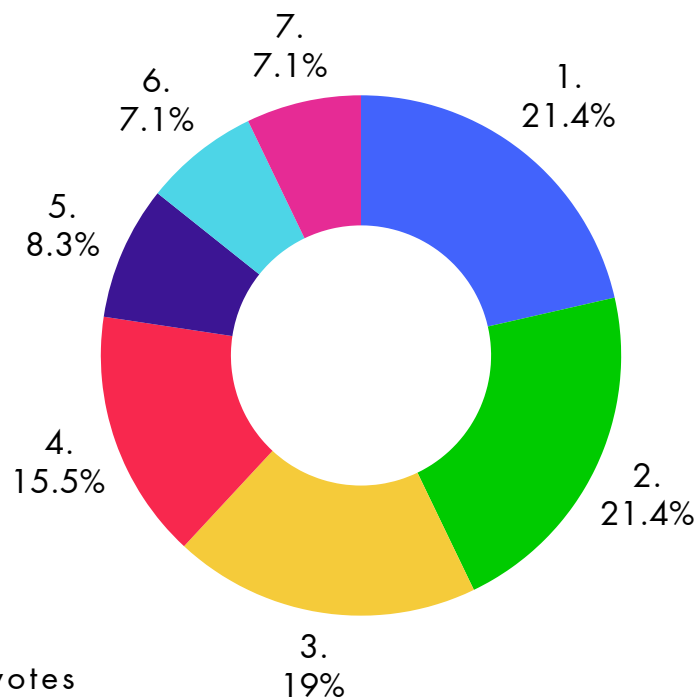


CHALLENGES

After hearing from each City Department and deliberating with one another, May Assembly participants identified challenges related to increasing public participation in the budget process. These were synthesized and grouped into seven categories. They then prioritized the top challenges for increasing public participation in the budget process by distributing up to three votes to the challenges they judged to be most important within each category. Challenges are presented in order of highest to lowest votes with associated vote percentages.

CHALLENGE: ACCESS AND COMMUNICATION

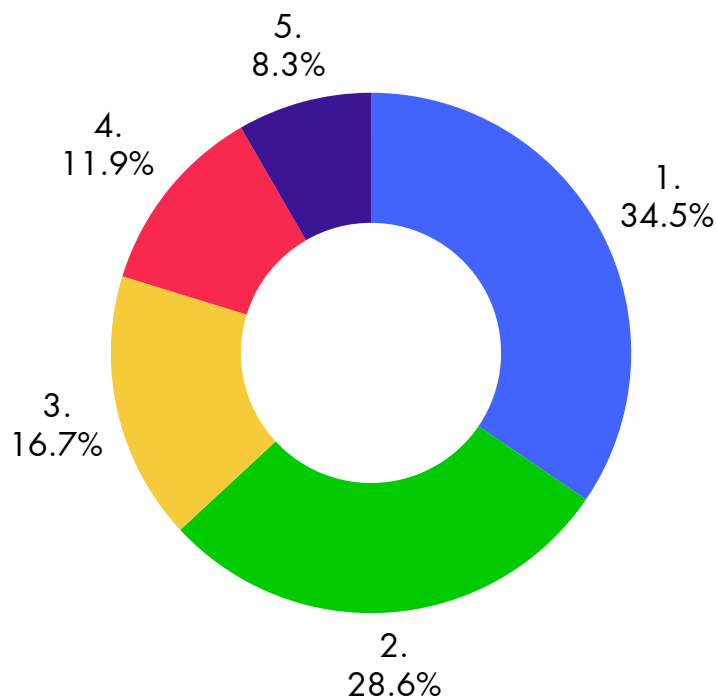
1. Getting the voices of a diverse cross-section of the community is needed to truly represent the City's priorities, but connecting with specific demographics can take extra work (such as low-income individuals and immigrants).
2. Reaching and including all community demographics in the budget process matters.
3. Even if resources are available for participating in the budget process, not all residents may be aware that they can contribute actively.
4. There may be limited access to public meetings due to timing, location, format, etc.
5. Not every community member is plugged into social media or other communications.
6. Providing consistent, accurate, up-to-date budget information can be challenging.
7. There are always limited resources, so the City can't do everything or reach everyone all the time.



- Challenge
% - Percent of votes

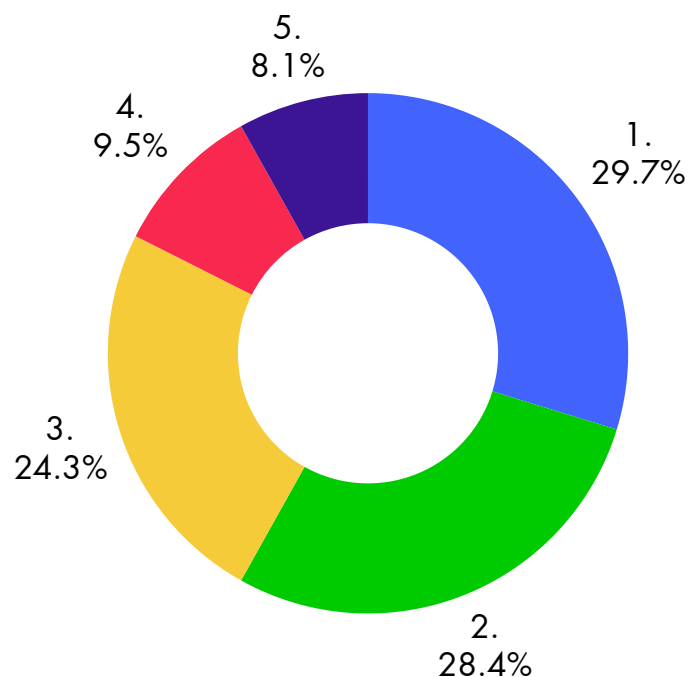
CHALLENGE: AWARENESS

1. Democracy is hard to deliver if all (most residents) remain unaware of the means by which input / feedback can be given.
2. The public can be disconnected from how daily or regular interactions with the City lead to and inform budget development.
3. Controlled unknowns such as intra-budget cost, natural disasters, or revenue shortfalls that require that a city manager adapt and adjust the budget / expenditures in ways that the public does not yet know about.
4. City work and services can often occur without public awareness.
5. Some departments do not interact with residents as much as others due to the nature of their work and therefore have lower visibility.



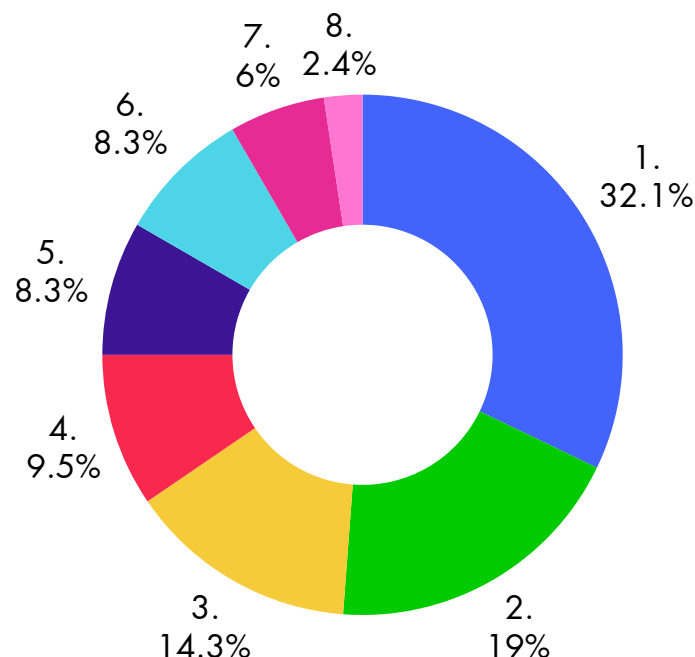
CHALLENGE: BUDGET CONSTRAINTS

1. If feedback is only a few weeks before budget adoption, it may not make a difference or be too late.
2. There are places within the budget that residents do not have an opportunity to impact directly, so participation with the budget process on these items is not possible.
3. Too much participation could slow down the budget process and create too many nuanced demands [or] requests for funds in a finite budget and process.
4. Getting more residents directly involved in the City Council's work on the budget process is a barrier.
5. Once budget decisions are decided, residents have to live with the decisions.



