Hartford Decide$

Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City

10 CELEBRATING YEARS OF VOTING. REAL CHANGE.







ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025

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thank you!

GREATER HARTFORD GIVES FOUNDATION

TRAVELERS

The Betty Knox Foundation

All project funding is made possible by the City of Hartford

Printing of this year's report is thanks to the **Betty Knox Foundation**



Letter from our Program Director

> What stands out most isn't just what got built—it's who showed up to build it. Young people leading conversations. Neighbors connecting across blocks and backgrounds. First-time voters realizing their voice carries weight. That energy is what keeps this work moving.

Ten years in, and Hartford Decide$ is still powered by the same thing that started it all – people.

In my three years as a Program Director for Hartford Decide$, I've witnessed the power of community and the transformation that occurs when those who feel unheard or uncomfortable in positions of power are given a voice. When introduced to the initiative of participatory budgeting, their eyes light up with excitement. A bottom-up approach to government? It sounds ideal! However, when I explain that our budget can only fund projects under the Capital Improvement Funds, they feel disappointed because they have many ideas, solutions, and frustrations about every aspect affecting their daily lives. I empathize with them because I, too, wish this program could be implemented universally, enabling the City to partner with the people they represent, while also helping residents understand what it takes to run a city.

This work has never been about reports or programs on paper. It's about residents showing up, speaking up, and shaping what their neighborhoods truly need. Over the past decade, we've seen ideas turn into real projects—safer streets, greener spaces, and resources that enhance everyday life. That only happens when communities are entrusted with genuine decision-making power.

As we celebrate ten years, we're also looking forward. The goal is simple: keep making this process more accessible, more inclusive, and more reflective of the people who call Hartford home. More voices. More ideas. More real impact.

Hartford Decide$ belongs to the community—and it always will. Let's keep building, together.

– Evie Cartagena

Hartford Decide$

Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City

Who We Are

Hartford Decide$ is Connecticut's first participatory budgeting initiative. Over the past decade, residents have proposed and voted on projects to improve the city through capital investments. These include murals, park enhancements, school and library projects, streetscape updates, and major repairs like the Wallace Stevens Bridge in Asylum Hill. This is supported by annual Capital Improvements funds and city leaders.

MEET THE TEAM

We are a team consisting of a volunteer working board, one part-time employee, and a former board member who now serves as technical support.

Our efforts are supported by resident volunteers and continued partnership with the City of Hartford's municipal agencies, commissions, and neighborhood organizations.



Zoe Chatfield
President



Naomi Ngoma
Vice-President



M. Sagacity Walker
Secretary



Frank Sentner
Co-Treasurer



Jared Chase
Co-Treasurer



Richard Frieder
Board Member



Nicholas Salerno
Board Member



Heather Nelson
Board Member



Margie Arroyo
Board Member



Graciela Rivera
Board Member



Evie Cartagena
Program Director



Joe Condren
Technical Support

OUR PRINCIPLES

TRANSPARENCY

Share information and make decisions about Hartford Decide$ as openly as possible.

COLLABORATION

Encourage neighborhoods, businesses, & community organizations to work together.

EMPOWER

Help Hartford residents to make decisions on the use of City capital funds set aside for Hartford Decide$ projects.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Increase participation by Hartford residents, especially those who have not previously been involved, in the civic life of the community.

UNITY

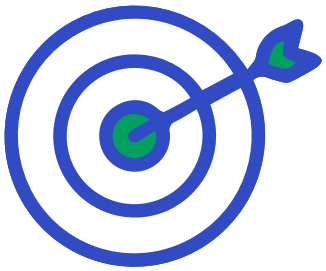
Bringing together individuals & neighborhoods, a sense of belonging to Hartford as a whole.

EQUITY & INCLUSIVENESS

Include people of all races, ethnicities, abilities, incomes, backgrounds, ages, genders, & neighborhoods equitably.

DELIBERATION

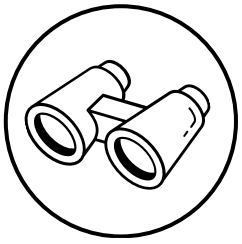
Encourage sharing perspectives and knowledge to build ideas that align community needs and challenges with local strengths and aspirations.



