



The People's Budget:

Denver's Participatory Budgeting Program

Dec. 7, 2024

Agenda

Participatory Budgeting Program Overview:

Four community-led phases followed by implementation

Phase Specifics:

Residents allocate \$1 million toward neighborhood infrastructure

Outcomes of the People's Budget:

Building trust between government and community

What?




Participatory Budgeting: Community allocates a portion of tax payer funds to community projects






FOUR COMMUNITY-LED PHASES

 PHASE 1
Community Design

 PHASE 2:
Idea Collection

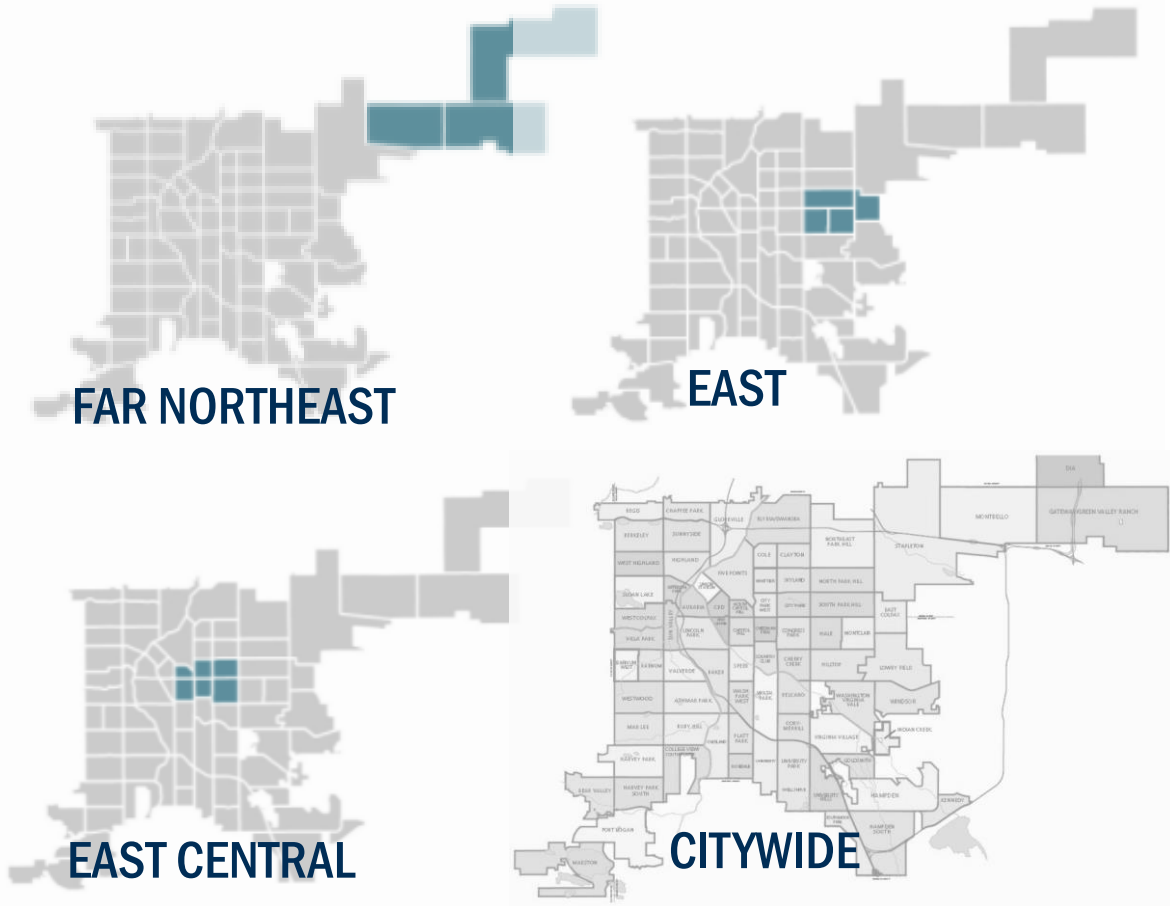
 PHASE 3:
Project Development

 PHASE 4:
Community Voting

 Then the City funds and builds the top projects!


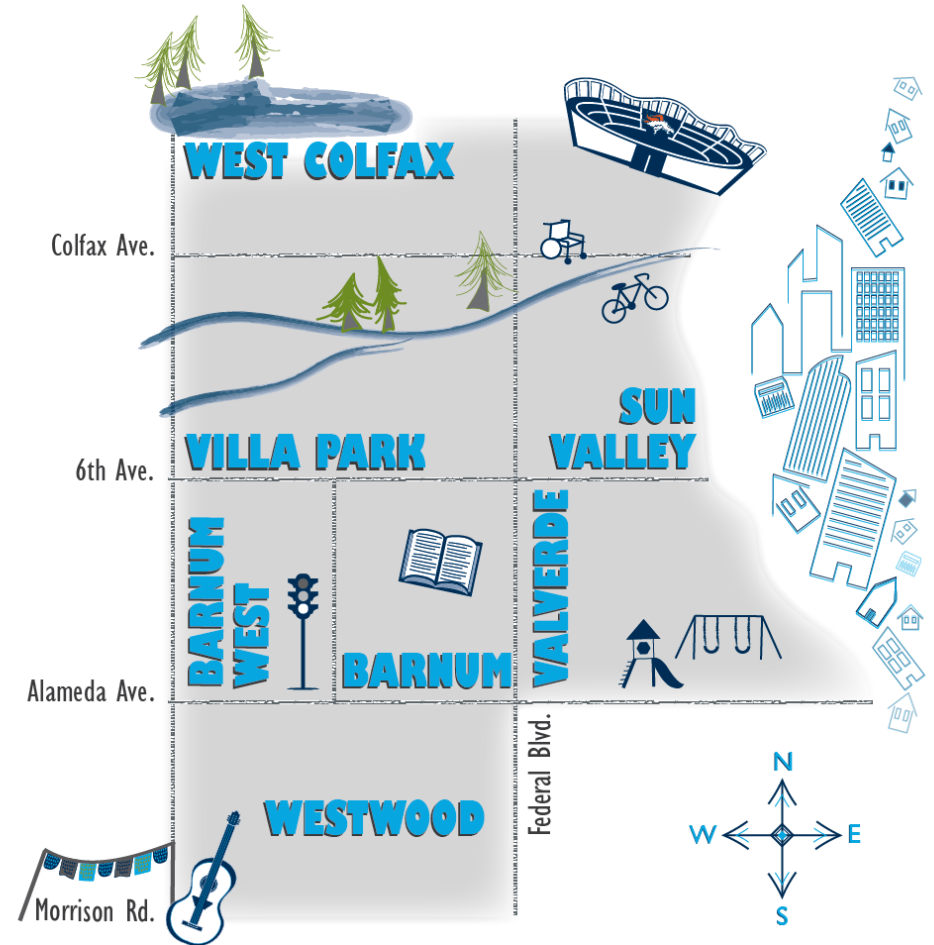
Cycle One | 2022-2023

**RESIDENTS ALLOCATE
\$2 MILLION**



Cycle Two | 2023-2024

**RESIDENTS ALLOCATE
\$1 MILLION**



Cycle 1 Results

- \$400,000:** Accessible sidewalks in Ruby Hill
- \$362,500:** New lights in FNE Parks/Trails
- \$300,000:** New Freedom Park Improvements
- \$225,000:** Shower trailers for unhoused residents
- \$200,000:** Tiny homes for unhoused residents
- \$187,500:** Safer intersections in Capitol Hill
- \$175,000:** Community Gardens at subsidized housing
- \$112,500:** Accessible transit in City Park
- \$37,500:** New trashcans in FNE Parks/Trails

\$2 MILLION





\$1.7

BILLION

City and County of Denver
2025 Budget

Why?



Democracy is hard. Without you, it's impossible.

We need a venue for meaningful civic engagement that prioritizes communities most impacted by institutional racism and systemic oppression. The People's Budget provides residents the opportunity to influence policy by allocating a portion of Denver's Budget.