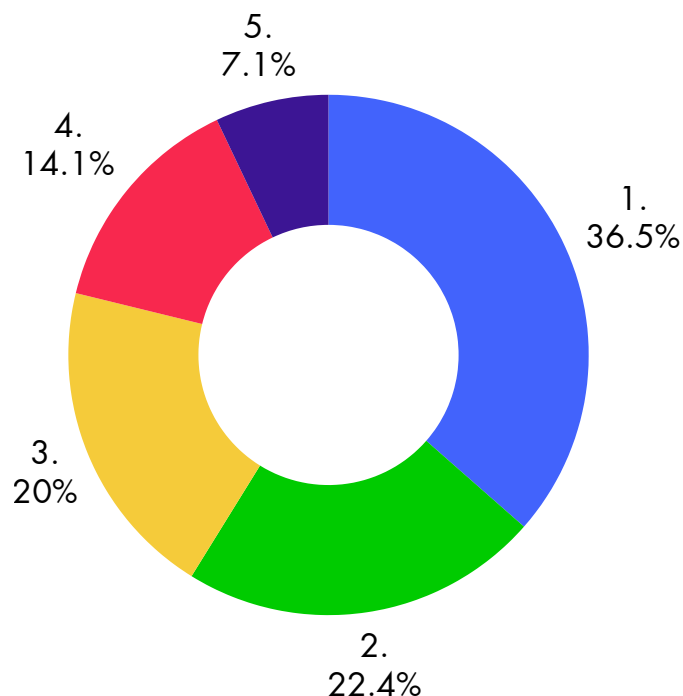
CHALLENGE: CHALLENGING TO UNDERSTAND / ENGAGE WITH

1. People don't know about the budget, feel unqualified to participate, and are afraid to ask questions or get involved.
2. A challenge is to teach people how to understand tradeoffs between options to spend money on.
3. There is so much going on within the budget process, it's difficult to know what to distinguish between immediate needs and what can be put off.
4. There are elements to the budget and budget process that are informed by (county, state, federal) law, which adds an additional layer of complexity.
5. The budget and budget process can be too complex and/or confusing.
6. Public processes can feel difficult to understand and navigate.
7. The budget and budget process can be / is boring.
8. There is a lot of technical language / jargon.



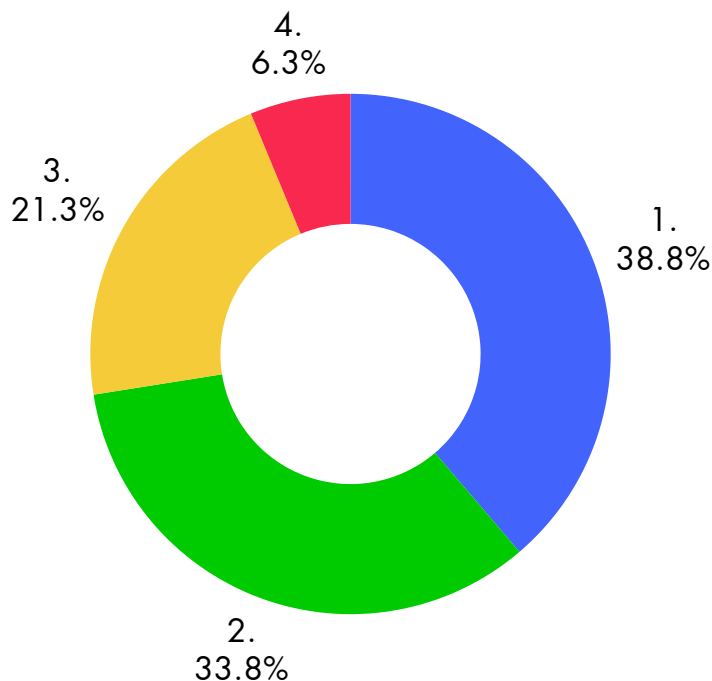
CHALLENGE: COMPETING INTERESTS & PRIORITIES

1. A challenge to increasing participation is whether it is a priority for the general public. As long as services remain effective and satisfactory, the vast majority of the public probably doesn't have the time or inclination to drill down into the information.
2. People are [too] busy living their daily lives to get involved in the budget process.
3. People care about services or specific items that the city takes care of, not necessarily the spending amount.
4. People have other priorities when it comes to engaging with the City or how they are involved.
5. People often don't want to seek out budget information on their own.



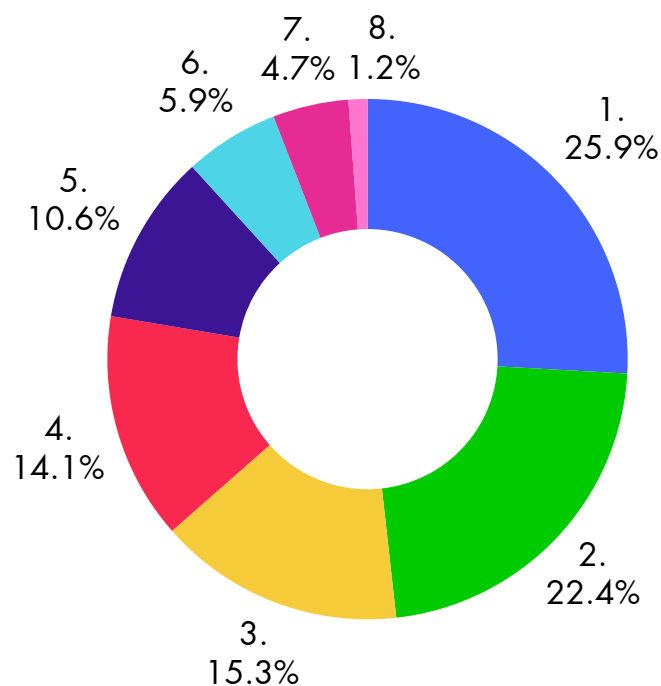
CHALLENGE: CONCEPT OF PARTICIPATION

1. People may not recognize that their lack of participation in the budget and budget process may have negative consequences (for the things they care about) [until] after the fact.
2. Residents are unsure whether or not their contributions to the budget process are truly heard.
3. Lack of engagement with the budget process can mean people are happy until they are unhappy.
4. Awareness is a form of participation but many may not realize it.



CHALLENGE: IMPACT PERCEPTION

1. Overall distrust of the government due to not listening to citizens, lack of diversity, and historical corruption at the state and federal levels.
2. The loudest voices should not always be considered the public majority.
3. If someone takes the risk to speak or provide input but feels like it doesn't matter, they may not do so again.
4. People are scared to participate because they don't feel they are "knowledgeable enough" to provide input.
5. Assumption or perception that public participation and input is either not wanted or not relevant to decisions that need to be made.
6. Overcoming the perception that one voice doesn't matter or can't make a difference.
7. A perception could exist that large portions of the budget feel or are inflexible, which makes participation feel less useful.
8. Different departments have different needs for participation (feedback, input, etc.).



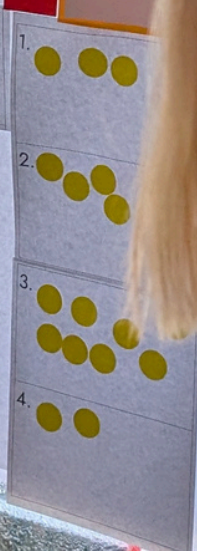
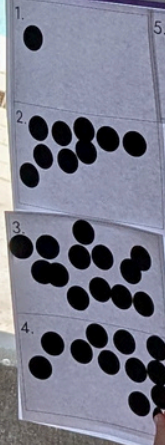


A. Data & Reporting

Communities need to know what they are doing well at and where they need to improve. Data and reporting can help us understand our current situation and plan for the future. This section provides information on how to collect and analyze data, and how to report on the results. It includes a list of indicators that can be used to measure community health and well-being, and a template for a data report.

B. Amplify Existing Activities & Resources

1. Advisory councils and other groups can help us understand our current situation and plan for the future. They can also help us identify and amplify existing activities and resources.
2. City staff providing regular communication and gathering regular feedback from the community can help us understand our current situation and plan for the future.
3. There are already many activities and resources in our community that we can amplify. These include community events, programs, and services.
4. Our city officials can help us understand our current situation and plan for the future. They can also help us identify and amplify existing activities and resources.
5. Showing how participation in these activities and resources can help us understand our current situation and plan for the future.

