

City of Sacramento
Measure U Community Advisory Commission Report
915 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814
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**Results and Lessons Learned from Participatory Budgeting Pilot Program Project
Implementation Grants: Final Report on Project Results (Continued from 06/15/2026)**

File ID: 2026-01501

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: 1) Discuss the draft Report on the Participatory Budgeting Project Implementation Grant Results (Report); and 2) pass a **Motion** approving the Report, as discussed.

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Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

2-DRAFT Report on the Participatory Budgeting Project Results

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: At the September 16, October 21, and November 18, 2024, Measure U Community Advisory Commission (Commission) meetings, Participatory Budgeting (PB) Pilot Project (Pilot) Implementation grantees provided detailed presentations describing their program activities, outcomes, challenges, and lessons learned. These presentations highlighted the breadth of community impacts achieved through the Pilot, including youth development, neighborhood revitalization, workforce training, food access, homelessness services, and early stage entrepreneurship support.

A comprehensive synthesis of the grantee presentations, closeout documentation, and supporting materials is provided in the attached report. This report summarizes activities and outcomes across all funded projects, presents cross cutting themes, and identifies opportunities to strengthen future community driven investments. Staff prepared the report in response to a Council member request at the May 5, 2026, Budget and Audit Committee meeting and to support the Commission's future policy and funding discussions related to community directed investments.

Policy Considerations: City Council Ordinance 2024-0039, adopted September 24, 2024, specifies that a primary power and duty of the Commission is to, “work with City staff on community engagement with respect to the Transactions and Use Tax.” On February 16, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution 2021-0044, which formally established the Participatory Budgeting Pilot Program. Council subsequently approved Resolution 2022-0284 on August 23, 2022, that authorized a funding allocation process for winning projects and requires the City Manager to implement and enforce the Proposal Delegate Conflict of Interest Policy.

Economic Impacts: None.

Environmental Considerations: None.

Sustainability: None.

Commission/Committee Action: The Commission previously received a presentation on the Participatory Budgeting Pilot Program Evaluation Report on March 20, 2023, and presentations from project implementation grantees on their project outcomes on September 16, October 21, and November 18, 2024.

Rationale for Recommendation: At the May 5, 2026, Budget and Audit Committee meeting, Councilmember Maple requested a report on the PB project implementation grant outcomes. As the PB effort was led by the Commission, staff is requesting Commission approval of the report.

Financial Considerations: Not applicable.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): None.



CITY OF SACRAMENTO

Measure U Community Advisory Commission

DRAFT Participatory Budgeting Pilot Program Project Outcomes Report

17 Projects | \$1 Million in Measure U Funding | North and South Sacramento

June 2026

Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Report Methodology	5
Part I: North Area Projects.....	6
Youth Development and Mentorship.....	6
BluePrint.....	6
Mentoring and Recreation Leadership Internships	7
Crossover Basketball Camps	8
Noralto Neighborhood Cleanup and Mentorship Program	9
Workforce Development	11
UniverSOUL Cafe Workforce Development Program.....	11
Second Chance Act Youth Workforce Program	12
Construction and Trades Workforce Development Programs.....	14
Neighborhood Cleanup.....	16
GNNA Cleaning and Greening Program	16
District 2 Youth Cleanup and Beautification Service	17
Old North Sacramento and Dixieanne Neighborhood Cleanup	18
Urban Agriculture	19
North Sacramento Urban Agriculture Program	19
Part II: South Area Projects	21
Youth Development and Mentorship.....	21
Additional Literacy Support for Elementary Students	21
Homeless Services	23
Sacramento Area Homeless Services Event 2023	23
Innovation and Entrepreneurship	25
Teaching Tech	25
Blackwater Accelerator	26
Youth Transportation	28
Transportation Van for Underserved and Unhoused Youth in Oak Park.....	28
Youth Enrichment on Wheels.....	29
Conclusions and Lessons Learned	30

Executive Summary

Between 2021 and 2022, the City of Sacramento piloted the use of Participatory Budgeting (PB) to allocate \$1 million in Measure U funds toward community-defined priorities. Residents of two geographically targeted focus areas in North and South Sacramento submitted ideas, participated as proposal delegates, and cast votes to select ten projects for funding.

Between December 2022 and January 2023, staff developed an application process to identify organizations that may be funded to implement the winning projects. As decided by the Measure U Community Advisory Commission (Commission), a selection panel consisting of an equal number of community members and commissioners was appointed to evaluate applications for funding and directly select the implementing organizations. The ten winning ballot projects were subsequently divided and administered as seventeen individual grant agreements, each managed through the City's Office of Innovation and Economic Development, Department of Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment, or Department of Community Response.

This report documents the implementation and outcomes of all seventeen funded projects. It draws on three Commission meeting transcripts from September, October, and November 2024; official grantee closeout and activity reports; a Project Tracker; and the original [2023 PB Pilot Evaluation Report](#) prepared by Third Plateau. Projects are organized by geographic area (North and South) and then by program category as reflected in the Project Tracker.

Portfolio Highlights

Across the full portfolio, PB investments produced documented outcomes in seven thematic domains: youth development and mentorship, workforce development, neighborhood revitalization, urban agriculture and food access, literacy and education, homeless services, and entrepreneurship and innovation. Selected portfolio-wide highlights include the following.

17	\$1 million	11	6
Grant Agreements	Total Funding	North Area Grants	South Area Grants

- More than 1,504 students participated in construction trades career exploration events, with 773 earning OSHA certification through the **Construction Industry Educational Foundation**.
- 63 students received individualized literacy tutoring through **Hope Technologies**; in addition, a gamified phonemic awareness application was developed and piloted.