OUR MISSION

To build an inclusive culture of community and civic engagement in Hartford that strengthens social trust through a process of direct decision-making on a portion of the City's budget.

OUR VISION



We envision a Hartford where residents and other stakeholders trust that their input will be listened to, valued, and acted upon to create a community where the dignity of every person is respected and where residents realize their power.

Hartford Decide$

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CYCLE TIMELINE 2024 - 2025

1 BRAINSTORMING & IDEA COLLECTION



SEPT-DEC

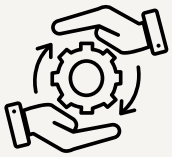




2 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



JAN-MAR

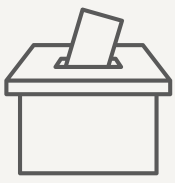




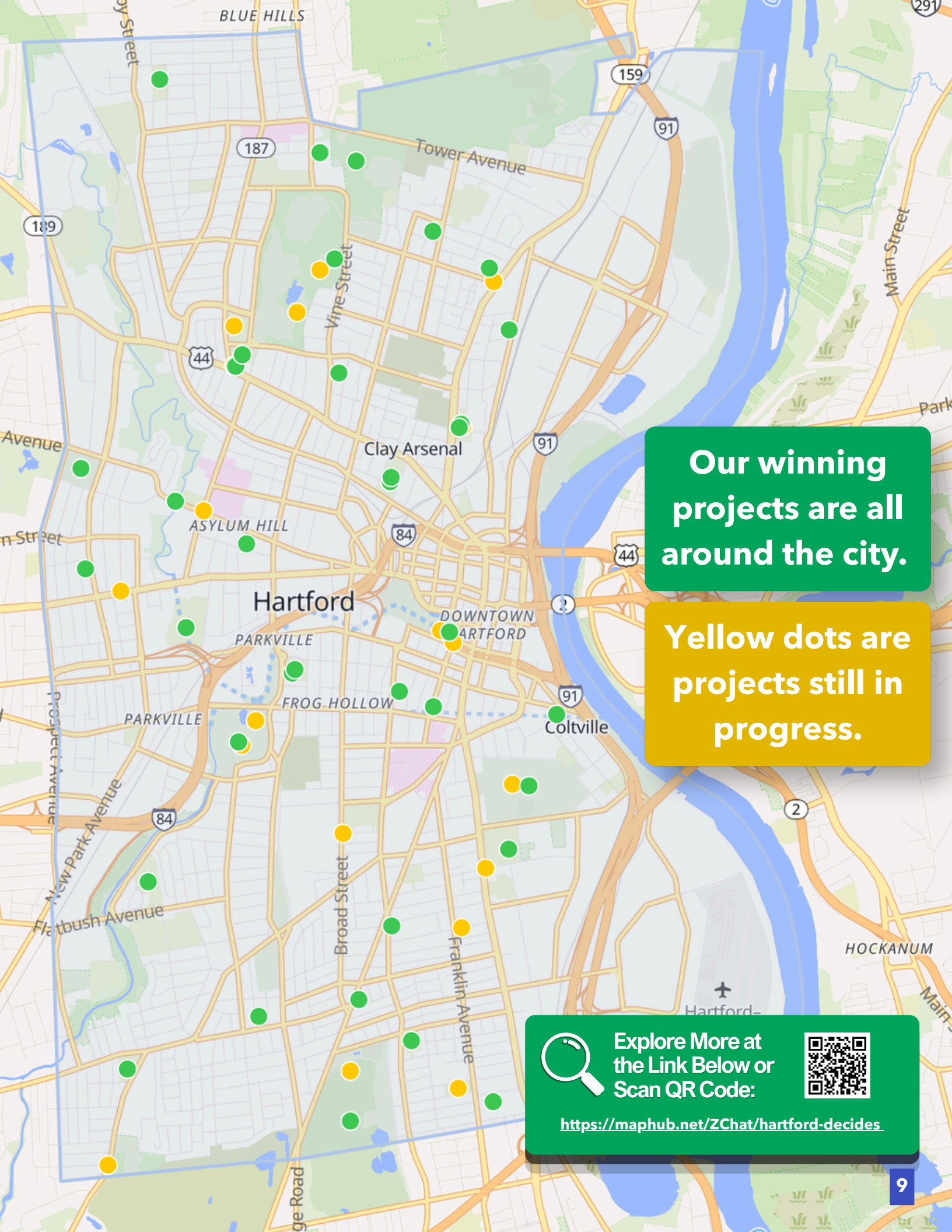
3 VOTING



APR 15- MAY 22







Our winning projects are all around the city.