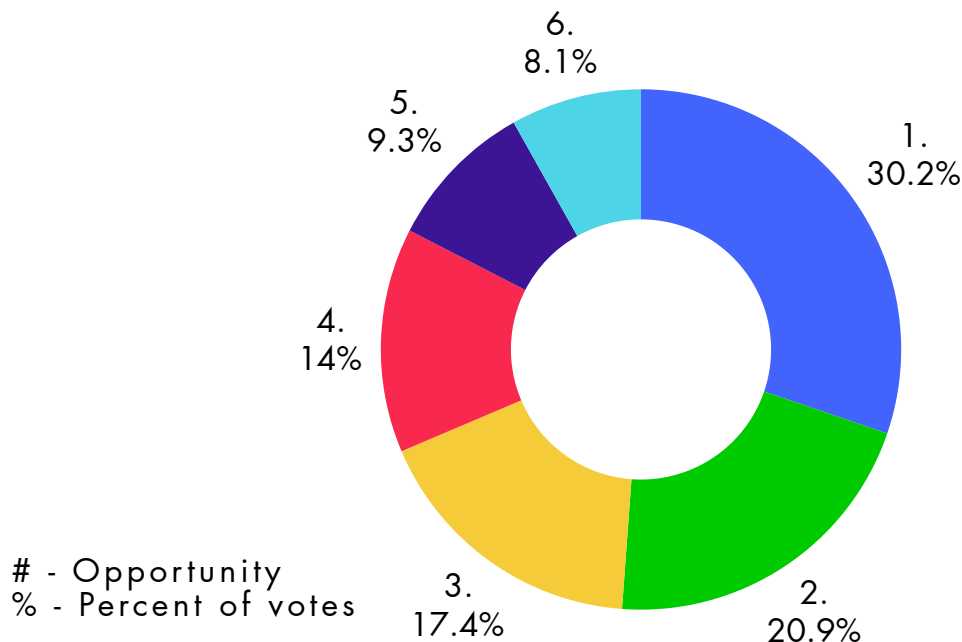


OPPORTUNITIES

After hearing from each City Department and deliberating with one another, May Assembly participants also identified opportunities related to increasing public participation in the budget process. These were synthesized and grouped into five categories. They then prioritized the top opportunities for increasing public participation in the budget process by distributing up to three votes to the opportunities they judged to be most important within each category. Opportunities are presented in order of highest to lowest votes with associated vote percentages.

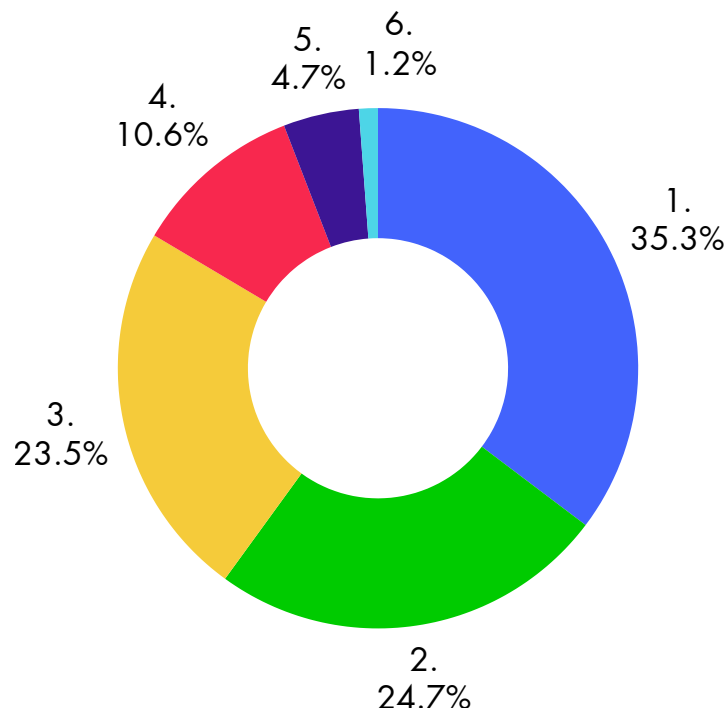
OPPORTUNITY: AMPLIFYING EXISTING ACTIVITIES & RESOURCES

1. Showing how participation resulted in the nuanced or meaningful change based on the feedback the City received from the process. Promote the result and how the process shaped it.
2. There are already channels of communication from the City (emails, calls, social media, website / apps, etc.) that can be used to share more information about the budget process.
3. Awareness about City staffing needs can help residents understand why budget decisions are important to how the City functions.
4. Advisory councils and other activities already exist, but their work in collaboration with the City can be shared more widely.
5. City staff providing services are engaging with the community and gathering regular input (ex. bus driver, City Clerk).
6. Our City officials co-creating with us can be a promising way for community voices to be heard.



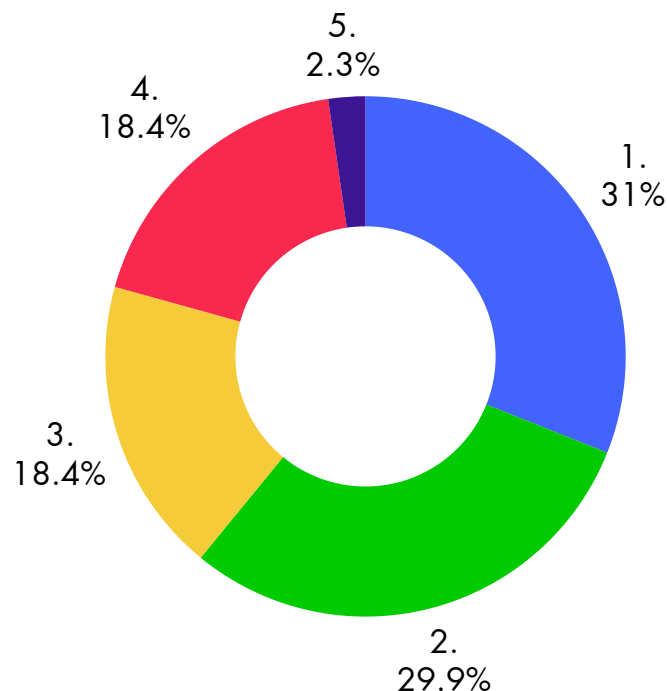
OPPORTUNITY: COMMUNITY AS RESOURCE

1. Meeting people where they are at (block parties, neighborhood coffee shops, social studies classes, Parent Teacher Associations, etc.) is an opportunity to hear from more / different residents.
2. Community members who are active in the budget process and/or are civically-minded can serve as connectors with other Culver residents who are less involved.
3. Building and strengthening relationships / trust between City staff and residents in formal and informal ways.
4. If there is more resident representation within the budget process, it will lead to more support for decisions and fewer complaints afterwards.
5. People do have opinions and want to give their feedback.
6. Community members already attend events and information about the budget process can be shared with them at these.



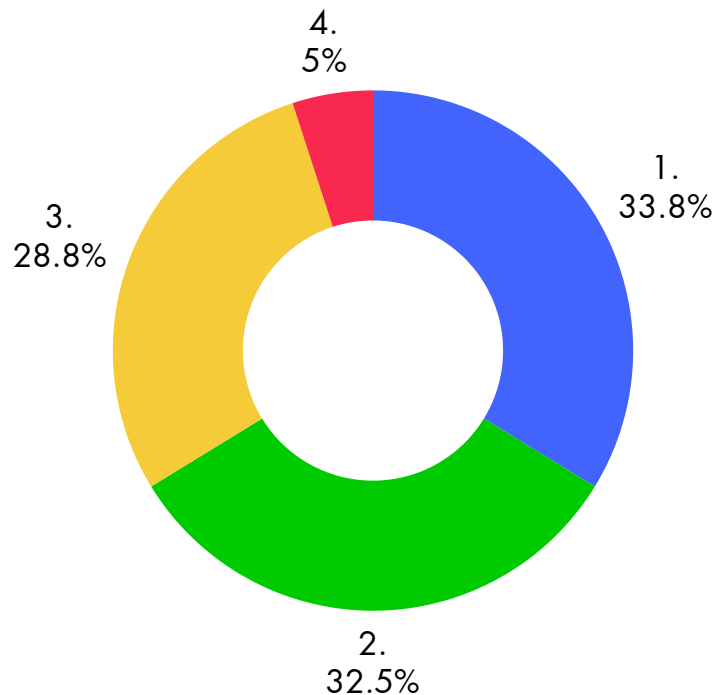
OPPORTUNITY: DATA & REPORTING

1. Communicating about key performance indicators (KPIs) can help residents see priorities and progress.
2. There are new ways to present budget information in simple, transparent, more accessible ways.
3. Budget changes occur regularly, and the results of these changes can be showcased for residents to understand impacts.
4. Technology can be used to gather more input from and share back with the community.
5. Departments already collect and keep data about their work, services provided, etc., which can be shared with the public.