More importantly, the People's Budget fosters a sense of belonging both among community members and between community and government.



Cycle 2 Community Engagement

41 community members from West Denver guide Cycle 2 of the People's Budget

81%

of resident leaders identify as **Black, Indigenous people of color.**

60%

of resident leaders either **cannot or did not vote** in the last election

53%

of resident leaders earn **less than \$25K a year.**

34%

of resident leaders identify as a **person with a disability**

Resident Leaders bring a variety of **lived experience** to the Program

- Residents speak **Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Lakota.** All meetings are **interpreted into Spanish.**
- Two residents are visually impaired, and materials are **embossed in braille.**
- Residents' age span over 50 years: The **youngest member is 15 and the oldest is 78 years old**
- Residents have perspectives and experience across the housing spectrum, from **homeownership to housing instability.** Three members currently live in shelters.

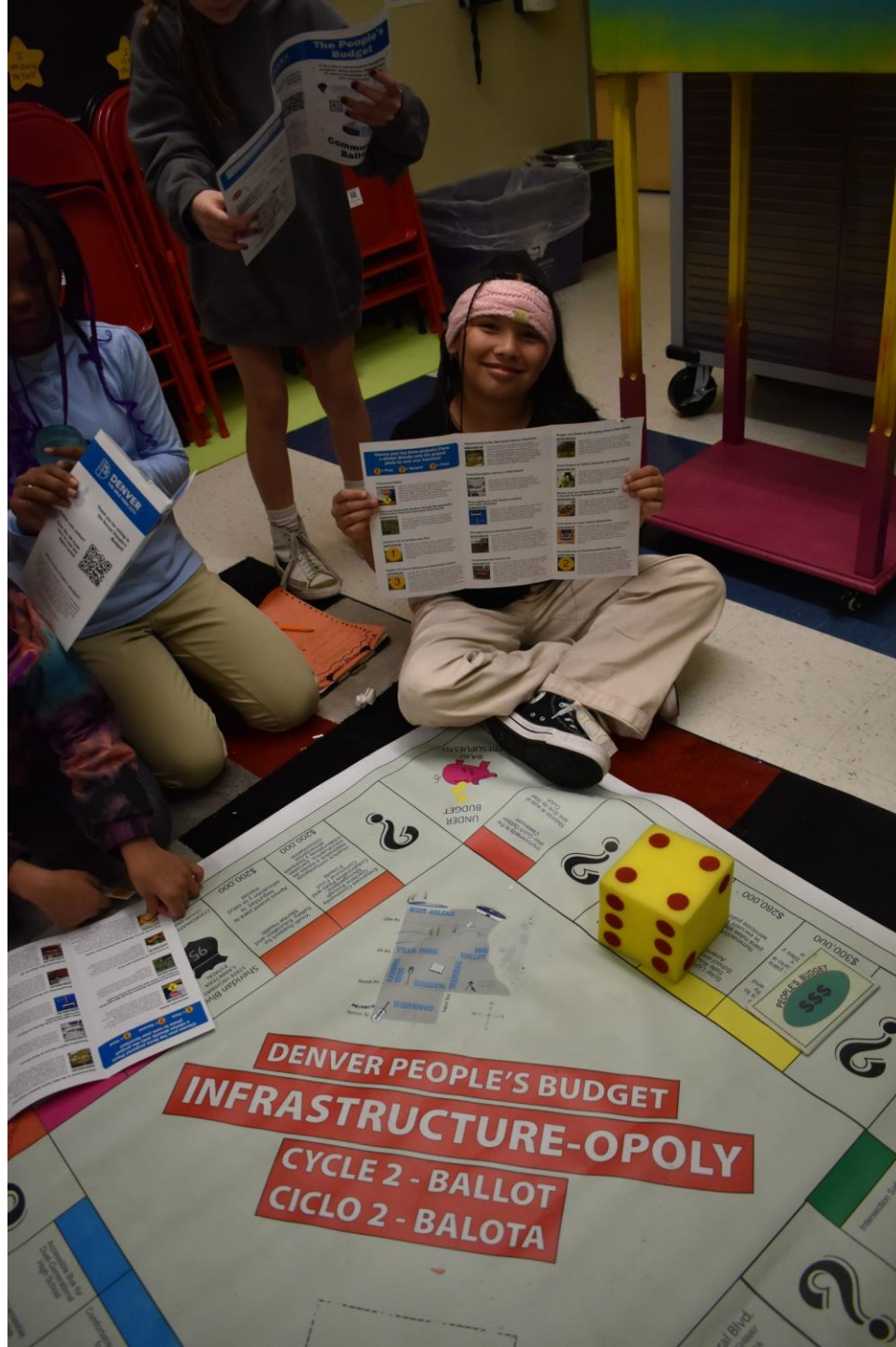


The People's Budget builds trust with communities

.....

“Denverites know their neighborhood the best. Working directly with Denverites to budget for the neighborhood improvements that they care most about will help ensure we meet the community’s needs and truly deliver great government.”

- Mayor Mike Johnston



Comments from Community Members

"I didn't realize how many steps it took to succeed in a decision that will help the greater community. I'm excited for the end result."

- Cycle 2 Steering Committee Member

"My favorite part was to negotiate within our communities on where the money should go, where is the most need, and figuring out how to best allocate the dollars and serve everyone."

- Cycle 2 Project Delegate

The People of the People's Budget



MISS KATHY EWING

“I had never been a part of anything like this before. When people participate, it makes them more excited about being a part of something. Everybody wins, everybody feels better. Everybody's able to say, I'm a part of something, and I matter.”

“Participatory budgeting builds stronger relationships between government and our residents. We come together as one collective power to build strong, different, effective solutions that truly speak to the needs of the people.”



CAROLD CARTER



How?

People's Budget Lifecycle:

Four community-led phases followed by project implementation



Q4 2023	Q1-Q2 2024	Q2-Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025-2026
PHASE 1: Steering Committee	PHASE 2: Idea Collection	PHASE 3: Project Development	PHASE 4: Community Voting	PHASE 5: Project Implementation

Resident Leader Recruitment Strategies

GOAL:

Build community capacity for civics and encourage new leaders

1.

Ask key community organizations/leaders to nominate residents who may not have worked with their government before

2.

Support residents with application process, including info sessions, and interview alternative to complete applications

3.

Online application for all West Denver individuals to apply. Conduct multiple diversity scans to ensure applicant pool is representative of the community

4.

.Accept all nominated applicants who successfully submit an application. Employ a “Fist to Five” blind review of all other applicants

5.

Employ a “buddy system.” Allow residents to join the committee with a community member they know to work on the committee together.

Cycle 2 Guidebook:



Who can submit ideas?

Anyone who lives, works, or goes to school in West Denver of any age



Who can be a Budget Delegate?

Anyone 10+ who lives or goes to school in West Denver



Who can vote?

Anyone who lives, goes to school, or works for a small business or nonprofit in West Denver

The People's Budget

Denver's Participatory Budgeting Program

Cycle 2 Guidebook: 2023-2024

City and County of Denver
Community Planning and
Development

Created by the
People's Budget
Steering Committee



Steering Committee Meetings



Government Meet & Greet!



People's Budget Lifecycle:

Four community-led phases followed by project implementation



Q4 2023
PHASE 1: Steering Committee

Q1-Q2 2024
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Q2-Q3 2024
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Q4 2024
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Q1 2025-2026
PHASE 5: Project Implementation

Denver
People's Budget
A Participatory Budgeting Program

How would you spend **\$1 million** to improve West Denver?

What is your infrastructure idea?

Tell us more! Why is your idea important?
How would this idea impact the community long-term?
What problem does your idea address? How would your idea help solve that problem?

Únase a nosotros para ¡Pizza en el parque!

¡La Asociación de Vecinos de Valverde y el Presupuesto Popular de Denver quieren SUS ideas para mejorar el Oeste de Denver!