- 350 unhoused residents accessed medical, dental, optical, veterinary, and social services at a single-day resource fair organized by **Josh's Heart**.
- \$20,000 was distributed directly to early-stage South Sacramento nonprofits through **Common Good Collective's** Blackwater Accelerator pitch competition.
- 57 students completed a 20-hour video game development curriculum and produced original games across 490 instructional hours through the **Sacramento Developer Collective**.
- 24 free produce distribution events were hosted by the **Del Paso Heights Growers Alliance** providing 1,380 boxes to 136 District 2 residents.
- 798 pounds of litter were removed, 139 blight reports filed, and 1,384 educational materials distributed by **Hmong Youth and Parents United** in Noralto.
- 13 high school interns participated in a leadership and mentorship program through **The GreenHouse**. All participants reported at least one personal benefit from the program, including increased leadership skills, improved academic performance, higher self-esteem, new skills and knowledge, and greater confidence in their future goals. 167 volunteers contributed 399 hours of community cleanup work through the **Gardenland Northgate Neighborhood Association**.

Grantees who presented to the Measure U Commission in fall 2024 consistently described PB grants as catalytic. **4 Your Epiphany Foundation's** BluePrint pilot opened a partnership with Twin Rivers Unified School District projecting more than 1,000 additional students in the 2024 to 2025 school year. The **Sacramento Developer Collective** is working to publish student-created games publicly. The **Del Paso Heights Growers Alliance** established a composting hub through new academic and nonprofit partnerships. **Common Good Collective** secured continuation funding from the City of Sacramento, Golden 1 Credit Union, and Bosch Semiconductors through 2026.

Report Methodology

Measure U Commission staff used artificial intelligence to synthesize information from multiple primary sources and generate an initial version of this report. Department staff who managed each contract reviewed and verified the information in this report for accuracy. Finally, Commission staff edited and finalized the report prior to publication.

The data sources used to compile this report included:

- **City Project Tracker:** Grant agreement details, contracted activities, target outcomes, and metrics for all 17 grantees.
- **Commission Meeting Transcripts:** Auto-generated transcripts from the September 16, October 21, and November 18, 2024 Measure U Community Advisory Commission meetings, during which grantees presented their results.
- **Grantee Quarterly and Closeout Reports:** Activity and outcome data submitted by grantees to the City throughout the grant period.
- **Third Plateau Evaluation Report (January 2023):** The official evaluation of the PB Pilot process, including the voter-selected project list and outcome framework.

For projects where grantee reporting remained pending at the time of compilation, narratives are based on the contracted activities and intended outcomes as specified in the grant agreements. These instances are noted clearly in the relevant project sections.

Part I: North Area Projects

The North Area focus covered neighborhoods including Old North Sacramento, Gardenland, Del Paso Heights, and portions of District 2. Eleven grant agreements totaling \$498,650 were administered in the North Area across four program categories:

- Youth Development and Mentorship,
- Workforce Development,
- Neighborhood Cleanup, and
- Urban Agriculture.

11
Grant Agreements

\$498,650
Total Funding

4
Program Categories

Youth Development and Mentorship

Four grants under the North Area youth development and mentorship category supported programs ranging from social-emotional learning workshops and recreation leadership internships to basketball programming and a youth-led neighborhood cleanup initiative. Together, these grants reached hundreds of young people across the focus area.

BluePrint

Pending Staff Verification

Grantee	4 Your Epiphany Foundation, Inc.
Grant Amount	\$18,000
City Contract	2023-1208
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Work and Mentoring Programs for Northeast Sacramento Youth

Program Overview

Blueprint is a youth empowerment workshop series developed by 4 Your Epiphany Foundation, an organization founded in 2012 by Christopher Robinson, a native of District 2 who attended Sacramento City Unified and has served the area for more than a decade. By 2024, the organization had served more than 10,000 youth, educators, and professionals,

logging more than 10,000 hours of service. The program’s core framework integrates 21st-century skills, social-emotional learning, and a growth mindset philosophy grounded in the belief that every young person can succeed.

Activities

Blueprint was delivered in two cohorts of up to 25 students each, meeting twice a week for 12 workshops per cohort. The curriculum focused on self-actualization, intrinsic motivation, self-care, communication skills, and resilience strategies. Originally planned for MLK Tech, the program pivoted to a community-based location following a leadership transition at the school site and recruited students directly from surrounding neighborhoods. Participants ranged from fifth grade through high school.

Outcomes and Results

The program achieved an 80 percent or higher graduation rate. Teachers and school staff reported improvements in student attendance, communication, and classroom behavior alongside measurable gains in soft skills and social-emotional development. A teacher wrote to Robinson: “You have poured so much into these kids. I truly believe you make a positive impact in everyone and every life you encourage.”

The Commission presentation in September 2024 revealed significant post-grant impact. Robinson reported that Blueprint’s documented success led Twin Rivers Unified School District to invite the organization into 12 schools covering 69 programs, with a projected reach of more than 1,000 additional students in the 2024 to 2025 school year. A cohort of young men who participated as students subsequently enrolled in a mentorship pilot program to serve younger students at those campuses.

Mentoring and Recreation Leadership Internships

Grantee	The GreenHouse
Grant Amount	\$12,000
City Contract	2023-0794
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Work and Mentoring Programs for Northeast Sacramento Youth

Program Overview

The GreenHouse operated a structured recreation leadership internship program placing high school youth in active roles within after-school youth programs. Participants gained practical experience while receiving mentorship, leadership training, and academic support in a two-semester model.