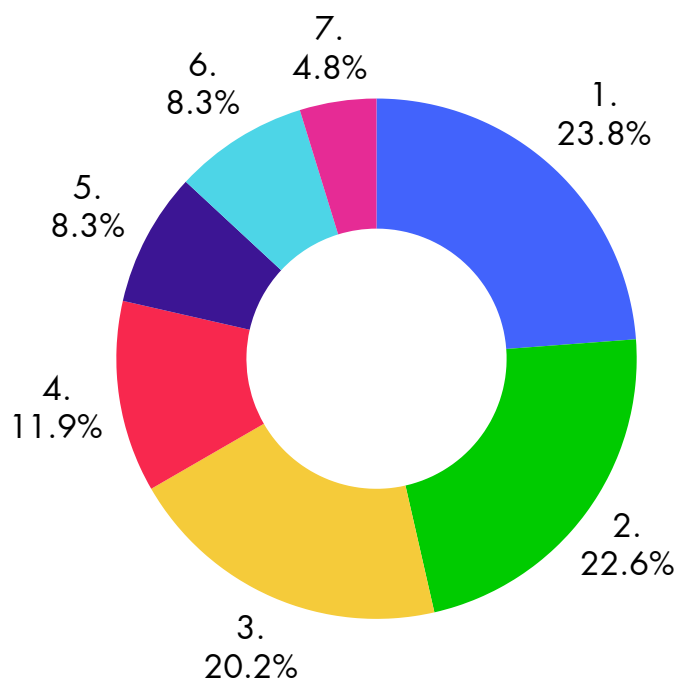
OPPORTUNITY: PARTICIPATION PIPELINE

1. An opportunity to increase participation is the relatively small size of Culver City. Residents might actually have more ability to communicate than they believe and City employees more capacity to absorb their concerns and input. Residents just need to be made aware of this.
2. We have an opportunity to eliminate participation barriers within the budget process so more residents' voices are heard by becoming conduits on behalf of our small neighborhood networks.
3. Official engagement activities can contribute to increasing residents' awareness of and ideas about the budget and budget process by focusing on specific issues.
4. When budget changes need to occur, people will be paying more attention and that can be an opportunity to increase their awareness about the budget process.



OPPORTUNITY: TAPPING INTO INTEREST

1. Small business community perspectives can supplement resident perspectives.
2. More awareness of the budget process will lead to more people wanting to make a positive impact.
3. Culver City has become a desirable destination for many people to live and to spend time in, and to open businesses. We have lots of positive momentum.
4. Sharing concerns and roadblocks with the community could increase participation in the budget process and generate interest.
5. Local businesses can be a partner for sharing information about the budget process with residents.
6. Staff are interested in asking community members to share their views about the budget process and have ways to use that input.
7. Residents want to know what's going on with the budget.





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ACTIONS

In addition to identifying top challenges and top opportunities, participants in the May Assembly also created an initial list of actions to either address challenges or take advantage of opportunities for increasing public participation in the budget process. Actions are presented here, as much as possible, in participants' own words. Due to process modifications as a result of moving from a single to two Assembly cohorts, and with the permission of May Assembly participants, these actions were synthesized, maintaining original text / language as much as possible, by CNDP in preparation for use by the second Assembly participants in July.

July Assembly participants reviewed proposed actions, engaged with May Assembly members, heard from Culver City-based community organizations and City representatives, and deliberated about the initial set of actions. They then provided modifications and/or added new actions that were missing. Finally, July Assembly participants selected which action they felt would best address each of the three top challenges and three top opportunities in each category.

TOP 10 ACTIONS TO ADDRESS TOP CHALLENGES

Actions are listed below to reflect the July Assembly's top 10 actions to address the top challenges for increasing public participation in the budget process. Actions are listed with those receiving the most votes to address challenges listed first. To see full text of each action, refer to the in-text page citation [p##] at the end of each action header listed below.

1	FEEDBACK LOOP & IMPACT DOCUMENTATION (p68)
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2	MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE (p68)
---	----------------------------------

3	BUDGET SIMULATION ACTIVITY (p70)
---	----------------------------------

4	SPECIFIC / DIRECT ASKS (p69)
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5	NEIGHBORHOOD AMBASSADORS, CHAMPIONS, OR GROUPS (p69)
---	--

6	TARGETED ENGAGEMENT WITH SUBGROUPS (p70)
---	--

7	BUDGET RECAP / CHANGES / COMPARISONS (p69)
---	--

8	EXTEND THE BUDGET PROCESS TIMELINE (p71)
---	--

9	DEPARTMENT-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION (p70)
---	--

10	BUDGET CIVIC ASSEMBLY *tied (p71)
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10	INCENTIVIZE INPUT / PARTICIPATION *tied (p73)
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10	RESIDENT ORIENTATION SESSIONS *tied (p72)
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PARTICIPANT EXPLANATIONS FOR TOP ACTIONS SELECTED

FEEDBACK LOOP & IMPACT DOCUMENTATION

"There is no better incentive in humans than knowing their voices and deliberation actually resulted in changes."

"This shows residents how their feedback influenced budget decisions, making them feel heard and encouraging them to participate again."

MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

"Meeting people where they are builds trust between residents and the City. When officials engage with people in familiar community spaces, participation feels less intimidating, leading to greater civic engagement and more informed budget decisions that reflect the needs of all residents, not just those who regularly attend government meetings."

"Meeting people at their activities increases chances of capturing their attention as discussion among their peers can be effectual in drawing them into a more formal discussion. Seeing others in their demographic could encourage the more reticent citizens to participate."

BUDGET SIMULATION ACTIVITY

"Having a simulation that treats everyone's response as equal remedies the loudest having the highest impact, everyone is treated equally."

"Having an interactive simulation would directly help [people] understand the tradeoffs between options on monies allocated."

SPECIFIC / DIRECT ASKS

"Having targeted asks can direct public participation towards areas where there actually is flexibility in the budget and real opportunities to affect the budget."

"Creating a list of specific invitations for resident actions could assuage the perception that their voice doesn't matter or isn't heard."

PARTICIPANT EXPLANATIONS FOR TOP ACTIONS SELECTED

NEIGHBORHOOD AMBASSADORS, CHAMPIONS, GROUPS

"Each area of Culver City has distinct and unique needs. Some affect everyone and some only affect the neighborhood. Reaching out to understand that is vital to feeling heard and seen, and increasing involvement."

"Having paid or volunteer neighborhood ambassadors or groups to examine localized concerns will help the community to better understand how the budget works and how their concerns may or may not be addressed."

TARGETED ENGAGEMENT WITH SUBGROUPS

"Targeted engagement with subgroups targets those who don't have a loud voice and gives them an opportunity to speak."

"Assuming it is an agreed priority to include all significant demographics of the community to participate, the most impactful way to meet this challenge is to specifically target engagement to / with subgroups that are lacking in representation."

BUDGET RECAP / CHANGES / COMPARISONS

"Publishing budget receipts with changes that impact the budget would be the most impactful way to help people understand tradeoffs between options where money is spent and which needs were addressed and how."

"Giving people the option and showing them the budget process and incremental changes is vital - it gives a better understanding."

EXTEND THE BUDGET PROCESS TIMELINE

"[Extending the budget process timeline] allows people time to plan and organize for the issues they care about. It also holds Council members accountable that they have to share information upfront and on time."

