



Toronto Community Housing Corporation
 931 Yonge Street
 Toronto, ON
 M4W 2H2

Briefing Note: For Information

To: Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

From: Sheila Penny, Chief Operating Officer

Date: March 7, 2022

Re: Tenant Services Committee Meeting of March 29, 2022 Public Action Item 4: Participatory Budget Program Reform

On February 9, 2022, the Tenant Services Committee requested that TCHC management provide a Briefing Note before the June TSC meeting on:

- A formal communication to tenants regarding the discontinuance of the Participatory Budget program;
- Items ordered under the former program but not delivered;
- Review of the procurement and pricing approach; and
- The program name with a direction to appropriately rename the program.

TENANT COMMUNICATIONS

In May 2021, the Tenant Engagement team met with the Tenant Marketing and Communications team to advise that the Participatory Budgeting (PB) process was cancelled for the remainder of 2021 and that all PB activities are scheduled to resume in 2022 with new and improved processes.

During the revamp process of PB, staff on the Tenant Engagement team were responsible for the following:

- Working to align the PB program with the new tenant hubs.
- Work and consult with the PB Monitoring Committee to create a new structure.
- Present the new structure to management for approval.

To promote that the program was postponed, the Tenant Marketing & Communications team developed a communications campaign to be implemented immediately after products were approved.

Communications

To provide tenants with an update on the changes to the PB process, the following resources were created and updated:

1. *PB webpage on the Toronto Community Housing website*

The PB web page was updated to advise visitors that PB is cancelled for 2021. This page link was also displayed on the poster developed for all buildings.

2. *Poster in Buildings*

A poster was created and shared with the Tenant Engagement team. The Tenant Engagement team emailed the poster to managers of each region, along with superintendents and Community Services Coordinators, for posting in each building. It was also recommended that a copy be sent to the Client Care Centre if they receive any questions from tenants.

3. *Social Media*

A social media campaign was created and posted on our social media channels from Monday, May 17 and scheduled to go out for the remainder of 2021.

4. *Seniors Housing Unit*

A mailer focusing on tenant engagement was created and sent to all tenants living in the Seniors Housing Unit. Part of the content included an article on PB being postponed for 2021.

ITEMS ORDERED BUT NOT DELIVERED

A total of 247 communities across all Toronto Community Housing's portfolios participated in the 2019 Participatory Budgeting (PB). 60 communities did not receive 124 approved and ordered items out of this number.

Table 1: A summary of total number of PB items ordered but not delivered by com region.

Region	Number of communities	Number of items not delivered by region
East	31	68
West	10	20
Central	19	36
Total	60	124

REVIEW OF PROCUREMENT AND PRICING, AND PROGRAM RENAME

Staff have started developing frameworks to guide PB reform to ensure accountability and effective program implementation. One of such is developing the "tenant funds distribution" policy that will govern how funds for community improvements initiatives are allocated while ensuring the appropriate controls are implemented for oversight and accountability.

In addition, the review of the procurement and pricing approach to PB and a rename of the program will be carried out as part of the reform process. PB reform will be completed in 2022, and implementation will start in 2023.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Participatory Budgeting Reform Work Plan
2. Sample Communications Materials

Item 3 – Briefing Note re: Action Item 4 - Update: Participatory Budgeting Reform Work Plan
TSC Meeting of March 29, 2022