Activities

The program ran two school-year sessions. Interns participated in weekly training sessions covering child development, temperament, positive discipline, and group leadership. They also attended weekly mentorship sessions providing tutoring and enrichment activities in art, sports, and academics. Each intern was expected to complete at least 45 hours of internship experience per semester. Structured journaling, resume-building, and individualized coaching on future aspirations were incorporated throughout. A closing field trip celebrated program completion.

Outcomes and Results

The program enrolled 13 participants, all of whom completed at least 45 internship hours. Throughout the year-long program, participants took part in 25 training sessions and 32 mentorship sessions. Pre- and post-program surveys showed that 100% of participants experienced at least one personal benefit, including increased leadership skills, improved academic performance, higher self-esteem, new skills and knowledge, and greater confidence in their future goals. In addition, 100% of participants reported satisfaction with their participation in the program. Participants also received stipends in recognition of their contributions, and the program established a strong mentorship framework that the organization plans to sustain.

Crossover Basketball Camps

Pending Staff Verification

Grantee	Campus Life Connection
Grant Amount	\$25,000
City Contract	2023-1555
Department	Department of Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment
Ballot Reference	Work and Mentoring Programs for Northeast Sacramento Youth

Program Overview

Crossover Basketball has served the Sacramento region since 1998, providing at-risk youth with structured basketball programming, mentorship, tutoring, and life-skills development across a drug-free environment. The program serves more than 400 youth annually through winter and spring leagues. Volunteer coaches, many of whom grew up in the same neighborhoods as participants, provide consistent adult mentorship that research identifies as a key protective factor for young people.

Activities

PB funding supported 26 sessions of free basketball camps for approximately 50 youth in grades 2 through 12, along with 20 summer camp scholarships for students to attend

weeklong programs in Santa Cruz. Participants received mentoring and tutoring, and engaged with a scripted life-skills curriculum covering dedication, responsibility, team-building, and community service. Coaches facilitated small-group discussions providing students a structured, safe space to process personal challenges with caring adults. Laptops and tutoring support were available during non-game time.

Outcomes and Results

PB funding expanded Crossover Basketball's annual reach by approximately 50 additional youth, a roughly 10 percent increase over baseline capacity. Several participants attended the ocean and the mountains for the first time through the summer camp program. Coach Omar Turner, who presented with program representatives at the October 2024 Commission meeting, reflected on 25 years of watching participants grow up and return as volunteer coaches. He noted that life-changing experiences such as summer camp provide the kind of formative memories and adult connections that redirect young people toward positive futures.

Pending Staff Verification

Noralto Neighborhood Cleanup and Mentorship Program

Grantee	Hmong Youth and Parents United
Grant Amount	\$25,000
City Contract	2023-1607
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Work and Mentoring Programs for Northeast Sacramento Youth

Program Overview

Hmong Youth and Parents United (HYPU) implemented a five-month youth leadership program in the Noralto neighborhood, combining neighborhood cleanup activities with civic education. The model trained youth to lead cleanup events, file blight reports using the City's 311 app, canvass residents, and distribute educational materials in the Hmong language, with the explicit goal of helping youth understand that organizing alongside City services can produce meaningful change.

Activities

The program recruited up to 20 youth participants and held two structured meetings per month from January through May 2024. Participants received stipends. Activities included supervised neighborhood cleanups, 311 blight reporting, Hmong-language educational material development and distribution, and training in code enforcement and public safety navigation.

Outcomes and Results

20	948	798 lbs	139
Youth Served	Total Hours	Litter Removed	311 Reports

The program served 20 youth, 74.2 percent of whom identified as Hmong, ranging in age from 14 to 24. Participants completed 948 hours of community service, removed 798 pounds of litter, filed 139 blight reports through the 311 app, and distributed 1,384 educational materials throughout the Noralto neighborhood. The grantee completed all contracted program elements and met every metric specified in the agreement. Youth testimonials documented deepened civic engagement, neighborhood pride, and a growing sense of empowerment as advocates for their community.

Workforce Development

Three grants supported workforce development programming in the North Area, creating pathways to food-service careers, construction and skilled trades, and general employment for youth and young adults facing barriers to entering the workforce.

Pending Staff Verification

UniverSOUL Cafe Workforce Development Program

Grantee	I Am Manpower Academy Inc.
Grant Amount	\$100,000
City Contract	2023-1206
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	A Second Chance Career Opportunity for the Youth

Program Overview

I Am Manpower Academy Inc. designed the UniverSOUL Cafe Workforce Development Program to prepare participants for careers in the food ecosystem while simultaneously supporting food-waste reduction through food-rescue operations. The program provides a combination of technical training, case management, coaching, and financial support for participants seeking to enter food-related industries.

Contracted Activities

The grant contract provided for recruitment and enrollment of at least 25 participants through intake assessment; food handler card training and examination preparation; development of individualized case plans based on identified participant needs and business goals; coaching and case management toward case plan goals; and two stipends of \$750 each per participant, payable upon completing the first half and the full program respectively.

Intended Outcomes and Metrics

The program was designed to enroll a minimum of 25 participants, provide each with sufficient instruction to pass the food handler card training and examination, and prepare participants to enter food-related careers while contributing to community food-waste reduction through food-rescue service roles. Full outcome reporting was pending at the time this report was compiled.