"The individuals that spoke to the assembly mentioned the squeaky wheel often gets heard but to combat this, extending the timeline and providing transparency into the process could help."

PARTICIPANT EXPLANATIONS FOR TOP ACTIONS SELECTED

DEPARTMENT-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION

"Department-specific activities and information helps residents understand how the budget affects the City services they use every day, such as parks, public safety, roads, and libraries rather than focusing on dollar amounts."

"Getting to know each department will break down budgeting into segments that are easier to understand and create awareness of the impact of public participation."

BUDGET CIVIC ASSEMBLY

"This creates a diverse representative citizens' assembly to provide informed input on budget decisions, giving residents a voice in areas where direct public participation is limited."

"Given infinite resources, all 40,000+ residents would benefit from the comprehensive education of this 3 day experience."

INCENTIVIZE INPUT / PARTICIPATION

"Incentives like check cards / gift cards will attract residents who may otherwise find participation burdensome."

"Incentives are valuable and if the City were to incentivize public participation by various means, it would make a big difference on involvement."

RESIDENT ORIENTATION

"This could explain the budget process in real-time, person-to-person so they can see how the process works."

"All residents should be informed of the process and cycle and when / where to participate."

TOP 10 ACTIONS TO ADDRESS TOP OPPORTUNITIES

Actions are listed below to reflect the July Assembly's top 10 actions to take advantage of the top opportunities for increasing public participation in the budget process. Actions are listed with those receiving the most votes to address opportunities listed first. To see full text of each action, refer to the in-text page citation [p##] at the end of each action header listed below.

1	NEIGHBORHOOD AMBASSADORS, CHAMPIONS, OR GROUPS (p69)
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2	MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE (p68)
---	----------------------------------

3	BUDGET RECAP / CHANGES / COMPARISONS (p69)
---	--

4	DEPARTMENT-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION (p70)
---	--

5	FEEDBACK LOOP & IMPACT DOCUMENTATION (p68)
---	--

6	TARGETED ENGAGEMENT WITH SUBGROUPS (p70)
---	--

7	DASHBOARD, KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, & METRICS (p71)
---	--

8	SPECIFIC / DIRECT ASKS (p69)
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9	BUDGET CIVIC ASSEMBLY (p71)
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10	USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO INCREASE AWARENESS (p72)
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PARTICIPANT EXPLANATIONS FOR TOP ACTIONS SELECTED

NEIGHBORHOOD AMBASSADORS, CHAMPIONS, GROUPS

"Neighborhood groups, etc. can be less intimidating for people to participate in issues concerning them regarding the City budget and can help increase involvement in an organic way by pooling resources, which makes a stronger argument in city meetings through strength in numbers."

"There is power in numbers and having neighborhood representation can be very effective for input and influence."

MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

"Meeting people where they enjoy the environment changes their attitude completely and opens their eyes to what they can do."

"Because people love Culver, people are always getting out and supporting events and businesses - that is the time to let people know what's going on."

BUDGET RECAP / CHANGES / COMPARISONS

"Publishing their data so folks can understand the impact of incremental changes effecting the budget is a direct way to showcase results and impact for residents."

"Showing budget recaps and comparisons can help residents understand the budget process more through actual example and process."

DEPARTMENT-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION

"This will help everyone understand budget needs and the process. It helps everyone understand where everything goes and 'Getting to Know Your Department' events are vital."

"Department-specific activities and information leads to more direct / focused issue discussions / deliberations and understanding of impact."

PARTICIPANT EXPLANATIONS FOR TOP ACTIONS SELECTED

FEEDBACK LOOP & IMPACT DOCUMENTATION

"Demonstrate that the public isn't wasting their time when they engage by clearly communicating the inputs they received and the impacts they had."

"We need to see and hear about how people were able to interact and engage with the City to have their changes implemented. It will help instill and reinforce confidence in the democratic process."

TARGETED ENGAGEMENT WITH SUBGROUPS

"Tapping into interest groups and existing gathering spaces that make Culver City so great plus making it clear that their engagement will have an impact and how they would use existing positive energy and high event attendance for good."

"Taking advantage of the small business community to target subgroups with common interests regarding the budget seems productive."

DASHBOARDS, KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, & METRICS

"Ongoing and updating dashboards lets residents see how the budget works, is changing and what City priorities are."

"This correlates directly to the problem that if communication is the issue, then key performance indicators can be accessed by anyone and they can see progress and priorities."

SPECIFIC / DIRECT ASKS

"To eliminate participation barriers, asking specific / direct asks can allow more residents' voices to be heard."

"Having a specific issue to handle or address can streamline participation in the whole process."

PARTICIPANT EXPLANATIONS FOR TOP ACTIONS SELECTED

BUDGET CIVIC ASSEMBLY

"A citizens' assembly on the budget would give residents a direct voice in the budget process and increases participation by making involvement more meaningful."

"This would give informed residents a meaningful role in the budget process, encouraging greater participation and helping more people make a positive impact on budget decisions."

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO INCREASE AWARENESS

"Because Culver City is demographically diverse, using all social media platforms, as well as print media, radio, cold calls, texts, and direct mail will capture a diverse participation audience."

"Social media may be the broadest and most cost-effective ways to reach residents and try to increase engagement."

While there may be disagreement on issues themselves, there is consensus on how we can get more people involved / engaged, which hopefully will increase who is represented in those discussions on issues (if implemented).

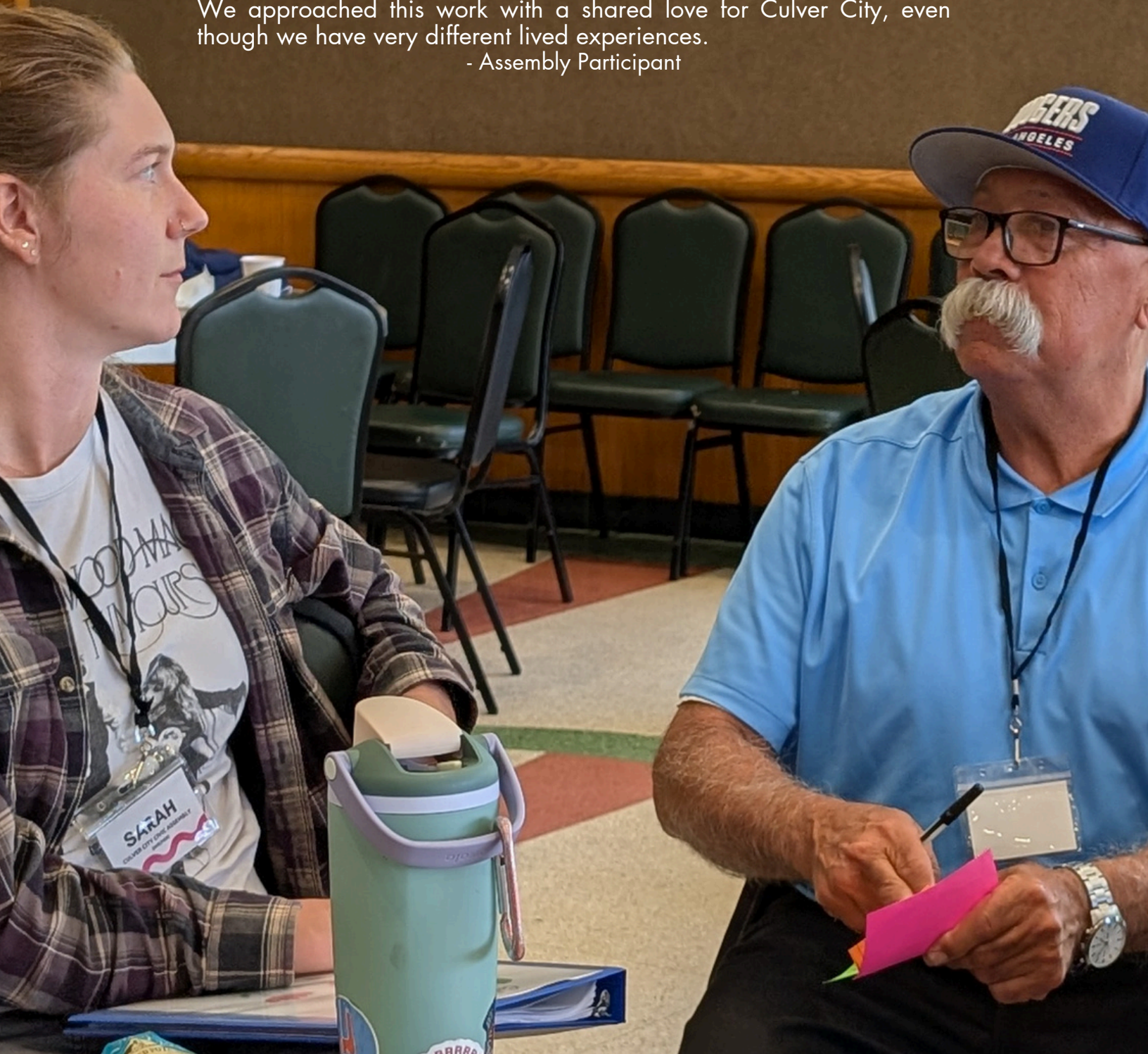
- Assembly Participant

It's important for my fellow Culver City neighbors to know that the work accomplished was a group effort that included a lot of conversation and discussion and varying perspectives, and that we tried to keep the entire community in mind.