Yellow dots are projects still in progress.

Explore More at the Link Below or Scan QR Code:

https://maphub.net/ZChat/hartford-decides

Hartford Decide$

Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City

10

YOUR IDEAS.
VOTING.
REAL CHANGE.













For the past decade, Hartford Decide$ has put power in your hands – transforming ideas from paper into real world change. And within that process, participants have learned how to engage civically and how voting strengthens your voice.

thank you!

Let's keep building Hartford Together!

Brief History

Hartford Decide$ was created from the belief that the people who live in Hartford should have a direct voice in shaping the future of their city. Participatory Budgeting (PB) itself first began in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 1989 as a democratic process that allowed residents to decide how public money would be spent in their communities. Inspired by this growing global movement, Hartford launched Connecticut's first citywide Participatory Budgeting initiative in 2015, bringing residents together to share ideas, develop proposals, and vote on projects that would improve neighborhoods across the city. One of the early champions of this work was Richard Frieder, who helped support and guide the initiative from its beginnings and continues to serve on the board today.

Since those early days, Hartford Decide$ has grown into more than just a voting process – it has become a community-driven movement rooted in inclusion, collaboration, and civic engagement. Over the years, thousands of Hartford residents, including youth, families, seniors, and longtime neighbors, have participated in shaping projects that reflect the needs and dreams of the community. From park improvements and public art to community spaces and neighborhood investments, every project tells the story of residents coming together to create a stronger, more connected Hartford.





Letter to Hartford

To the residents of Hartford,

Thank you for believing in the power of community! Thank you for showing up, sharing your ideas, casting your votes, volunteering your time, and continuing to believe that every neighborhood deserves to be heard. Hartford Decide$ would not exist without the passion, creativity, and dedication of the people who call this city home.

Over the past decade, you have helped transform Participatory Budgeting from an idea into a living movement built on collaboration, trust, and hope for a stronger Hartford. Every conversation, every proposal, and every vote has contributed to the connection and a community-driven future. We are deeply grateful to walk alongside you in this work and look forward to continuing to build a Hartford where every voice matters.

Thank You!

THE HARTFORD DECIDE$ TEAM

Hartford Decide$

Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City

2015

THE BEGINNNING OF PARTICIPATIORY BUDGETING

2016

PAINT THE CITY

Ten city-owned properties in Hartford were transformed with murals by local artists.



LAPTOPS FOR LEARNING

10 laptops were purchased for 5 libraries, helping patrons meet their learning objectives.

2017

KEEP THE KIDS COOL

125 shade trees were planted at five Hartford public schools, providing relief from overheated parking lots and playgrounds.



2021 & 2022

TREE PLANTING

Knox Parks planted over 40 trees at five Hartford Public Schools: All trees coming with a three-year care warranty.



2023

SOCCER & BASKETBALL ENHANCEMENTS



2024

BUS STOP ENHANCEMENT

This project leads to new bus benches being installed citywide and upgrades to bus stops on various streets.



SECURITY CAMERAS FOR SENIOR CENTER



This project led to security cameras being installed in a South-End Senior center.



PARK LAMP IMPROVEMENTS

This project led to improved lighting in parks.



COMMUNITY GARDENS

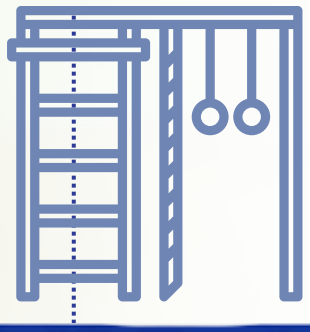
This project established new community gardens.

10 YEARS OF ACTION

First Place Winners on the Track



Every year, residents bring forward creative ideas, beautification projects, repairs, and solutions to everyday frustrations. Through participatory budgeting, more residents can get involved in solving problems and improving our neighborhoods. As you can see below, these projects were made possible by participatory budgeting, the people of Hartford, and city officials working together.