Second Chance Act Youth Workforce Program

Grantee	Play Hard Play Smart Youth Development
Grant Amount	\$100,000
City Contract	2023-1207
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	A Second Chance Career Opportunity for the Youth

Program Overview

Play Hard Play Smart Youth Development designed the Second Chance Act program to help hard-to-employ youth and young adults enter the workforce through a structured combination of certifications, financial literacy, barrier removal services, and paid internship placements with local businesses and nonprofits.

Contracted Activities

The program recruited 10 participants through intake assessments and provided OSHA certification, 20 hours of combined job readiness, computer literacy, and financial literacy training. Each participant received a laptop, work attire, transportation support, meals during training, and assistance opening a bank account. Following training, staff identified employer partners and connected participants with local businesses and nonprofits for paid internship placements. Participants received a \$1,500 monthly stipend for up to four months of internship experience. The program also provided career path consulting and resume development.

Outcomes and Metrics

The Play Hard Play Smart Program successfully served 10 youth participants through a comprehensive workforce development and work-based learning experience designed to prepare young people for future employment opportunities and financial independence. Program outcomes exceeded expectations, with all 10 participants successfully completing the full 10-week work experience component. Workplace safety training was another major focus of the program. All 10 participants earned their OSHA certification, equipping them with industry-recognized credentials and foundational knowledge of workplace safety practices that will benefit them across multiple career pathways.

Program Outcomes Summary

- Youth Enrolled: 10
- Youth Completing Program: 10 (100%)
- Youth Completing Workforce Training: 9 (90%)
- Youth Opening Bank Accounts: 9 (90%)
- Youth Earning OSHA Certification: 10 (100%)

- Youth Completing/Updating Resumes: 10 (100%)
- Youth Completing 10 Weeks of Work Experience: 10 (100%)

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Construction and Trades Workforce Development Programs

Grantee	Construction Industry Educational Foundation (CIEF)
Grant Amount	\$18,650
City Contract	2023-1593
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Work and Mentoring Programs for Northeast Sacramento Youth

Program Overview

The Construction Industry Educational Foundation (CIEF), the educational arm of the Sacramento Regional Builders Exchange, was founded in Sacramento in 1901 and focuses on empowering students to pursue careers in the built environment. CIEF used PB funding across three interconnected programs: Trades Day career exploration events for middle and high school students, the Design-Build Competition, and OSHA-10 safety certification.

Activities

Trades Day brought students to hands-on career exploration events where they rotated through interactive stations with bricklayers, electricians, heavy equipment operators, plumbers, general contractors, masons, steelworkers, and linemen. Transportation challenges for Northeast Sacramento schools led CIEF to create a dedicated middle school Trades Day at the Capital College and Career Academy on Del Paso, placing the program within the target area. The event was covered by CBS News, Fox 40 News, and KCRA 3. The Design-Build Competition challenged high school teams to plan and construct a 96-square-foot structure over two days following four months of preparation with industry mentors. Participating schools were encouraged to build with purpose, with some teams constructing tiny homes and storage facilities for community organizations.

Outcomes and Results

1,504	218	773	98%
Total Students	From Target Area	OSHA-10 Certified	Highly Satisfied

Trades Day served a combined 1,504 students, including 300 middle schoolers and 1,204 high schoolers. Of these, 218 were from the Northeast Sacramento target area. Student surveys found that 98 percent rated the experience as highly positive, 96 percent said it gave them a closer look at construction and skilled trades, 79 percent expressed increased interest in the industry, and 93 percent of teachers would recommend the event to others. For the Design-Build Competition, 86 percent of participants reported gaining leadership skills and 81 percent made valuable connections with industry professionals. A total of 773 students

received OSHA-10 safety certification, including 51 from the North Sacramento target area. CIEF anticipated further growth, with more than 1,900 students already registered for the following year's Trades Day events.

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Neighborhood Cleanup

Three grants supported neighborhood cleanup and revitalization work in North Sacramento. Together, these programs mobilized hundreds of volunteers, serviced several key neighborhood sites, and engaged youth as active stewards of their communities.

GNNA Cleaning and Greening Program

Grantee	Gardenland Northgate Neighborhood Association (GNNA)
Grant Amount	\$20,000
City Contract	2023-0793
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Neighborhood Cleanup Grants

Program Overview

The Gardenland Northgate Neighborhood Association (GNNA), established in 1996, organized a sustained community cleanup and greening initiative spanning nine events across City Council Districts 2 and 3. Vice President Roberto Ramirez and project manager Adrian managed implementation, presenting the program's results to the Commission at the September 2024 meeting.

Activities

GNNA conducted outreach through social media, flyers, soccer games, coffee shops, and word-of-mouth to recruit volunteers and build momentum for each cleanup event. Two-to three-hour events were held on a regular monthly schedule, with equipment and lunches provided to participants. GNNA leveraged cost-saving purchasing strategies to maximize grant value. The program aimed to create a cleaner, connected community while building lasting volunteer relationships and developing civic capacity within the neighborhood.

Outcomes and Results

GNNA mobilized 167 volunteers who collectively contributed 399 hours of service across nine cleanup events. Participants ranged in age from 5 to more than 70, reflecting a genuinely multigenerational effort rooted in community pride. The program removed substantial quantities of trash and debris from public and private spaces throughout the Gardenland-Northgate neighborhood, promoted community health and safety, engaged youth project leads in community action, and established a replicable model for ongoing volunteer-led revitalization.