APORTAN IDEAS DE PROYECTO ESTA PRIMAVERA

ENTONCES DESARROLLAN PROYECTOS

FINALMENTE RESIDENTES VOTAN POR PROYECTOS

Cuando Sábado 11 de mayo de 12 a 14 h.

Dónde West Bar Val Park (las canchas de baloncesto)

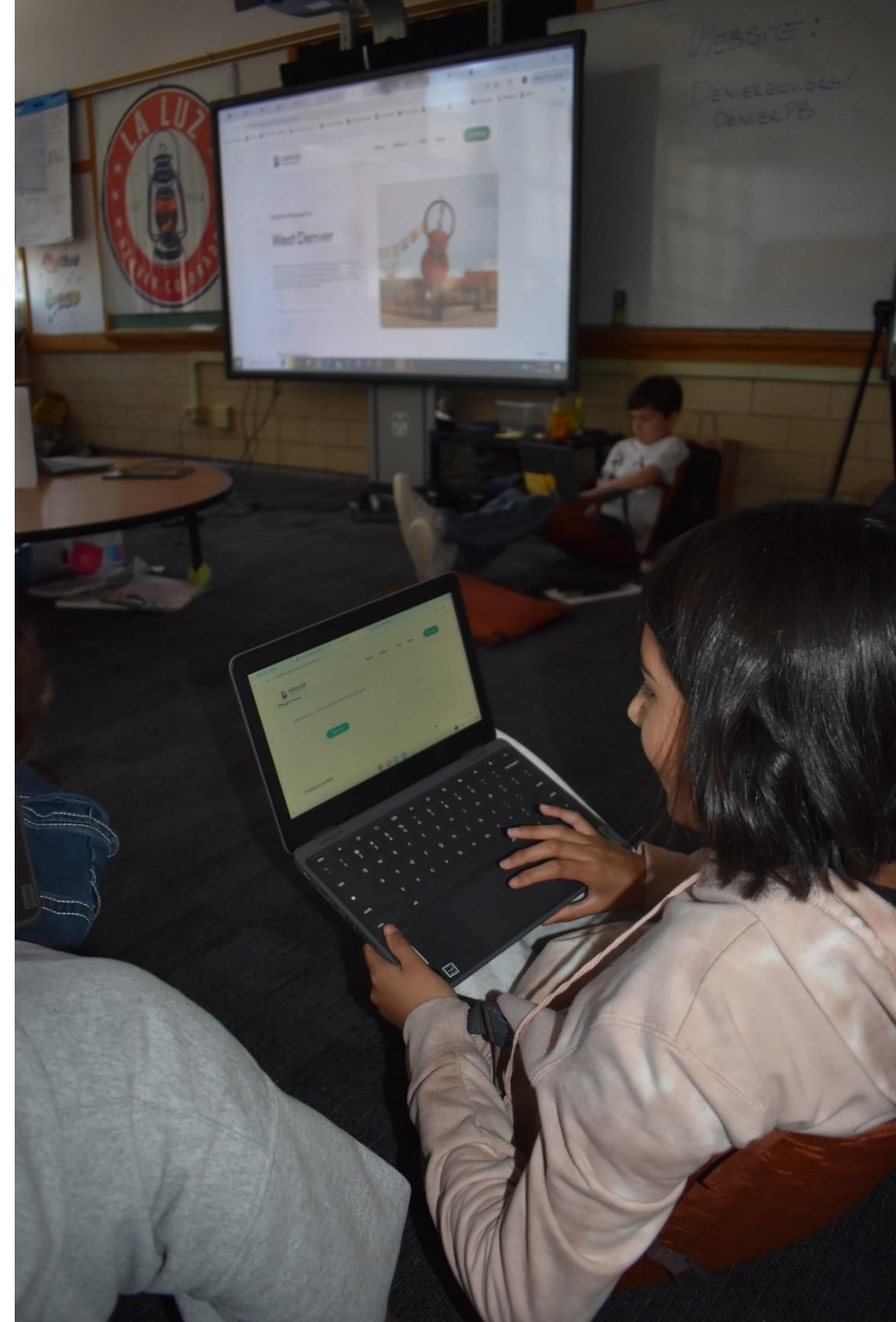
Qué En el Presupuesto Popular, West Denver decide cómo gastar \$1 millón para mejoras de barrio. ¡Comparte tus ideas durante una fiesta comunitaria con pizza, arte y más!

★ Envía una idea de proyecto durante el evento para participar en un sorteo y podrás ganar una tarjeta de regalo



Idea Collection Events

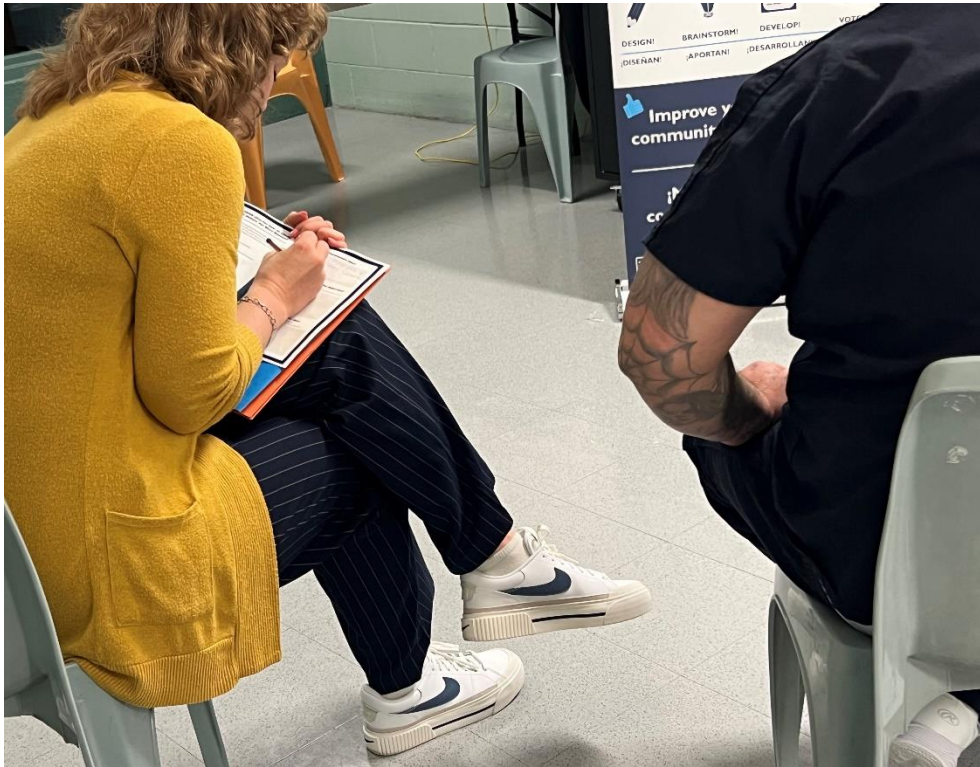
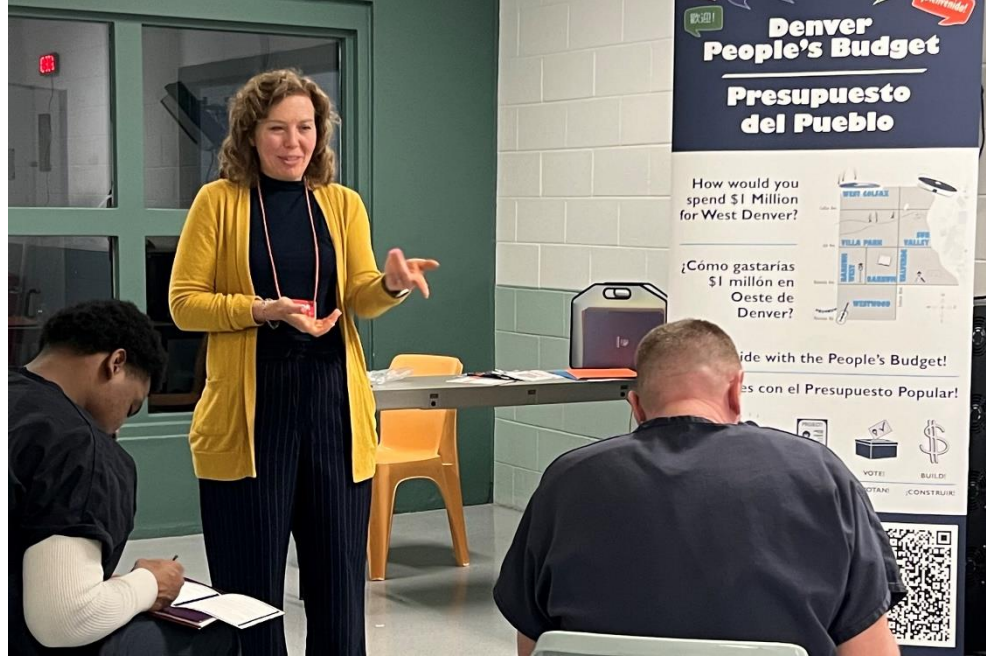
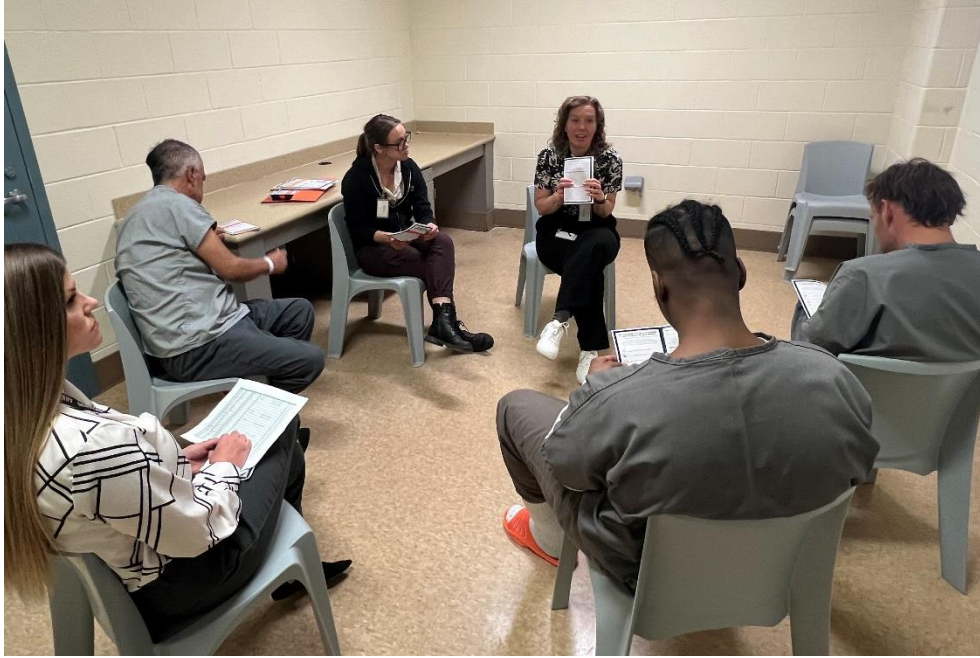
Idea Collection Events