2018

KENEY PARK FITNESS TRAIL





2019

WALLACE STEVENS BRIDGE REPAIR

This project repaired the damaged sidewalks on the Asylum Avenue Bridge. It will also install plaques honoring poet Wallace Stevens.

COVID 19



COVID affected our in-person community efforts, but we adapted by hosting brainstorming sessions on Zoom, leading to successful outcomes.

2020

Hydroponic Garden

Hydroponic gardens enable plant growth using nutrient-rich water, maximizing space and efficiency, particularly in urban areas.







2025

SIDEWALK REPAIRS

This project will fund several sidewalk repairs.

2025
A DECADE OF IMPACT
10
YEARS



BUSHNELL ICE RINK ENHANCEMENTS

This project acquired skating aids and enhancements for Bushnell Park's annual ice rink.



SOLAR CHARGING STATIONS

This project aims to install charging stations throughout parks.

These are just a few of the projects made possible over the last 10 years – there are too many to fit on one page. More funds, more projects, more civic engagement, and stronger relationships across the city. Hartford has been busy.

A DECADE OF PROGRESS

FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING OUTREACH

Over the last decade, we have expanded our outreach and enhanced our tools to connect with every resident who has an idea, wants to vote, and aims to contribute positively to Hartford.

HARTFORD DECIDES
REAL MONEY, REAL POWER: PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING
BRAINSTORM IDEAS · DEVELOP PROJECTS · VOTE ON PROJECTS · FUND TOP PROJECTS

THEN:
Our Foundation

We began with the basics and a belief in the purpose of participatory budgeting remained steadfast. Below are the foundational elements we had to work with from the very start.







In-Person Events Only

In-Person Voting Only

Posterboard Proposals

Word of Mouth

Media Outlets

Community Networks

Hartford Decide$
Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City

NOW:
10 years of growth

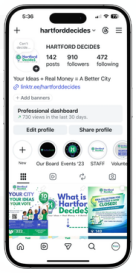
To improve our outreach, we used online platforms to communicate our message. This approach allowed us to refine our methods for enhanced engagement.



In-Person Events & Online Idea Collection



In-Person & Online Voting



Social Media



Community Networks



Digital Access to Proposals

WhatsApp & Mobile Number

Media Outlets

Word of Mouth

Thank You

to Our City Leaders.

Celebrating **10** YEARS **2015-2025**

A decade of partnership. A lifetime of impact.

For the past decade, Hartford's Participatory Budgeting process has grown because leaders across the city believed that residents deserved a voice in their community.

What began as neighborhood conversations, posterboards, and paper ballots became something much larger: a lasting commitment to civic engagement, inclusion, and trust between government and the people it serves.

To each member of the Hartford City Council and every Mayor who has served in the past decade, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your commitment to upholding the voice of democracy.

With Gratitude,

The Hartford Decide$ Team









Special Shout Out

We would like to acknowledge a leader who has significantly enhanced this initiative and highlighted its importance. Marilyn Rossetti has consistently supported Hartford Decide$ and the principles of participatory budgeting. We are proud to recognize her and extend our ongoing appreciation.