District 2 Youth Cleanup and Beautification Service

Grantee	SunShineZCleaning Inc.
Grant Amount	\$20,000
City Contract	2023-0849
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Neighborhood Cleanup Grants

Program Overview

SunShineZCleaning Inc. operated a youth-led cleanup and beautification program across District 2 and portions of District 3, engaging young participants in structured environmental service work while providing stipends, meals, equipment, and uniforms. The program also partnered with community organizations to host larger beautification events.

Contracted Activities

Contracted activities included participant outreach and recruitment, equipment and uniform procurement, provision of meals following each work day or cleanup event, and stipend payments for participating youth. Streets serviced included Danville Way, Ford Road, Mable Street, Swain Street, Del Paso Boulevard, South Avenue, Vern Street, Grand Avenue, and North Avenue. The program also landscaped and cleaned yards for seniors in the area. A community beautification event was held at the Garden of Many Colors in partnership with the Del Paso Heights Growers Alliance. Additional cleanups were coordinated around holiday programming and the January 2024 Martin Luther King March.

Outcomes and Metrics

The program engaged 17 youth participants, with 14 youth ultimately participating in paid neighborhood cleanup and beautification work. Participants received orientation, safety training, and hands-on experience in landscaping, debris removal, customer service, tool use, and basic property maintenance.

More than \$13,000 in stipends were distributed to participating youth and volunteers. Equipment purchased through the grant, including landscaping and cleanup tools, will continue supporting future beautification efforts. Despite challenges related to school schedules and participant availability, the program advanced its goals of youth workforce development, neighborhood improvement, and community engagement.

Old North Sacramento and Dixieanne Neighborhood Cleanup

Grantee	Del Paso Boulevard Partnership
Grant Amount	\$20,000
City Contract	2023-1053
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Neighborhood Cleanup Grants

Program Overview

The Del Paso Boulevard Partnership coordinated a multi-service cleanup initiative covering three distinct service zones: the Del Paso Boulevard corridor, the El Camino Avenue area, and the Dixieanne and Calvados alley network in Old North Sacramento. The program combined professional contractor services with a youth stipend component.

Activities and Results

In August 2023, contractor Street Scapers LLC began litter abatement along Del Paso Boulevard and parallel streets including Rio Linda Boulevard, Fairfield Street, Oxford Street, Gibson Street, and Hawthorne Street. Vendor Bin So Clean provided heated, high-pressure washing of public sidewalks and gutters. In September, contractor Clean Streets initiated work along El Camino Avenue and through the alley network in Old North Sacramento, including mowing at alley gate entrances, junk removal, and general litter abatement. By November 2023, the program had serviced 257 parcels in all service areas, power-washed over 4,000 square feet of sidewalks, curbs and gutters, hauled away over 25 cubic yards of trash, collected over 30 33-gallon trash bags, and directly serviced over 23 residences and 9 small businesses. Two youth participants completed hours in the stipend program during the initial months.

Urban Agriculture

One grant in the North Area funded urban agriculture programming, representing the single largest North Area award and one of the deepest community-engagement outcomes across the entire PB portfolio.

North Sacramento Urban Agriculture Program

Grantee	Del Paso Heights Growers' Alliance (DPHGA)
Grant Amount	\$140,000
City Contract	2023-0933
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Urban Agriculture Programs and Mobile Farmers Market

Program Overview

The Del Paso Heights Growers' Alliance (DPHGA) implemented a community health-focused urban agriculture program in City Council District 2 to increase access to fresh produce and strengthen residents' knowledge of healthy eating and food growing practices. The program consisted of three integrated components: a mobile food stand distributing fresh, seasonal produce across multiple District 2 locations; community workshops in cooking, nutrition, and urban agriculture; and the maintenance of three community gardens supporting ongoing local food production.

Activities

The Fresh Out of DPH Free Farm Stand provided produce box distributions at Mutual Housing Dixieanne, Mutual Housing Norwood Estates, Del Paso Heights Library, and the Robertson Community Center, paired with chef-led cooking demonstrations and nutrition education.

The program also maintained three community growing sites—the Rootcellar Community Garden, Sugar Cane Community Garden, and True Beginnings Orchard—and expanded food systems infrastructure through a composting hub developed in partnership with Re-Soil Sacramento and the California Alliance for Community Composting. Additional programming included cooking, nutrition, and urban agriculture workshops at neighborhood sites, as well as a Nature Rx initiative offering outdoor wellness trips.

Outcomes and Results

Overall, the program engaged 941 individuals through direct services and online education and distributed over 10,000 pounds of fresh produce to North Sacramento families.

All key targets were met or exceeded. The program hosted 24 produce distribution events (target: 16), distributing 1,380 produce boxes to 136 District 2 residents in the 95838 zip code.

More than 38 varieties of culturally relevant produce were provided.

The program delivered six cooking and nutrition workshops and 23 urban agriculture workshops, exceeding required goals. Participants improved knowledge of healthy food preparation and growing practices and reported increased food access awareness.

A community member who became a regular participant described the program's impact at the November 2024 Commission meeting:

“This program has shown me that it is important to deal with farmers to get that food to the people so that they can have access to it and be able to have a healthier, better way of life.”

Infrastructure investments expanded long-term capacity, including restoration of garden and orchard sites, development of a composting hub, and construction of an 18' x 24' greenhouse to support ongoing training. The program also provided mentorship and technical assistance to support economic opportunities for BIPOC farmers and disadvantaged community members, with evaluation support from UC Davis and UC Irvine.