Idea Collection Events:

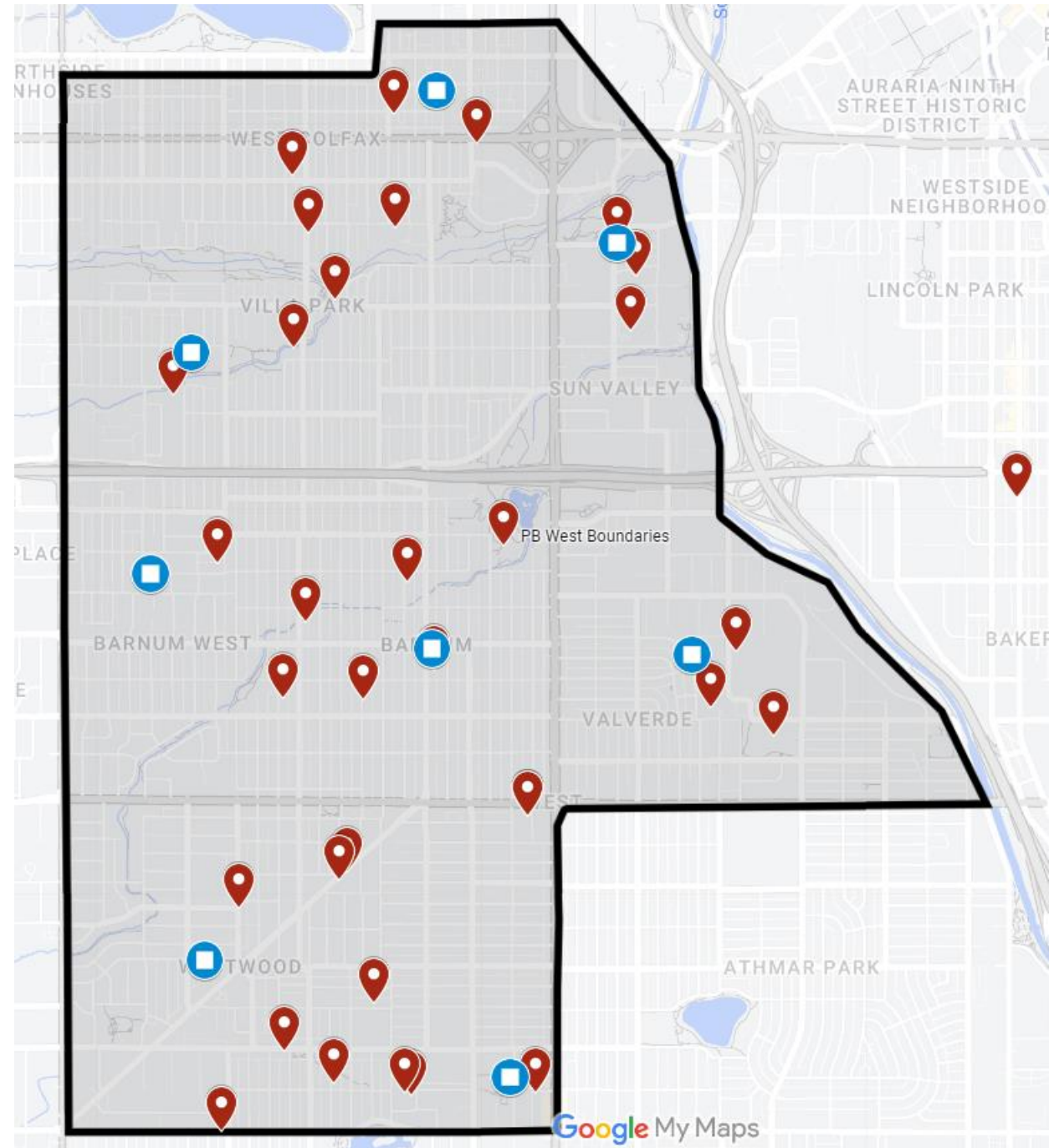


Denver Jail Outreach

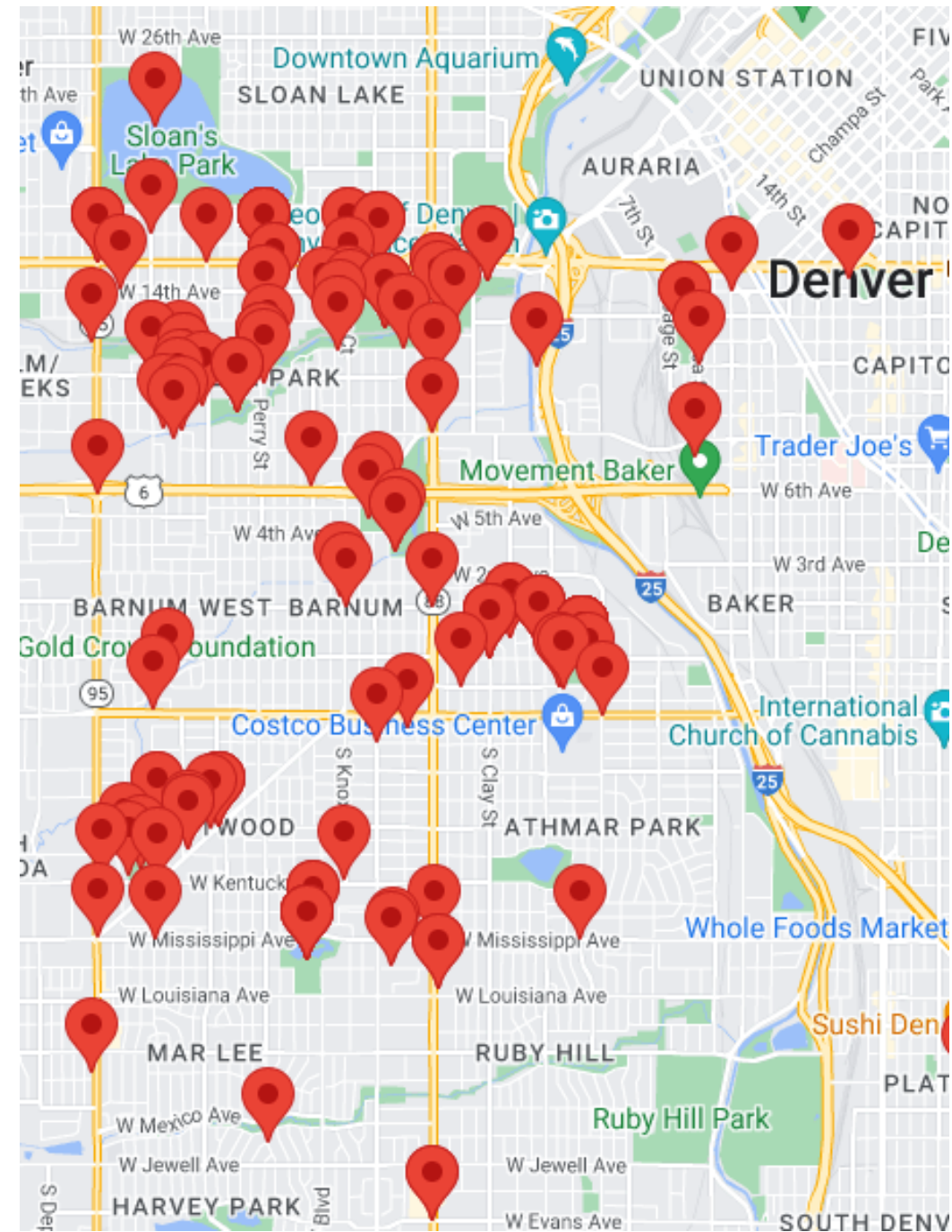
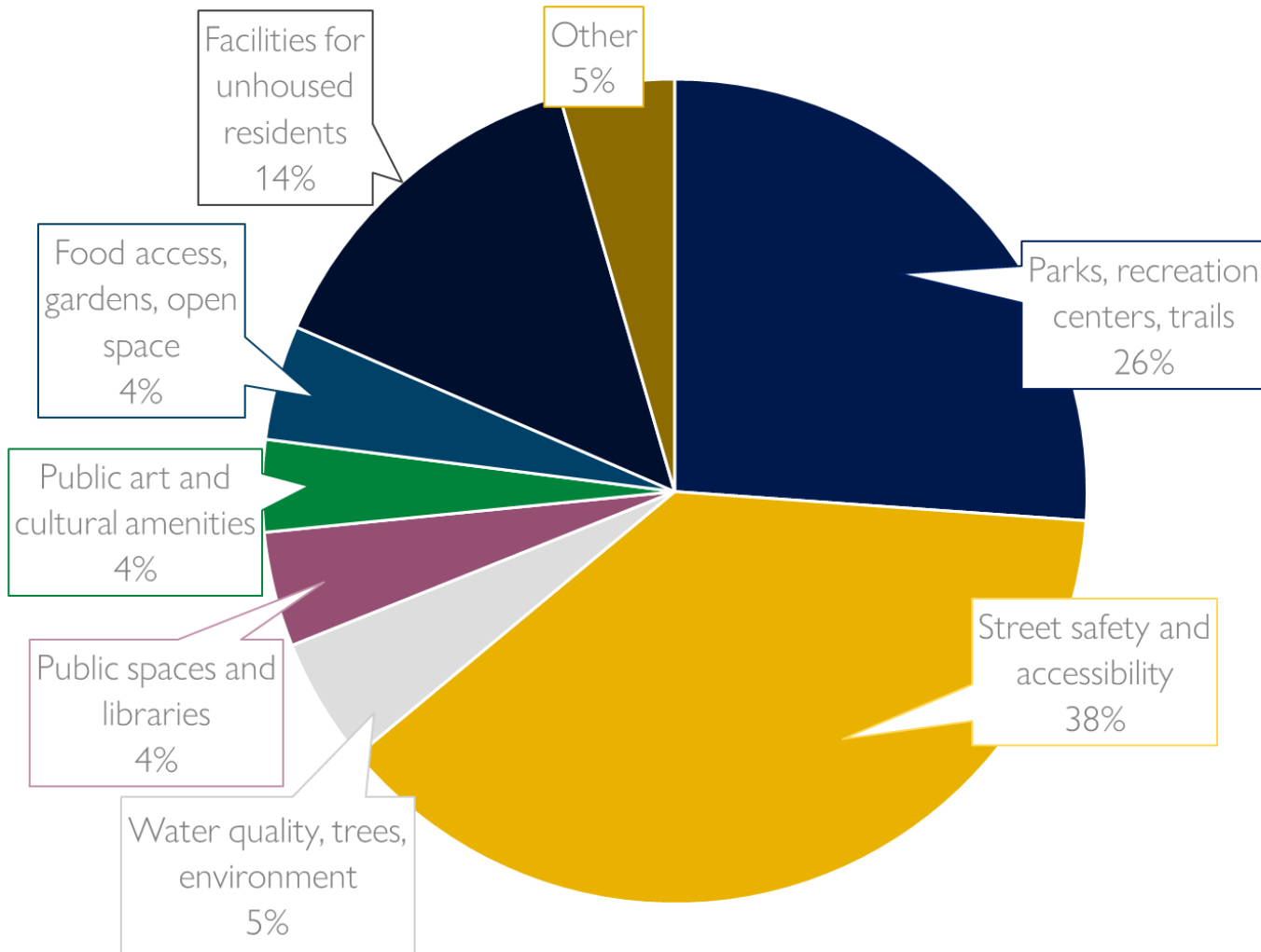


Cycle 2 Outreach (Mar. - May 2024)

- **Over 1,000 ideas or affirmations** for neighborhood improvements
- **50+ community meetings or events**
 - **Over 1000 residents** attended various community events
 - **96+ hours** with community members
- At least one **idea drop box** in each neighborhood



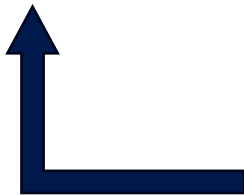
384 Specific Project Ideas



Community Ideas

“Cheaper housing for those that are getting out of hallway houses or jail...

“To help those who are already having a hard time... Those that face displacement already feel like the world is against them. It would help us stay clean and get off the streets where drugs are.”



What is your infrastructure idea?

Cheaper housing for those that are getting out of hallway houses & jails. Incorporate public gardens in the apartments.

Tell us more! Why is your idea important?

How would this idea impact the community long-term?
What problem does your idea address? How would your idea help solve that problem?

To help those who are already having a hard time getting out of the system to make some food cheaper. Maybe have a fish pond & chickens.

Who would benefit from your idea?

Who would your idea help or what community would it serve?
Would your idea make West Denver more inclusive, accessible, or equitable?

those that face potential displacement & already feel like the world is against them. With this at risk population it would help a lot of ppl stay clean & off the streets where drugs are

Safety in the gulch

Submit Proposal

Review Projects

12

Share:   

Project Description:

The gulch is very unsafe at night. I hear gunshots all the time and women who seem to be in trouble. The gulch is very dark and unsafe at night. We need lights or some kind of safety feature so people can safely walk home.