Hartford Decide$ Kickoff & Winning Projects Celebration

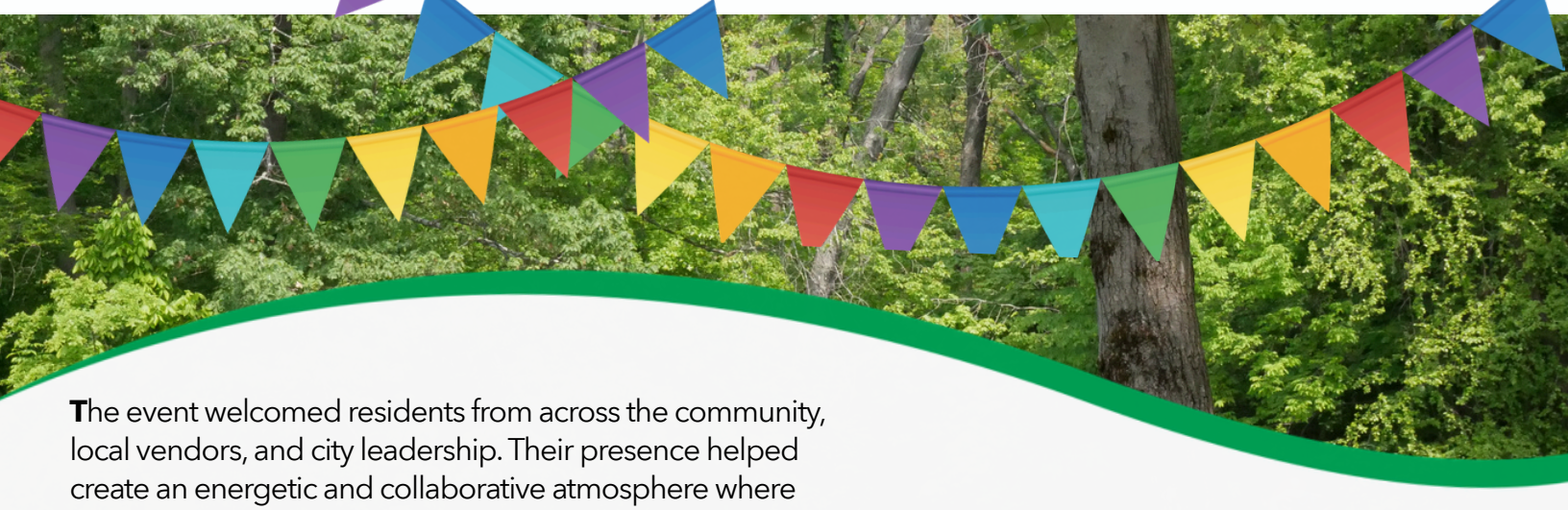
A CELEBRATION OF IDEAS, COMMUNITY & IMPACT

September 20, 2024 | **Keney Pond House**

Our **Hartford Decide$ Kickoff** event served as both a launch of the new project cycle and a celebration of previously selected winning projects. It was an event that brought residents, community leaders, and local businesses together in one shared space to recognize progress, generate new ideas, and strengthen civic participation.

FRIENDS of KENEY PARK
Our community – and your place for recreation.

A thank you to Friends of Keney Park for their generous hospitality



The event welcomed residents from across the community, local vendors, and city leadership. Their presence helped create an energetic and collaborative atmosphere where neighbors could connect directly with decision-makers and learn more about how community-driven investment works.

Local vendors were also featured as part of our continued commitment to supporting small businesses and keeping community events rooted in local economic growth.



This event also introduced the pilot launch of our new brainstorming and engagement strategy. Rather than only collecting ideas, participants were guided through a full mock participatory budgeting project development and voting experience.



A HANDS-ON LOOK AT PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING:

Idea Collection

Participants were shown how submitted ideas are developed to meet capital improvement criteria.

Idea Development

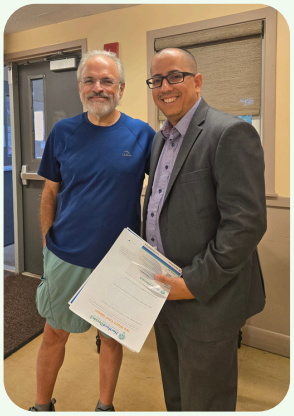
Facilitators explained CIP funds and the criteria the City would require to meet the standard. If the idea initially did not meet the criteria, we brainstormed how we could fit the goal into a Capital Improvement Project.

Voting On Ideas

After the development exercise, attendees voted on the ideas they most wanted to support by adding a heart to each idea on the board. Two winners received a gift card, adding a tangible award to their civic participation.

Voices That Lead

Remarks From **Amilcar Hernandez**

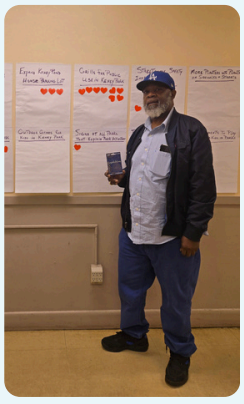


A highlight of the evening was remarks from City Councilman Amilcar Hernandez, who delivered an inspiring speech on the importance of resident-led decision-making.

He highlighted the importance of initiatives that unite residents and leaders, and the power of civic engagement in strengthening communities.