- Assembly Participant

We approached this work with a shared love for Culver City, even though we have very different lived experiences.

- Assembly Participant



AGGREGATE ACTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR CULVER CITY

Participants in both the May and July Assemblies produced actions that the City of Culver City could take in order to increase public participation in the budget process. Actions are listed to reflect the July Assembly's aggregate prioritization of these actions (based on votes across both challenges and opportunities), with the most popular actions listed first and subsequent actions in descending order.



1

MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

Hold events at locations where people are already gathering and/or using city services, such as block parties, neighborhood book clubs or coffee clubs, school assemblies, high school classrooms, parent teacher associations, parks, "Culver Steps" events, the farmer's market, or meeting people in bars, restaurants, malls, and other businesses. Conduct budget and budget process outreach and engagement through different channels by which our voices can be heard rather than having in-person opportunities driven by people going to Council meetings.



2

FEEDBACK LOOP & IMPACT DOCUMENTATION

Document how feedback and input shapes the budget and is incorporated throughout the budget process. This could include concrete and clear examples of acknowledging resident complaints or suggestions, publishing the results of deliberations and votes before and after key meetings and discussions, and providing examples of how resident feedback affected budget decisions so that the public is aware of and knows how their feedback helps to shape budget priorities.

3

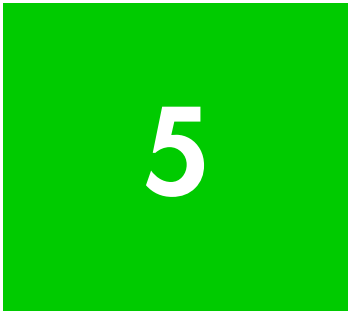
NEIGHBORHOOD AMBASSADORS, CHAMPIONS, OR GROUPS

Coordinate paid and/or volunteer neighborhood ambassadors, champions, or groups who examine more localized concerns, serve as sources of information and points-of-contact for bi-directional information flow, and go out to certain areas to gather qualitative feedback so that it is more equitable and fills in gaps in the budget process.

4

BUDGET RECAP / CHANGES / COMPARISONS

Publish data (ongoing and annual) to track how shifts in the budget occurred, including changes in expenses and revenue, legal or policy changes that impact the budget or budget process, and what the results were so that people can better understand the impact of incremental changes (e.g. "Dept. X's budget increased 1% = 1 new staff hired = service delivery changed from Y to Z" or provide case studies showing how an issue was addressed).

5

SPECIFIC / DIRECT ASKS

Create a list of specific invitations for resident action / requests / feedback related to different topics in order to direct people's energy and appeal to what directly affects them as it relates to the budget and budget process. For example: "We need your input on issue Y. We need to understand your priorities on issue X," or "We have this money, help us determine how to spend it." Create clear and succinct opportunities for participation.

6

DEPARTMENT-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION

Department-specific events, public and recorded meetings with department managers and staff, informational materials (such as presentations, explainers, dashboards, and key performance indicators [“KPIs”]), and outreach will help the public understand departmental missions and challenges, needs (such as staffing), and help residents understand where expenditures go. “Get to Know Your Department” events could also give us some possible ideas on how the public could participate in the budget process and insight into each department’s budget.

7

TARGETED ENGAGEMENT WITH SUBGROUPS

Make connections and hold community meetings with different segments of the city and communities of interest such as business owners and associations, residents that regularly use parks / recreation services, landlords and property owners, renters, neighborhood groups, as well as service users, affinity groups, and other valued stakeholders who may not necessarily be residents.

8

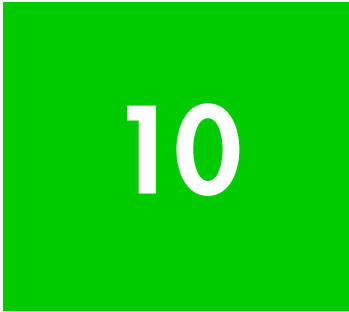
BUDGET SIMULATION ACTIVITY

Create an interactive online budget simulation activity that shows the amounts previously allocated to each department with explanations of each department, and then allow users to add and subtract money from different departments to fit the total budget. The simulator could also provide an option to give feedback, reasoning, and advice to departments as well as the city as a whole (similar to the Los Angeles Metro Budget Activity, which is bilingual and easy to use).

9

BUDGET CIVIC ASSEMBLY

The city should retain and compensate an annual Civic Assembly on the Budget run by an unbiased 3rd party that is diverse and representative in geography and demographics that is educated, informed, and retained to give comment based on their constituent views. This rotating civic duty would be per budget cycle and could only be served on once.

10

DASHBOARD, KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, & METRICS

Create and regularly update public-facing dashboards / databases that include agendas for budget meetings, information regarding budget proposals and budget reconciliation, departmental budget requests and information, reports of service, and departmental key performance indicators ("KPIs") that can be accessed by anyone.

11

EXTEND THE BUDGET PROCESS TIMELINE

Extend the budget process timeline so that the community can engage with City staff, provide input and feedback, and have a longer period of time between the establishment of the draft budget and adoption of the final budget.

12

RESIDENT ORIENTATION SESSIONS

Hold resident orientation sessions to empower people to participate in monthly or quarterly interactive events, with presentations for new and existing residents to learn about how the City functions and about the budget process.

13

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO INCREASE AWARENESS

Updates on the budget process are always communicated across diverse methods like social media (including TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc.), posted on community networks and websites, radio and print media, physical signs with QR codes, and direct outreach (call / cold calls, text, and mailers) so everyone has an opportunity to be informed about the budget process and how to participate.

14

MAKE BUDGET & PROCESS INFO ACCESSIBLE

Make the budget process more comprehensible for people to understand and navigate so that they can participate in the process. Make it more user-friendly by simply communicating and explaining technical terminology and process steps (such as how, when, and where to participate), as well as information about the departments involved with organizational charts.

15

MARQUEE, BOARDS, & KIOSKS WITH INFORMATION

Utilize public spaces to establish a community board, marquee, or kiosks in high visibility locations (such as downtown) in order to publicize opportunities for participation in the budget process and solicit public comments so that more people can become aware of participation opportunities.

16

INCENTIVIZE INPUT / PARTICIPATION

Incentivize public participation in the budget process through payments, food, gift cards to local businesses, reimbursement for transport costs / childcare, or other forms of compensation.

17

APP / PORTAL

Create a Culver City application and/or web portal for residents to learn about the budget process, access relevant City datasets, provide feedback, receive direct correspondence from appropriate City staff about budget inquiries, and receive alerts about opportunities for participation.

18

CREATIVE CAMPAIGNS & COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Create ad campaigns to invite the community into the budget process. Appeal to them through humor such as “What’s funny about money,” or ask residents for “help.” Humanize it by finding ways to make the budget process relate to how people are trying to make our city better, or translate the budget into something that shows how resident needs and wants are addressed (see p75 for examples).

19

CONDENSE & SUMMARIZE THE BUDGET

Create a simple, user-friendly budget summary document / searchable resource that reduces the current ~700-page document down to 10-20 pages in order to help the community clearly understand the budget as a whole.