Part II: South Area Projects

The South Area focus covered neighborhoods including Oak Park, South Sacramento, Meadowview, and portions of Fruitridge. Six grant agreements totaling \$500,000 were administered in the South Area across four program categories:

- Youth Development and Mentorship,
- Homeless Services,
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and
- Youth Transportation.

6
Grant Agreements

\$500,000
Total Funding

4
Program Categories

Youth Development and Mentorship

One South Area grant was classified under youth development and mentorship, targeting elementary-age literacy intervention in South Sacramento. The program combined one-on-one tutoring with the development of scalable, technology-enabled tools designed to extend its reach beyond direct service.

Pending Staff Verification

Additional Literacy Support for Elementary Students

Grantee	Hope Technologies Sacramento, Inc.
Grant Amount	\$100,000
City Contract	2024-0077
Department	Department of Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment
Ballot Reference	Additional Literacy Support for Elementary Students

Program Overview

Hope Technologies Sacramento, Inc. operates a nonprofit learning center in South Sacramento, focused on building lifelong learners through literacy intervention and technology education. Founded by Josh and Brittany Howard, the organization has served the community for approximately eight years. The literacy grant funded one-on-one tutoring,

the hiring of three part-time literacy directors, and the development of two new tools intended to extend the program’s reach: a research-backed reading intervention guide and a gamified phonemic awareness application.

Activities

The program provided individualized, phonics-based literacy tutoring to students primarily in grades 4 through 6 who were at least two grade levels behind in reading. Instruction followed a framework that included assessment to identify each student’s specific gaps, chart-based skill reinforcement, and a tracking record to monitor progress. Upon completing the tutoring sequence, students transitioned to a Read Aloud program in which they narrated stories for kindergarten classrooms, building confidence and a love of reading through authentic audience experience. A staff member with both teaching credentials and a computer science degree led development of a gamified reading web application accessible through standard browsers and mobile devices without requiring a download. The app presents phonemic awareness content through word games and maze activities, culminating in readers built around learned skills. The reading intervention guide was designed as a transferable resource usable by parents and teachers independently of the program.

Outcomes and Results

63 Students Tutored	3 Literacy Directors Hired	App Beta Launch	2 Grades+ Avg. Gap Closed
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Since receiving the grant, Hope Technologies served 63 students through one-on-one tutoring. Students demonstrated measurable improvements in reading proficiency; school attendance increased among program participants; and program leaders observed growing confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Co-founder Josh Howard described students “constantly begging to be a part of our program and not being able to wait to come back.” The reading application was in a beta testing phase as of October 2024 and available for preview at read.hopenlc.org, with a full public launch planned by end of year. The application was piloted in classrooms and at community events, with design driven by direct student feedback.

Hope Technologies also shared an emerging concern with the Commission: rising insurance requirements from school partners, including per-occurrence policies that can exceed \$17,000 annually, are increasingly prohibitive for small nonprofits. They recommended that future grant cycles consider allocating funds for insurance costs as a legitimate program expense.

Homeless Services

One South Area grant funded a direct-service event for unhoused residents, providing comprehensive, dignity-centered access to multiple services in a single-day format that proved both highly effective and cost-efficient.

Sacramento Area Homeless Services Event 2023

Grantee	Josh's Heart
Grant Amount	\$50,000
City Contract	2023-0858
Department	Department of Community Response
Ballot Reference	Sacramento Area Homeless Services Event 2023

Program Overview

Josh's Heart organized a full-service, one-day resource fair designed to provide unhoused residents with meaningful access to services that are typically difficult to obtain in fragmented or appointment-based settings. The event brought together medical, dental, optical, and veterinary providers alongside government agencies, social service organizations, and community volunteers under one umbrella, in an environment intentionally designed to convey respect and dignity.

Activities

The event was held August 12, 2023. Services available to guests included mobile medical, dental, and optical care; veterinary services; portable showers; new clothing; haircuts; meals from local food trucks; live music; DMV identification card services; bus and light rail day passes; resources from the Public Defender and Child Support Services; housing services; and Blessing Backpacks. Representatives from City, county, state, and nonprofit organizations attended. The grantee conducted advance outreach to identify unhoused community members and coordinated logistics across more than two dozen service providers.

Outcomes and Results

350 Guests Served	327 Intakes Completed	200 Volunteers	4.8 / 5 Avg. Rating
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The event served 350 guests, 327 of whom completed intake. Two hundred volunteers supported operations. Exit surveys were collected from 117 participants. Of survey respondents, 86 percent reported that they were able to take care of the things they wanted to at the event. Eighty-two percent rated the event 5 out of 5 and the overall average rating was 4.8 out of 5. Total expenditures were \$45,595.36, with \$4,404.64 of the \$50,000 grant unspent.

At approximately \$130 per guest for a full day of access to 15 or more services, the Homeless Connect event represents a notable return on a relatively modest public investment. The grantee noted that navigating allowable expenditure categories, including hotel costs for medical volunteers traveling from out of town, required extended back-and-forth with the Department of Community Response, and recommended that clearer upfront guidance on eligible expenses be provided to future event-based grantees.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Two South Area grants supported innovation and entrepreneurship programming, one through a youth-focused STEAM curriculum using video game development as its core instructional vehicle, and one through a structured accelerator and pitch competition designed for adult entrepreneurs from South Sacramento.

Teaching Tech

Grantee	Sacramento Developer Collective
Grant Amount	\$100,000
City Contract	2023-0927
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	Teaching Tech

Program Overview

Sacramento Developer Collective (SDC) is a nonprofit organization supporting the local game development community and using video game creation as a vehicle for workforce and entrepreneurship training. SDC partnered with Square Root Academy to deliver the Teaching Tech program, building on a curriculum the organization had already been developing. The program introduced youth ages 12 to 18 to coding, art, animation, level design, sound design, and UX through structured game development coursework.