Building Project Champions

The event concluded with outreach to the residents who wanted to pursue their idea. These individuals become our Project Champions. They support their ideas throughout the process & help get out the vote.



Ranked Choice

A New Way To Vote in Hartford

Introduced in the 2025 Hartford Decide$ Participatory Budgeting process.

Rank up to 5 projects.

1 = Your favorite

5 = Your fifth choice

PROJECTS	1 (Favorite)	2	3	4	5 (Fifth Choice)
Sidewalk Repairs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fruit Trees in the Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pet Food Pantry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sister Cities Memorial	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Volleyball/Pickleball Court	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bike Repair Stations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Illegal Dumping Prevention	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Multigenerational Sensory Equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐	
ADA Picnic Tables and Grills in the Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	



Ballots and project descriptions are always in English and Spanish.

How It Works

1 Rank your Favorites

You can **rank** up to **5** of your favorite projects from **1-5** (**1** being your favorite)



2 Votes Are Counted

Each ranking receives a point value, with top choices earning the most points.



3 Projects Get Funded

After all ballots are counted, the projects with the highest total points wins funding.



How Budgeting Works

Hartford allocated $100,000 to fund winning projects.



$100,000

If the winning project costs less than the budget allocated, the remaining funds are used to partially fund the next highest-ranking project.

Sidewalk Repairs
$65,000
WON

$35,000
Remaining Budget

Fruit Trees in Parks
$85,000
ORIGINAL COST



Why Ranked Choice?



More Choice

We're listening. Your top choices matter, even if they're not everyone's first.



Stronger Results

Projects with broad support rise to the top.