20

BUDGET INFORMATION AI-ASSISTANT

Develop or use AI-powered communication tools (such as an AI-assistant that could answer questions 24/7 in multiple languages, explain how tax dollars are spent, and/or summarize complex budget documents in plain language) to increase public awareness and participation in the budget process.

CREATIVE CAMPAIGN IDEAS:

The Tower Signal: The Veterans Memorial tower lights up each fall to announce Budget Season with a signature color plus projected key dates, meeting times, and where to weigh in, giving the whole city a heads-up that budget decisions are open.

What's Funny About Money: social media post with a joke or fact; make people laugh, give them budget info, ask for a comment.

Heart of Screenland Film Competition: Annual 1-2 minute short-film contest about the budget where winners screen before movies at the Culver Theater, and prizes sponsored by the studios. It draws people in through the craft this city is built on and that so many residents work in: filmmaking becomes the doorway to the budget.

Screens at the Pump: Air the winning films on gas-pump screens (which have a captive audience with the sound on) or other budget info like key dates, where money goes, even quick choices on the pump's buttons, car-wash style: "More money for childcare? Yes / No."

21

COUNCIL MEETING STANDARDS OF ENGAGEMENT

Adopt simple standards of engagement on the dais: eye contact with speakers, phones / tablets off during public comment, a brief acknowledgment of what was said.

Council Members could focus their full attention on residents who go to speak in Council Meetings out of respect for their time and truly listen during public comment periods. When people feel basic human understanding from their Council, they come back. Accountability starts with looking up.

22

INCENTIVIZE LOCAL BUSINESSES AS PARTNERS

Partner with local businesses to provide incentives to customers who provide input / feedback on the budget process. An example might be a \$500 credit to a business for collecting a specific number of responses in exchange for the business giving a free beverage or food item for every response received.

23

WORKING WITH BUSINESSES TO INCREASE AWARENESS

Partner with local businesses to share information about the budget process, deadlines, notices, meetings, etc. to increase visibility among Culver City residents through items like QR codes, receipt notices, or informational packets.



24

PREVENTION VS. RESPONSE

Explain budget priorities in terms of upstream prevention vs. downstream response.



25

BUDGET ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION / COMMITTEE

Establish an advisory board, commission, committee, or council that actively interacts with the community to capture their thoughts and opinions and works with a single City department to collect feedback, categorize, and prioritize community input.



26

BY-APPOINTMENT BUDGET MEETINGS

City staff should hold meetings by appointment and with limited attendance to connect with residents about the budget and budget process.

27

BUDGET QUESTION / COMMENT / ANSWER REPOSITORY

Create a repository for all email, web, and in-person questions / public comments and any answers relating to the budget and budget process. Make them publicly accessible both in-person and digitally.

28

VIDEO ASSETS

Produce more explainer videos for specific issues related to the budget and budget process, departmental information, and City services. Make these available on the City's YouTube channel and other platforms and provide an opportunity for feedback through each video.

29

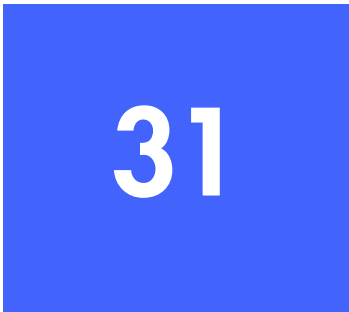
EMAIL & TEXT-SPECIFIC ALERTS WITH BUDGET INFORMATION / NEWSLETTER

Set up an opt-in text message service in addition to the existing opt-in email alerts / newsletter that the City already provides; expand the number of topics for both text and emails to include budget planning meetings, budget items / projects to be addressed, what has been decided, with corresponding meeting notes.

30

BUDGET TOWN HALLS

Hold 1-2 Town Halls each budget cycle to announce opportunities to engage with the budget and to emphasize the importance of the issue.

31

SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN ENGAGEMENT FORUM

Use existing social media platforms (such as Nextdoor, Reddit, and Facebook groups) to reach those who don't attend traditional in-person budget / budget process forums [by engaging with social media posts].

32

REDEFINE ACCESSIBILITY

Redefine the concept of "accessibility" when it comes to the budget process in order to include language, economic, and other factors as it pertains to participation.



33

BUDGET EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Create classes and finance courses on the budget so that people can understand tradeoffs between expenditures and other aspects of the budget process.



34

FUN EVENTS / GAMES

Create fun activities such as a game about financial planning to help people connect with the budget process.



35

MONTHLY CITY MANAGER REPORTS

Prepare and distribute a monthly City Manager report on the budget and budget process.

36

ENGAGEMENT BEYOND TECHNOLOGY

Utilize forms of outreach, communications, and engagement that are aimed at residents and community members who are not tech-savvy or who may not be comfortable utilizing digital technologies.

37

GAMIFY PARTICIPATION

Gamify contributions and participation in the budget process with things such as credits, badges, exclusive invites to events with officials at the end of fiscal year, or discounts on services.

38

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

Work to ensure barriers that might preclude community members with physical disabilities from attending and participating in budget events are addressed (such as holding events in accessible spaces and/or creating options for digital attendance and participation).

39

DEVELOP DIGITAL RESOURCES WITH RESIDENTS

Engage residents and community members to help develop City budget websites and other technology / digital applications.

40

INCREASE PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

Increase the time allotted per public comment during City Council Meetings.

41

LOWER VOTING AGE

Lowering the voting age to 16 would increase student participation in the budget process.

42

BUDGET TERMINOLOGY IN NEWS / COMMERCIAL MEDIA

Daily or weekly postings in print, newspapers, and other commercial communications that provide budget process and legal terminology in normal / layperson's words.

It is important for people to know that we took into account how everyone in the community may be represented in the budget feedback process, determining which tools may be used in collaboration to capture everyone's voice, and then determine how people know their voice has been heard.