How your project helps the community:

Lights or the gunshot spotters would make this trail safer at night. People, especially women, who work late at night have to travel home and the gulch is very dark. I've heard women screaming there before and I've called the police but I can't see anything down there because it's too dark.

Residents could show their support for other people's ideas by "liking" or affirming the project



Benches at bus stops

Submit Proposal

Review Projects

14



Project Description:

Benches are needed at bus stops because there are a lot of people who could use them, like the elderly and school children

How your project helps the community:

This would help the Villa Park community and especially the elderly

Adding Cherry Trees in Garfield Park

Submit Proposal

Review Projects

9



Project Description:

Improve environment and community near Garfield Park

How your project helps the community:

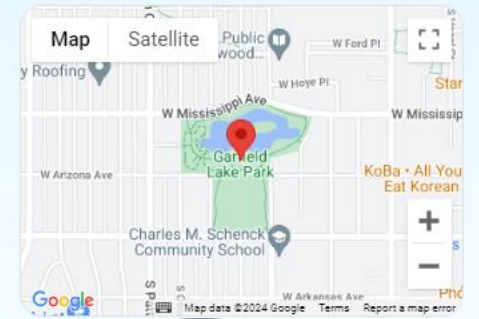
Adding in cherry trees in Garfield Park could improve the air quality in the park. The fruits from the trees could help the composting of the soil. The cherry trees would improve the atmosphere of the environment. And the trees could serve the community as an landmark for any bypassers. The cherry trees can provide shade for people. The trees can make the landscape alive and healthy.

Advocate for this project:

Project Photos:



Project Location:



Street address:

Garfield Lake Park, 3600 W Mississippi Ave, Denver, CO 80219, USA

Residents could add details like a specific address or project photos



People's Budget Lifecycle:

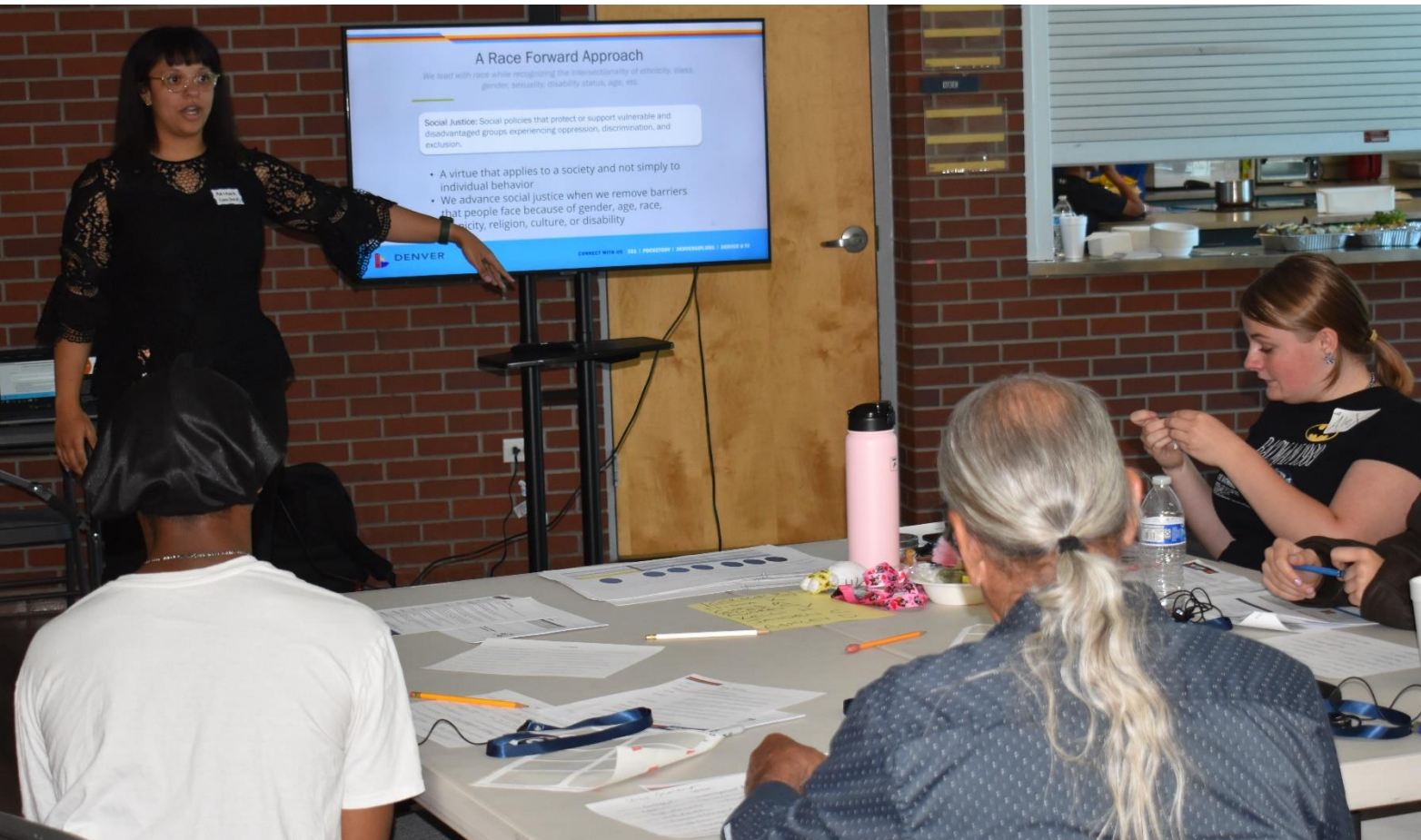
Four community-led phases followed by project implementation



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Project Delegate Meetings

- Equity in Infrastructure training with OSEI
- “The Face of Government” Introductory activity with live portrait drawings of Delegates



Project Delegate Meetings

Custom Infrastructure-opoly game to learn about infrastructure projects in Denver



Project Delegates Meetings

Delegates use equity-focused rubric to score 300+ ideas and identify the top 20 projects



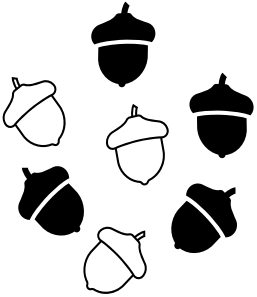
Monolingual Spanish-speaking residents deliberate with the help of simultaneous interpretation headsets



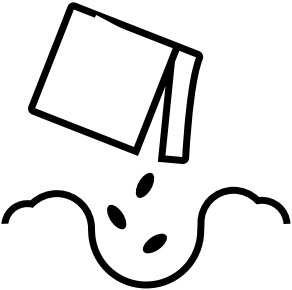
Visually impaired resident Chris feels consensus in the room through textured stickers on project factsheets

Project Development Lifecycle

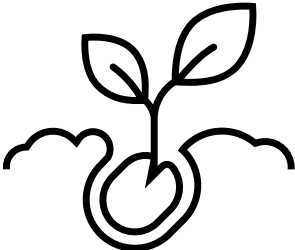
Ideas submit by residents



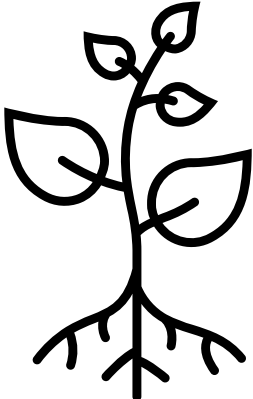
Delegates
decide which
ideas to advance



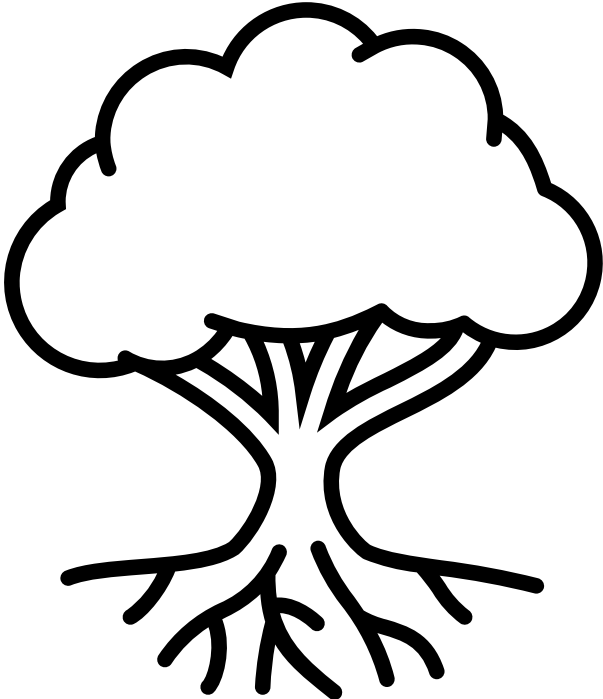
City Staff will identify
feasible projects



Project Delegate build
out the ballots



West Denver votes and
decides which projects
to fund!