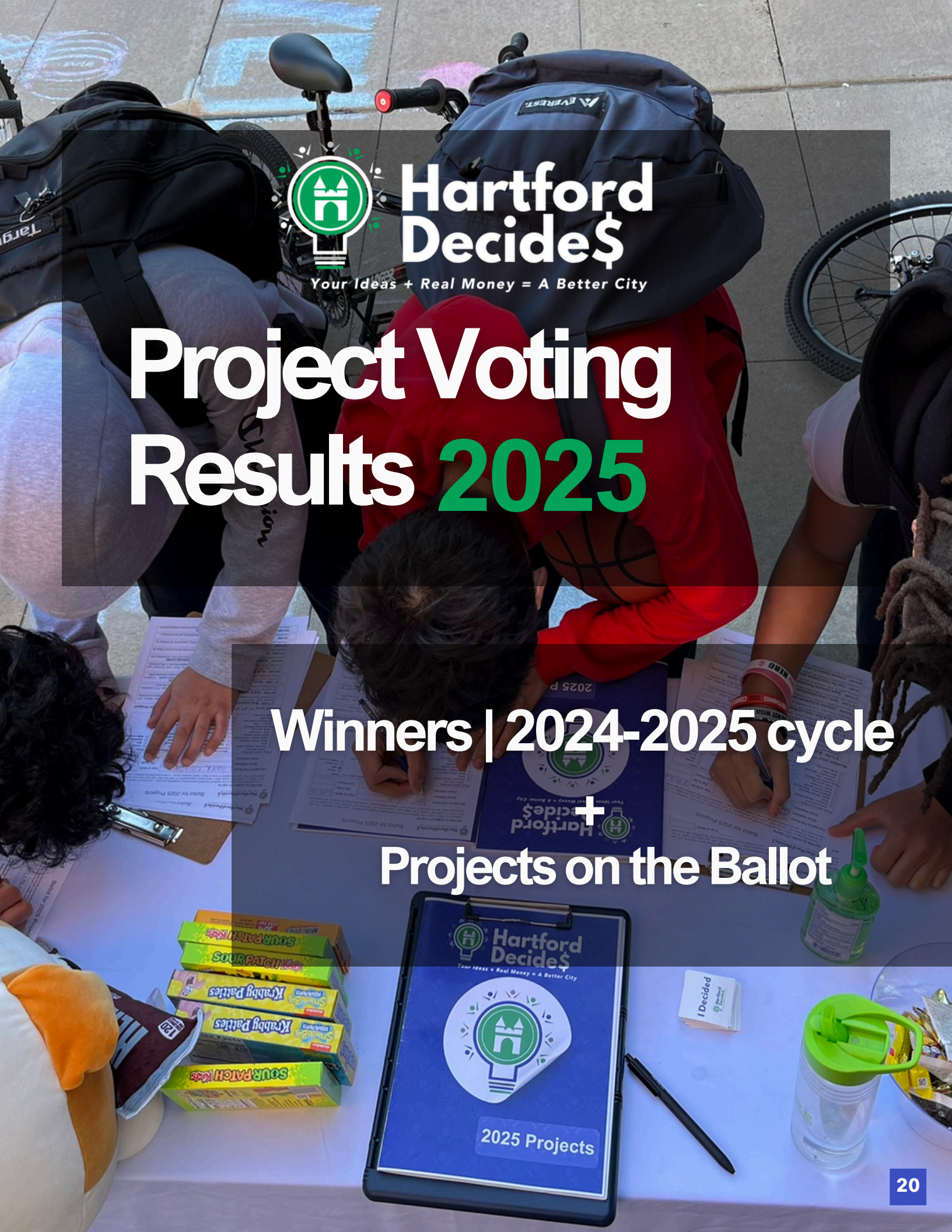
Smarter Budgeting

We fund more projects with the allocated funds.



The Future of Voting

Ranked choice voting is the future of election voting.


Hartford Decide$
Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City
Project Voting Results 2025
Winners | 2024-2025 cycle
+
Projects on the Ballot
Hartford Decide$
2025 Projects
I Decided

WINNERS



SIDEWALK REPAIRS

The project allocates $65,000 to repair broken and uneven sidewalks in Hartford, addressing safety and accessibility concerns. Improvements will benefit residents, families, and seniors by creating safer, smoother pathways, making the streets more convenient and welcoming for all.



FRUIT TREES IN PARKS

This $35,000 project will plant 12 fruit trees in Keney, Goodwin, and Pope Parks to provide free fresh fruit for Hartford residents. The trees will enhance air quality, support local wildlife, and green public spaces, especially benefiting food-insecure neighborhoods. The initiative includes five years of maintenance funding and community workshops for long-term success.

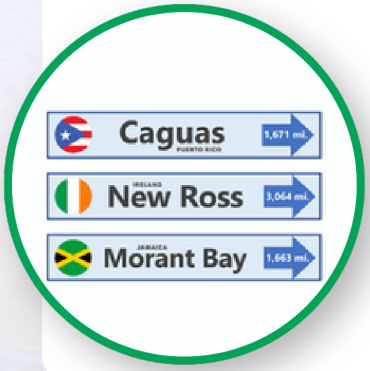
Brainstormed | Developed | Voted On

PROJECTS ON THE BALLOT



PET PANTRIES

This $9,000 project aimed to install pet food pantries near schools in Hartford to assist residents who were struggling to afford pet food. Initiated by 6th graders at Covenant Preparatory School through the Hartford Decide$ Participatory Budgeting educational pilot program, the initiative responded to rising pet food insecurity, including among pets of unhoused residents.



SISTER CITIES MEMORIAL

A $25,000 project proposal was made to install a Sister Cities monument at Pulaski Mall, 406 Main Street. This monument was intended to enhance the area's beauty and strengthen connections between Hartford residents and global communities. It was to feature Hartford's nine sister cities, displaying their names, flags, and the distance and direction to each location, celebrating cultural ties and international relationships.



VOLLEYBALL/PICKLEBALL

This $95,000 project was to establish a multi-use court in Brackett Park, adjacent to the basketball court at Parker Memorial Community Center. Designed for volleyball and pickleball, the court featured adjustable poles and nets. This recreational space primarily benefited youth interested in volleyball and residents who enjoyed pickleball; promoting exercise, skill development, and community engagement.



BIKE REPAIR STATIONS

This $50,000 project aimed to install 20 Fixit Plus bicycle repair stations with air pumps across Hartford, enhancing maintenance access for bicycles, skateboards, and scooters. This initiative aimed to improve mobility, reduce transportation barriers, promote safer travel, and support sustainable transportation; fostering a healthier, more connected community.