Activities

SDC developed an 83-page game development curriculum grounded in progressive game jam methodology, which takes participants from ideation to publication through the full game development lifecycle. The program was delivered through multiple cohorts at Lab 7 Coworking, Oak Park Community Center, and Sacramento New Technology High School. Participants received 20 hours of instruction and interactive labs covering coding, digital art, animation, audio design, UI/UX, level design, and other STEAM disciplines. Each participant also received a printed curriculum guide and was invited to showcase their work publicly through the Capital Creative Showcase.

Outcomes and Results

57	490	5	100%
Students Served	Instructional Hours	Instructors Trained	Made a Game

The program served 57 students across two class series, delivering 490 total instructional hours and training 5 instructors. Student skill gains measured before and after the program showed average improvements of 1.2 in coding, 2.3 in game development, and 0.3 in art development on standardized scales ranging from 1 to 10. One hundred percent of students reported learning how to make a video game by program conclusion. Presenter Nathan Allshouse noted that student motivation, not age, was the primary driver of engagement; even younger participants produced impressive work when they were interested in the material.

At the October 2024 Commission meeting, a commissioner noted that the high-ROI, community-owned programs created through PB represent exactly the kind of evidence the City Council needs to hear in support of renewed investment, and invited SDC and other grantees to participate in future City Council advocacy opportunities.

Blackwater Accelerator

Pending Staff Verification

Grantee	Common Good Collective (formerly Blackwater Consulting)
Grant Amount	\$125,000
City Contract	2023-1470
Department	Office of Innovation and Economic Development
Ballot Reference	South Sacramento Entrepreneurial and Career Academy

Program Overview

Common Good Collective, formerly operating as Blackwater Consulting, developed an entrepreneurship ecosystem for South Sacramento through three interconnected components: Pitch Black, a two-minute pitch competition for early-stage entrepreneurs; the Homegrown Accelerator, an eight-week structured business development program; and Paper Talks, monthly panel discussions open to the broader community. The program reflects a long-held vision to support the financial upward mobility of South Sacramento entrepreneurs through practical tools, peer community, and access to capital and mentorship.

Activities

Two Pitch Black competitions were conducted, each providing 10 early-stage entrepreneurs a two-minute opportunity to pitch their ideas, receive expert feedback, and compete for direct funding. Monthly Paper Talks panels covered branding, strategic planning, and legal fundamentals for entrepreneurs and were made available through YouTube to extend community access. The Homegrown Accelerator enrolled 16 participants in an eight-week cohort program covering business development, legitimization, and scaling strategies. During the grant period, Common Good Collective relocated from its former South Sacramento location to Del Paso Heights, embedding the organization in the community it was designed to serve.

Outcomes and Results

\$20,000 was distributed directly to early-stage nonprofits in the South Sacramento region through two Pitch Black competitions. The first Homegrown Accelerator cohort enrolled 16 participants. Presenter Nicholas Haystings described the program as having achieved its core mission: providing disconnected entrepreneurs with the tools, skills, and opportunities to succeed.

Most significantly, Common Good Collective secured continuation funding from Golden 1 Credit Union and Bosch Semiconductors, extending Pitch Black through 2026. This represents one of the clearest examples in the PB portfolio of a grant-funded pilot catalyzing sustained institutional partnerships and longer-term investment well beyond the original grant period.

Youth Transportation

Two South Area grants addressed the transportation gap for underserved and unhoused youth in the Oak Park area. Both programs recognized that consistent, reliable transportation is a fundamental precondition for participation in after-school programming, tutoring, sports, and other youth development services.

Pending Staff Verification

Transportation Van for Underserved and Unhoused Youth in Oak Park

Grantee	Hope Technologies Sacramento, Inc.
Grant Amount	\$75,000
City Contract	2024-0078
Department	Department of Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment
Ballot Reference	Transportation Van for Underserved and Unhoused Youth

Program Overview

Hope Technologies received a second PB grant to purchase a vehicle and hire a driver dedicated to transporting underserved and formerly unhoused youth to and from programming. This grant directly addressed a structural barrier that had limited the organization's ability to reach students who lacked reliable transportation to the Hope Neighborhood Learning Center.

Activities and Results

The contract provided for vehicle purchase and driver hiring. Contract term finalization required approximately one year following the initial award. Once the van was purchased in summer 2024, Hope Technologies began family visits to students who had previously been unhoused and were now housed, in partnership with the nonprofit Growing Pass Today. Special events, community outings, and summer camp transportation were being planned for the subsequent program year. Co-founder Josh Howard described the van as enabling a new model of family engagement through home visits that had not been possible under the prior volunteer driver model. The program metric for this grant is the number of participants transported monthly, with reporting ongoing as the vehicle enters regular service.

Youth Enrichment on Wheels

Pending Staff Verification

Grantee	Just Us United
Grant Amount	\$50,000
City Contract	2023-1552
Department	Department of Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment
Ballot Reference	Transportation Van for Underserved and Unhoused Youth

Program Overview

Just Us United received funding to provide transportation for Oak Park youth to sports training, after-school programs, and related enrichment activities. The program was designed to close a persistent transportation gap that limits youth participation in structured activities and positive community engagement in this area of South Sacramento.