- Assembly Participant



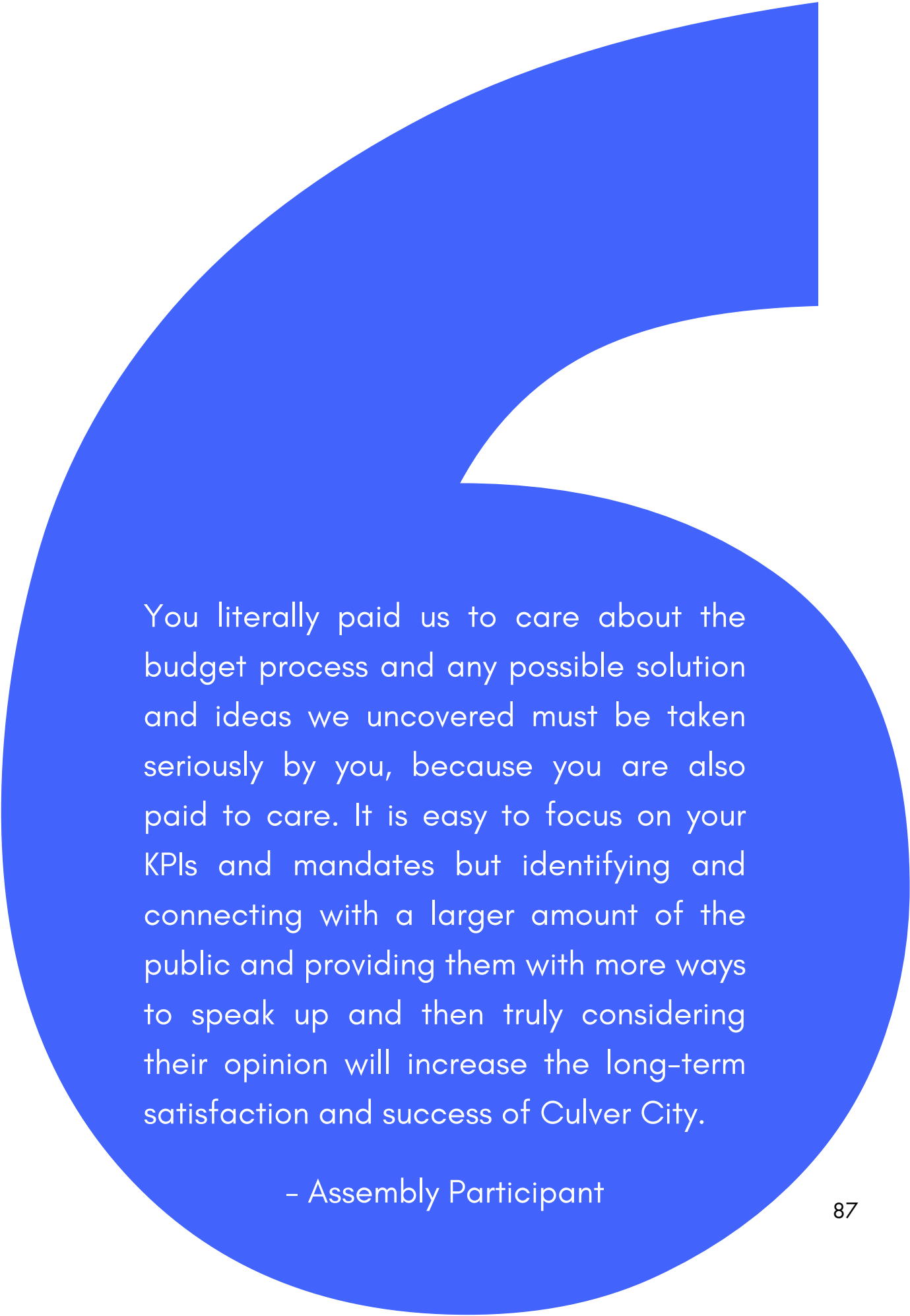


DETERMINING SUCCESS

Throughout both the May and July Assemblies, participants considered how the City should determine whether or not they're successful in increasing public participation in the budget process. Assembly participants identified these key indicators for determining success:

- implementing Assembly participants' prioritized recommendations
- establishing a baseline of current budget participation and engagement statistics
- tracking and publishing those statistics so that the public could monitor whether or not goals are being met
- communicating the results and impact of budget participation on future Culver City budget decisions

Participants also observed that progress on these indicators would demonstrate that the Civic Assembly on Increasing Public Participation in the Budget Process was a purposeful investment of residents' time and work.



You literally paid us to care about the budget process and any possible solution and ideas we uncovered must be taken seriously by you, because you are also paid to care. It is easy to focus on your KPIs and mandates but identifying and connecting with a larger amount of the public and providing them with more ways to speak up and then truly considering their opinion will increase the long-term satisfaction and success of Culver City.

– Assembly Participant

Success would look like a real feedback loop between the City (including Council) and community members measured qualitatively by surveying how many people actually experience their big or small requests or interests being addressed - not necessarily agreed to or implemented but more responsiveness.

- Assembly Participant



PARTICIPANTS REFLECT ON SUCCESS:

You spent a lot of money to put on this event. It was a good event and some great insights were uncovered, and actionable ideas suggested. I want you to do something with it now.

The so-what: How is what we did going to actually impact the functioning and processes of the City?

- Assembly Participant

Many people need to be engaged (voting in surveys, adding comments to specific measures, etc.) to ensure there is a diverse cohort of perspectives making an impact on the decisions that are made. Without engagement, things just happen to people without any agency to shape the future.

- Assembly Participant

In order to get a budget for Culver City, and to use a finite and limited number of resources in the most effective way to meet the very diverse needs of as many people as possible who live in the city, increased participation of as many citizens as possible in the budget process is desirable.

- Assembly Participant

The process itself has gained the city 70 more informed and willing to participate citizens. That's not nothing when you think about only 2 people showing up to finance meetings. It's a win from the start - then the work speaks for itself. There were a few conversations among participants during breaks (not associated w/CNDP) about whether or not this was a sincere effort to get the public to participate or just for show. Will you act on the assembly ideas?

- Assembly Participant

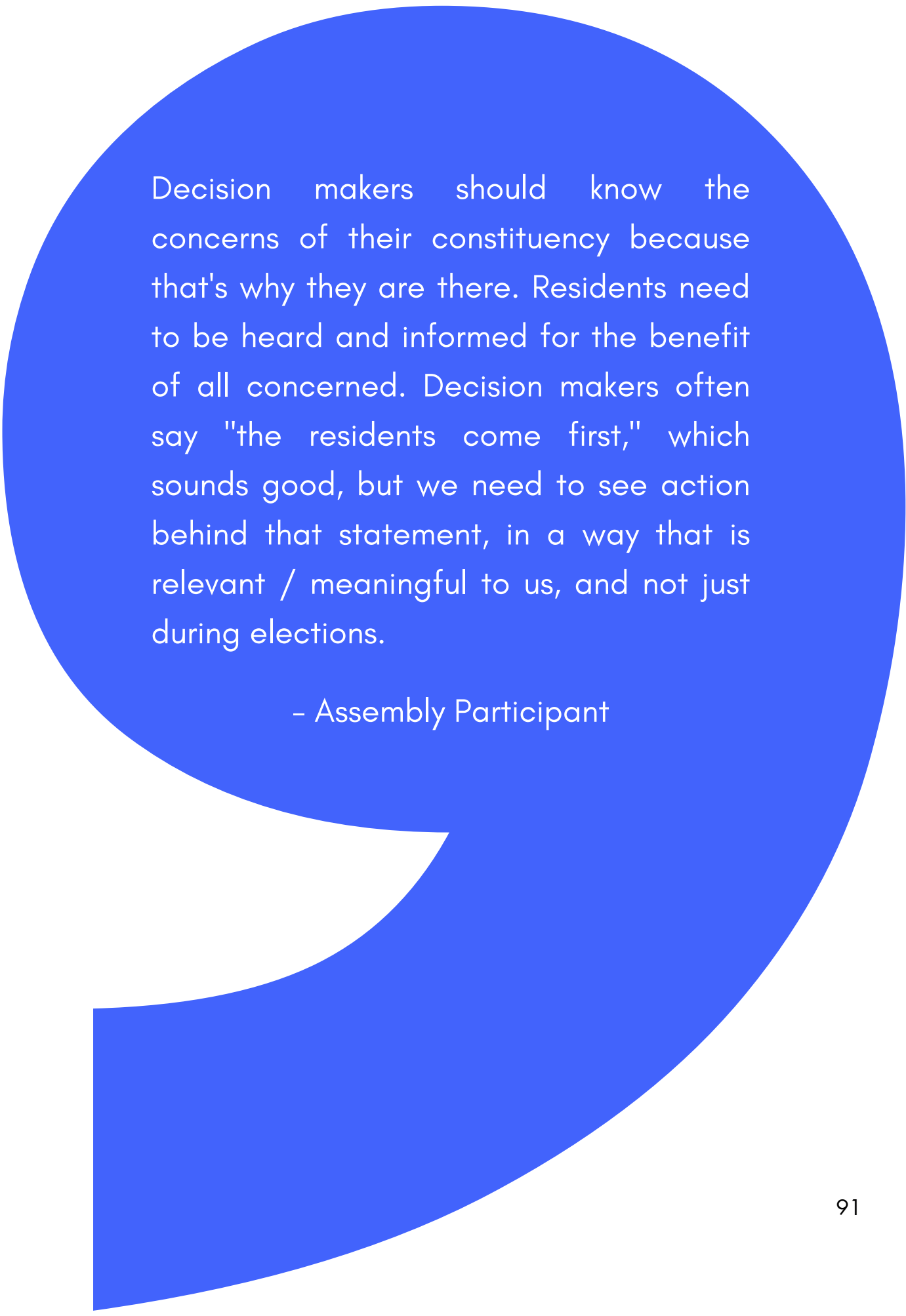
How would we know the City is successful? Send out a satisfaction survey regarding the budget process to create a baseline. Send out subsequent surveys in the future which allow us to measure greater engagement in the budget process.

- Assembly Participant

Success would be with visible data on change in participation and actual impact on the budget that was a direct results of the residents' participation.

- Assembly Participant





Decision makers should know the concerns of their constituency because that's why they are there. Residents need to be heard and informed for the benefit of all concerned. Decision makers often say "the residents come first," which sounds good, but we need to see action behind that statement, in a way that is relevant / meaningful to us, and not just during elections.

- Assembly Participant

THANK YOU,



CULVER CITY!



Center for New
Democratic Processes

COMMISSIONED
BY:

Culver **CITY**

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