380 ideas from the Community

321 projects identified as feasible

116 Project Groups

Project Delegates scored to identify the top **40-50** projects

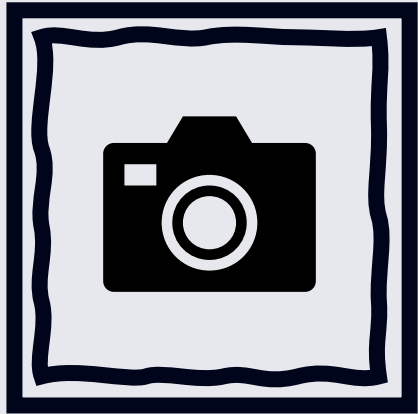
Delegates identify the top **30** projects. Then City Staff determined feasible projects

Delegates developed the top **14** projects into proposals for the ballot!

Now, West Denver will vote!

Building the Community Ballots!

Each project will have the same four key pieces of information listed on the ballots



PROJECT NAME: Short, informative title

COST: \$xxx,xxx.xx

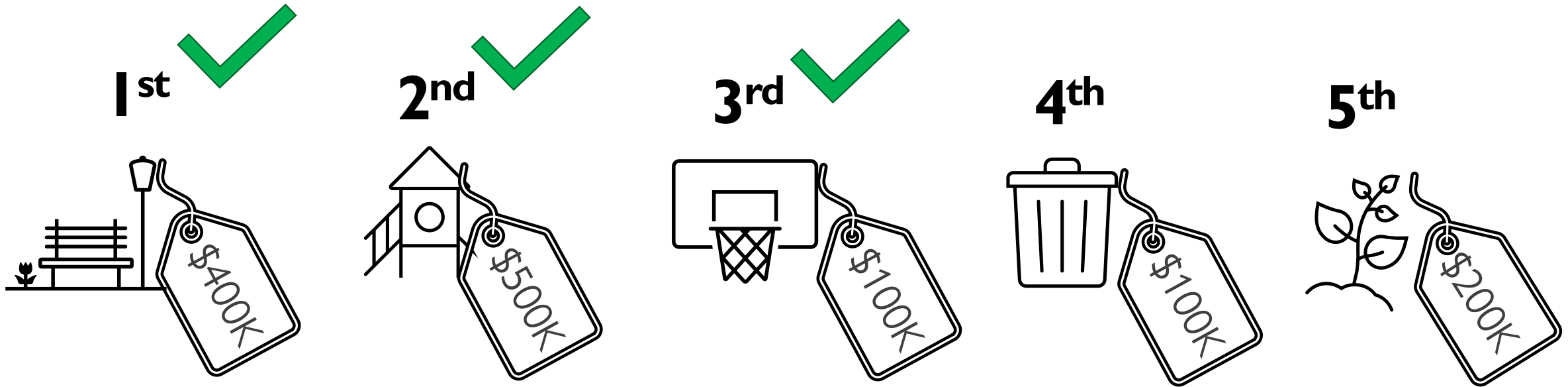
LOCATION: Address or desired focus areas

DESCRIPTION: Goals and problem statement



In teams and with the help of City Staff, you will fill out each section

Fund the top projects, skipping if needed to fully fund as many as we can.



Funded

Funded

Funded

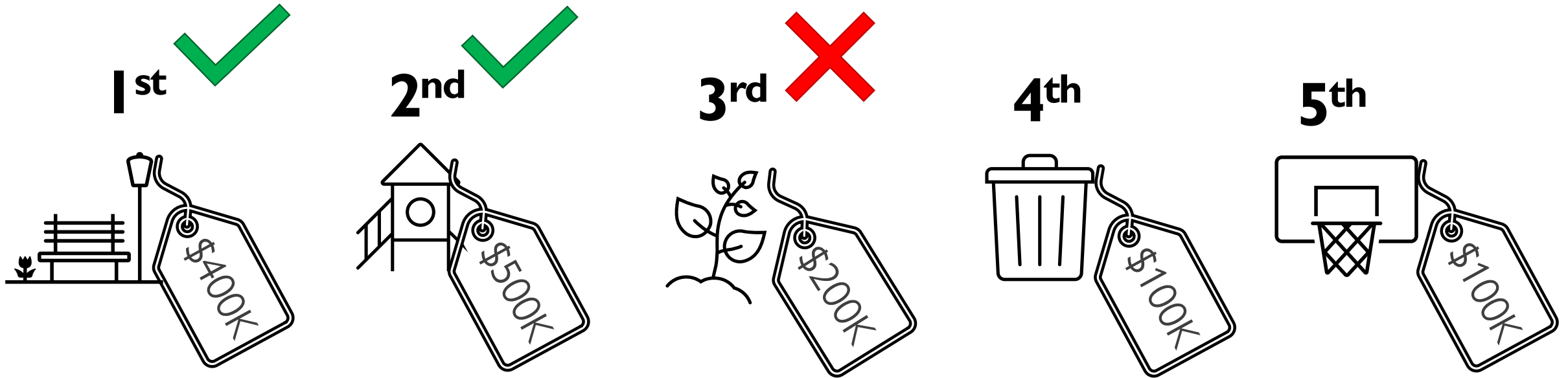
\$400K

\$500K

\$100K

\$1,000,000 budget

Fund the top projects, skipping if needed to fully fund as many as we can.



Funded

Funded

Past \$1M Budget

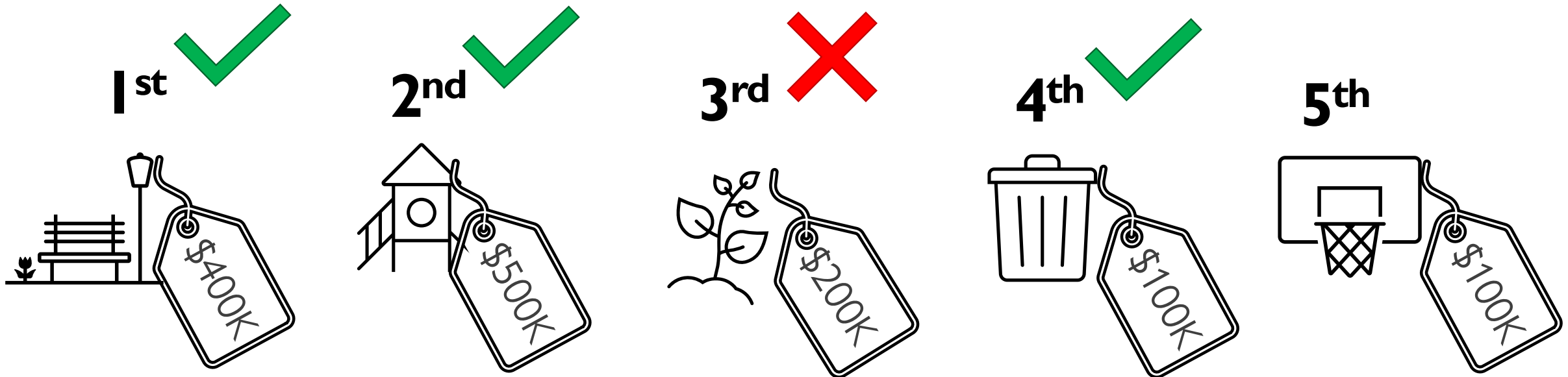
\$400K

\$500K

\$200K

\$1,000,000 budget

Fund the top projects, skipping if needed to fully fund as many as we can.