ATTACHMENT 1: Participatory Budgeting Reform Work Plan

Milestone Description	Lead	Assigned To	Start	End
Conduct External Scan			1/24/2022	8/27/2022
Conduct External Scan of Similar Programs by Housing Providers	COO	Manager, Tenant Engagement		
Identify Oversight and Control Mechanisms in External Programs	COO	Manager, Tenant Engagement		
Report on Oversight and Control Mechanisms in External Programs	COO	Manager, Tenant Engagement		
Conduct Tenant Consultation			2/2/2022	11/10/2022
Conduct Targeted Tenant Consultations	COO	Manager, TE and Regional Manager CSS		
Consult Tenant Leadership	COO	Manager, TE and Regional Manager CSS		
Conduct General Tenant Consultation in Targeted Communities	COO	Manager, TE and Regional Manager CSS		
Develop Public Report Outlining Tenant Feedback	COO	Manager, Tenant Engagement		
Program Refresh			2/11/2022	7/2/2022
Develop New Participatory Budget Program	COO	Manager, TE and Regional Manager CSS		
Program Review and Oversight Controls			2/12/2022	9/15/2022
Detailed Assessment of new PB Program Components and Controls	CFO	Manager, TE and Finance and Procurement, Regional Manager CSS		

Identify Key Oversight Controls and Assess PB Control Deficiencies	CFO	Manager, TE and Finance and Procurement, Regional Manager CSS		
Develop Summary Report containing Findings from PB Program Review	CFO	Manager, Tenant Engagement		
Develop Participatory Budget Program Policy			2/12/2022	1/30/2023
Develop New Participatory Budget Program Policy	COO	Manager, TE and Strategic Planning and Stakeholder Relations (SPSR)		
Present New Participatory Budget Program Policy to TSC, BIFAC and Board for Approval	COO	Manager, Tenant Engagement		

Item 3 – Briefing Note re: Action Item 4 - Update:
 Participatory Budgeting Reform Work Plan
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ATTACHMENT 2: Sample Communications Materials

Webpage

Residents	Rent	Capital initiatives	Doing business	Careers	Transparency	News & resources	Calendar
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Home > Residents > Getting involved > Participatory budgeting

Getting involved

- Tenant Engagement System ▶
- Tenant Engagement System Refresh Process ▶
- Tenant Participation System
- Participatory budgeting** ▲
- Consultations
- 2016 PB allocation results
- 2015 PB allocation results
- 2014 PB allocation results
- Children and youth ▶
- The Centre for Advancing the Interests of Black People ▶
- Scholarships ▶
- Internships

Participatory Budgeting

Participatory budgeting is cancelled for 2021

Check out the [Participatory Budgeting is cancelled for 2021 poster \(PDF\)](#) for more information.

How Participatory Budgeting has worked

For over 15 years, the Participatory Budgeting (PB) process has given Toronto Community Housing tenants the opportunity to decide how to spend funds to improve their buildings, developments, and communities.

In 2017, Toronto Community Housing put PB on hold so we could work with tenants and improve the PB model. During this review phase, this is what we heard from tenants:

- Have a separate tenant engagement process for non-capital and capital items
- We need a process that is clear and less complicated for tenants and staff
- Tenants want more of a say about selecting projects and less staff control throughout the process

The 2019 PB process

Phase one: Identify local needs

- Tenants will be educated on the process and encouraged to participate
- Staff will support tenants to develop their ideas and provide key information about items
- Local needs will be identified at building meetings

Phase two: Decide on projects

- Communities will decide which non-capital items to present on allocation dav. and select a deleoate and an alternate



Poster

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is cancelled for 2021



Participatory Budgeting (PB) is on hold for the remainder of the 2021 calendar year. All PB activities are scheduled to return in 2022 with new and improved processes.



While PB is being revamped:

- Staff are working to align the PB program with the new tenant hubs.
- Staff will work and consult with the PB Monitoring Committee, to create a new structure.
- Once the new structure has been established, staff will present the new structure to management for approval.

For more information, speak to your local Engagement Community Services Coordinator. If you don't know who they are, call the Client Care Centre at **416-981-5500**.

 Call **416-981-5500** to request this post in an alternate format or language.

Take down after August 31, 2021

Social Media Posts

Version #1

Please note that Participatory Budgeting will be postponed until 2022 while staff work to align it better with TCHCs new operations structure at the hub level.

Version #2

Please note that Participatory Budgeting will be postponed until 2022 while staff align the program with TCHCs new structure.

Participatory Budgeting is on hold and will return in 2022 while staff work to improve processes and the structure of the program.