Contracted Activities

The grant provides for transportation to sports training, after-school programs, and related activities for youth in and around Oak Park. Services are intended to fill the transportation deficit for this community and to provide a safe, consistent mode of transit to and from program sites.

Intended Outcomes and Metrics

The program was designed to provide safe youth transportation; create positive and healthy outlets for self-expression; build youth awareness of community services and needs; reduce the incidence of youth violence by providing structured program access; and address the structural transportation gap in the Oak Park area. The primary contract metric is the number of trips provided. Full outcome reporting was pending at the time this report was compiled.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

The Participatory Budgeting Pilot Program represents a significant, if still modest, investment in community-driven decision-making in Sacramento. The seventeen grant agreements funded through the pilot span a wide range of service types and populations, from youth interns in after-school recreation programs to unhoused adults receiving medical care, from immigrant farmers growing culturally meaningful produce to high school students earning OSHA certifications. Across all programs, several themes emerge consistently.

Community Organizations as Capable Implementers

PB grants consistently reached organizations already embedded in their communities, with established credibility and cultural competency. HYPUs deep roots in the Hmong community, the Growers Alliance's intergenerational connections in Del Paso Heights, GNNA's three-decade neighborhood history, Josh's Heart's dignifying approach to homeless services, and Crossover Basketball's multi-decade presence in North Sacramento all reflect the kind of community-owned programming the PB process was designed to amplify. These organizations did not need to build trust with their communities; the grants enabled them to do more of what they were already doing effectively.

Catalytic and Leveraged Impact

In multiple cases, PB grants served as catalysts for larger or more sustained investment. Blueprint's pilot opened a pathway to 12 schools and more than 1,000 additional students in Twin Rivers Unified. Common Good Collective's Pitch Black program secured continuation funding from Golden 1 and Bosch Semiconductors through 2026. The Del Paso Heights Growers Alliance established composting infrastructure and academic partnerships that extend the program's impact well beyond the grant period. CIEF projected growth from approximately 1,500 to more than 1,900 students in the following year. These multiplier effects suggest that the return on PB investments meaningfully exceeds the dollar amounts of the grants themselves.

Administrative Lessons for Future Cycles

Grantees and Measure U commissioners identified several process lessons at the fall 2024 meetings. Clear upfront guidance on allowable expenditures would save time for grantees navigating reimbursement-based payment structures. Contracts finalized mid-year compresses program timelines, in at least one case reducing a nine-month program to five months. Rising insurance requirements for organizations working with youth on school campuses may represent a structural barrier for small nonprofits. Robust evaluation infrastructure, while sometimes funded through partnerships, should be treated as a core program cost in future cycles. These observations align with the Third Plateau evaluation's

broad call for clearer rules and structures, realistic timelines, and greater scaffolding for community-based implementing organizations.

Staff Perspective and Analysis

The results documented in this report are meaningful, but they are not meaningfully different from outcomes that might be produced by a well-administered discretionary grant program. What is different is that the projects and grantees in this portfolio were chosen by the residents who participated in the process, not by Council members or City staff. That distinction is the point. If the Council funds a second cycle primarily to drive specific thematic outcomes or program categories, it should consider whether a targeted grant program might accomplish that goal more efficiently.

PB is administratively intensive work. The pilot required sustained staff engagement across multiple departments, a contracted implementation partner, an independent evaluator, grant administration, and more than 15 months of active coordination. These demands are necessary to make the process work. A future cycle is unlikely to succeed if it is simply absorbed into existing staff workloads without dedicated capacity. Council should budget for implementation resources as a dedicated line item and should expect that the true cost of running PB well is higher than the dollar amount allocated to fund PB projects.

Council may also wish to consider whether to specify thematic or geographic focus areas for a future cycle. The pilot intentionally left project categories open to community input, which produced a broad portfolio. A future cycle could preserve that open-ended approach or instead establish guardrails, directing community decision-making toward areas where the City has identified the greatest need or where existing funding gaps are most acute. Either approach is legitimate; the tradeoff is between maximizing community empowerment and maximizing the alignment of PB investments with Council priorities.

The Measure U Community Advisory Commission's Case for Continuation

The Measure U Commission did not secure a subsequent round of PB funding at the time this report was compiled, and the Commission acknowledges the challenge of advocating for the program amid significant structural budget constraints. PB is a governance mechanism, not a grant program. Its defining value is that community members directly decide how a portion of public funds are spent in their neighborhoods. Nonetheless, the grantees who presented in fall 2024 offered compelling testimony about what community-rooted organizations can accomplish with modest public investment and meaningful trust. Multiple presenters expressed willingness to advocate directly before the City Council and asked the Commission to continue pushing for PB renewal.

As the Commission noted at the close of the November 2024 meeting, the pilot produced exactly the kind of documented, data-supported outcomes that make the case for sustained investment. The seventeen projects in this report are proof that participatory budgeting in

Sacramento works: that community organizations are ready to implement ambitious programming with appropriate support, and that residents are eager to shape how public dollars are spent in their neighborhoods.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Commission recommends that Council view the decision to fund PB as a standing commitment to democratic governance rather than a discretionary program to be revisited in favorable budget years. The logic that PB should be funded only after core services are fully budgeted implicitly treats community engagement as a luxury. The City should treat the capacity for residents to shape public spending as itself a core service. The Commission recognizes the real constraints of the current fiscal environment, but encourages the Council to frame the question accordingly: not whether there is surplus funding available for PB, but whether direct and democratic participation in budget decisions is a value the City is willing to resource as part of its ongoing governance.