Funded

Funded

SKIP

Funded

\$400K

\$500K

\$100K

\$1,000,000 budget

People's Budget Lifecycle:

Four community-led phases followed by project implementation



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Choose your top three projects! Place a sticker directly onto the project photo to rank your favorites!

1 = First

2 = Second

3 = Third

Intersection Safety

\$350,000.00



Improve safety at 2-4 intersections in West Denver, focusing on high pedestrian injury and high crash intersections. Add improvements like stop signs, crosswalks, or flashing beacons. This would benefit mobility for people who use different modes of transportation including biking, rolling, busing, and driving.

Enhanced Community Gardens through Microgardens, Collaborative Plots and Communal Food Forests

\$200,000.00



This project will provide access to a variety of community gardens, focusing on addressing food insecurity, culturally relevant and healthy foods, education, and establishing equitable land access.

Inclusive Play at Garfield Lake Park

\$425,000.00



Renovate the existing sensory garden area at Garfield Lake Park near W. Arizona Ave. and S. Newton St. with solar lighting, an accessible path into the space, new inclusive sensory elements, and new language-inclusive signage such as Spanish, Braille, and American Sign Language.

Support the Denver Wellness and Stabilization Center

\$1,000,000.00



Improve the Solution Center's ability to support an individual's recovery, well-being and safety. This 24/7 facility offers crisis triage and stabilization services, temporary housing, and assistance for mental health and substance misuse. Improve safety by increasing capacity for medical care for people dealing with substance misuse and by providing building upgrades to ensure physical safety, focusing on serving people with disabilities and members of the Deaf and hearing community.

Improvements to the Weir Gulch Outdoor Classroom

\$200,000.00



Renovate the current Weir Gulch Outdoor Classroom near S. Wolff St. and W Center Ave. with improvements such as adding picnic tables, adding ADA improvements, improving the nature play section, expanding the existing public art, and adding new educational signage that is inclusive of languages like Spanish, Braille and American Sign Language.

Expanding Digital Literacy in West Denver

\$150,000.00



This project would support access to job training, education, career development and digital literacy. Improvements could include renovations or technology upgrades to existing community and job training centers.

Solar Lighting for Safe Routes to School and Public Amenities

\$280,000.00



Install sufficient lighting powered by solar along a portion of the Westwood Via Verde trail adjacent to the upcoming Safe Route to School intersection at S. Irving St. and W. Ford Pl. This will provide a safer path to school, public amenities and route home for residents.

Strengthening and Renovating Lakewood Gulch

\$350,000.00



Improve the Lakewood Gulch Trail for families and the community focusing on safety and providing amenities that bring people together. The project will add solar lighting and wayfinding signage along the trail and will identify three to five locations to add a variety of improvements such as benches, picnic tables, trash cans, bicycle parking, dog waste stations, and potentially community bulletin boards.

Comfortable Bus Stops for All

\$100,000.00



Add benches to 2-3 bus stops per neighborhood for up to 20 stops throughout West Denver with priority given to stops that are on collector corridors. The West Corridor Transportation Management Association (TMA) is a multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency partnership that works to enhance investments in access, mobility, and quality of life. In partnership with the TMA and community partners, benches would incorporate art from local artists where possible.

Oxygen and Shade for All! Adding Trees in West Denver

\$175,000.00



Add trees to 7-10 parks or trails in a variety of West Denver neighborhoods, prioritizing parks or trails or green spaces that do not currently have trees or do not have enough shade. Trees purify the air, improve the environment, provide shade, and beauty!

Youth Support for Safety, Education and Mental Health

\$200,000.00



Provide a safe place for youth across West Denver, emphasizing education, mental health, ADA access and digital literacy. Improvements could include renovations or upgrades to existing youth centers or transportation to and from the youth center.

Mobile Food for Community Access to Healthy, Culturally Relevant Nutrition and Education

\$300,000.00



This project will provide access to healthy, culturally relevant foods and education throughout West Denver. Through pop-up food markets, food or farm trucks, mobile food pantries, etc., this project would focus on food desert elimination bringing food and education directly to those who need it.

Heat Relief for Lower Income Households

\$75,000.00



Many homes for lower income households were not constructed with cooling equipment, or are now at the point of needing upgrades or replacements to critical systems. This project would improve existing housing with a particular focus on heat relief and cooling systems in individual units and/or communal spaces.

Accessible Bus for Dual-Generational High School

\$150,000.00



Florence Crittenton High School is a DPS School that partners with Florence Crittenton Services to provide a dual-generation program for teenage mothers and their infants or toddlers. Traditional school buses do not meet safety standards for babies as they do not come equipped with seatbelts to secure rear-facing car seats. This project would purchase new vehicles for Florence Crittenton High School to safely transport mothers and their babies from school to nearby RTD stations.

6:51 AM Denver People's Budget - City Affidavit Ballot

civictrust.app/ballot/1728599464849x460497759998312450

Instructions More info Select Projects

Ballot

0/3 votes selected

- Improvements to the Weir Gulch Outdoor Classroom**
Renovate the current Outdoor Classroom with improvements such as adding picnic tables, adding ADA improvements, improving the nature play section, expanding the existing public art, and adding new etc...
\$200,000
- Accessible Bus for Dual-Generational High School**
Traditional school buses do not meet safety standards for infants and some toddlers as they do not come equipped with seatbelts to secure rear-facing car seats. This project would purchase new vehicle...
\$150,000
- Support the Denver Wellness and Stabilization Center**
This project would improve the Solution Center's ability to support an individual's recovery, well-being and safety. This 24/7 facility offers crisis triage and stabilization services, temporary housing...
\$75,000
- Solar Lighting for Safe Routes to School and Public Amenities**
Install self-sustaining lanterns powered by solar panels in portions of the Vinlands trail

Click to show related images

Select Project

Support the Denver Wellness and Stabilization Center
This project would improve the Solution Center's ability to support an individual's recovery, well-being and safety. This 24/7 facility offers crisis triage and stabilization services, temporary housing, and substance misuse. Funds will improve safety and housing services by increasing capacity for people dealing with substance misuse issues and by providing building upgrades to...



Vote on here



Vote line



El People's Budget
¿Qué es el presupuesto de la Comunidad? ¿Por qué es importante? ¿Cómo se crea? ¿Cómo se vota?
Balota de la Comunidad

THE DENVER PEOPLE'S BUDGET

**VOTE
HERE**

**VOTA
AQUI**



**VOTE
HERE**

**VOTA
AQUI**



Cómo llegamos aquí...
La gente decide cómo gastar \$1 millón para West Denver

Cómo se 65 de los presupuestos

How we got here...

Comunidad

**ALTERNATIVAS
Calle 6 y Montezuma
FUTURO DE TU VEKINDARIO**





*What's
next?*

People's Budget Next Steps: Project implementation



Q4 2023
PHASE 1:
Steering
Committee

Q1-Q2 2024
PHASE 2:
Idea
Collection

Q2-Q3 2024
PHASE 3:
Project
Development

Q4 2024
PHASE 4:
Community
Voting

Q1 2025-2026
PHASE 5:
Project
Implementation



Comments from Agency Staff

“We’ve taken all community ideas, even the ones that didn’t make it to the ballot, and added them into our CIP process. The program helps us be more responsive and proactive as an agency.”

- DPR Senior Planner

Democracy is hard. Without you, it's impossible.

We will continue to invest in people.

We will develop collaborative feedback loops to improve processes and, more importantly, to improve long-term relationships in the community.



Thank you. Questions?