ILLEGAL DUMPING PREVENTION

The $70,000 project aimed to prevent illegal dumping in Hartford by installing fencing, barriers, and security cameras in high-risk areas, including Ledyard, Reserve Road, Pope Park, and various locations in Keney Park. These measures would have deterred illegal dumping, aided enforcement, and enhanced the area's appearance and safety. The initiative would have benefited all residents.



MULTIGENERATIONAL SENSORY EQUIPMENT

This $75,000 project aimed to install sensory equipment in parks for engaging sight, sound, and touch; enhancing accessible experiences for individuals with neurodivergence and mobility challenges. It would have supported families with children facing special needs and sensory challenges.



ADA PICNIC TABLES & GRILLS IN PARKS

The $71,500 project aimed to install 25 ADA-accessible picnic tables in Pope, Goodwin, Elizabeth, and Keney Parks to enhance outdoor spaces for families, especially benefiting Hartford residents without transportation. The distribution included five tables in Pope, Goodwin, and Elizabeth Parks, and ten tables with covered charcoal grills in Keney Park for larger gatherings.

All Great Projects That Would Be Wonderful to Fund!

TELL the CITY

If you'd like the City of Hartford to continue supporting Participatory Budgeting, visit our website at www.HartfordDecides.org or scan the QR code. Simply select **"Tell the City"** to advocate for additional funding.



Our Community at a Glance

Demographic Insights

2025 Voter Demographics

10 Years of Voter Demographics

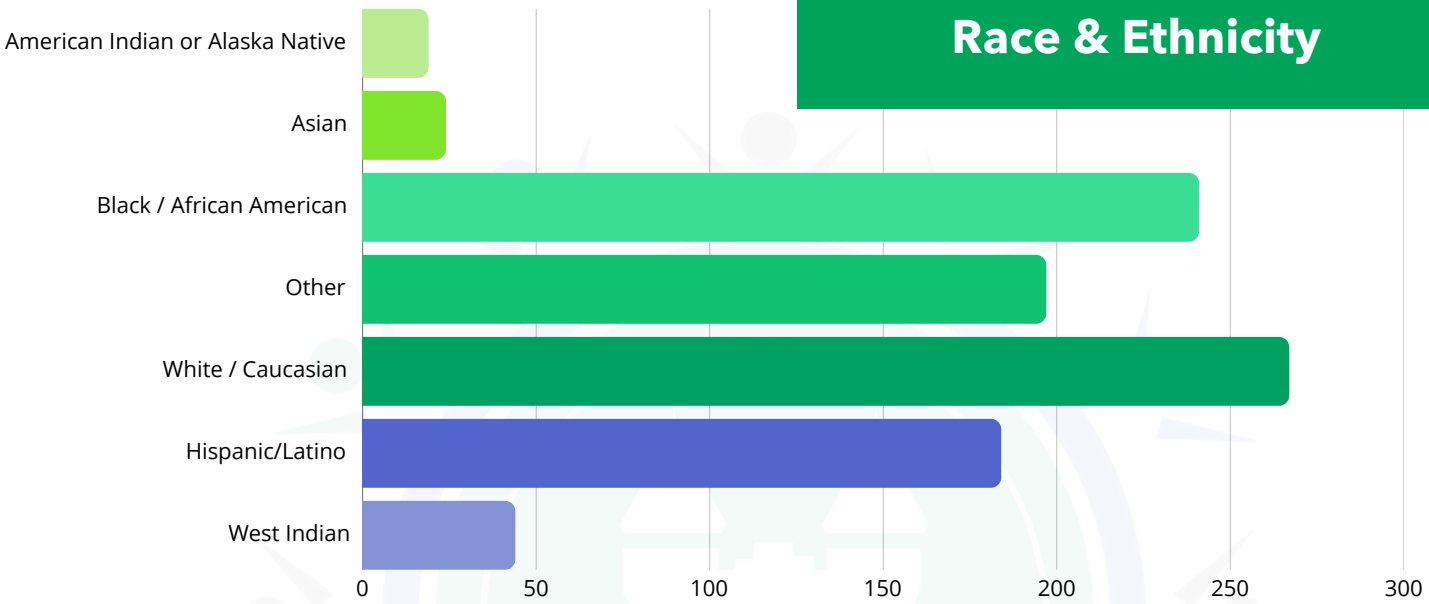
Map of Voters by Zip Code

2025 Voters

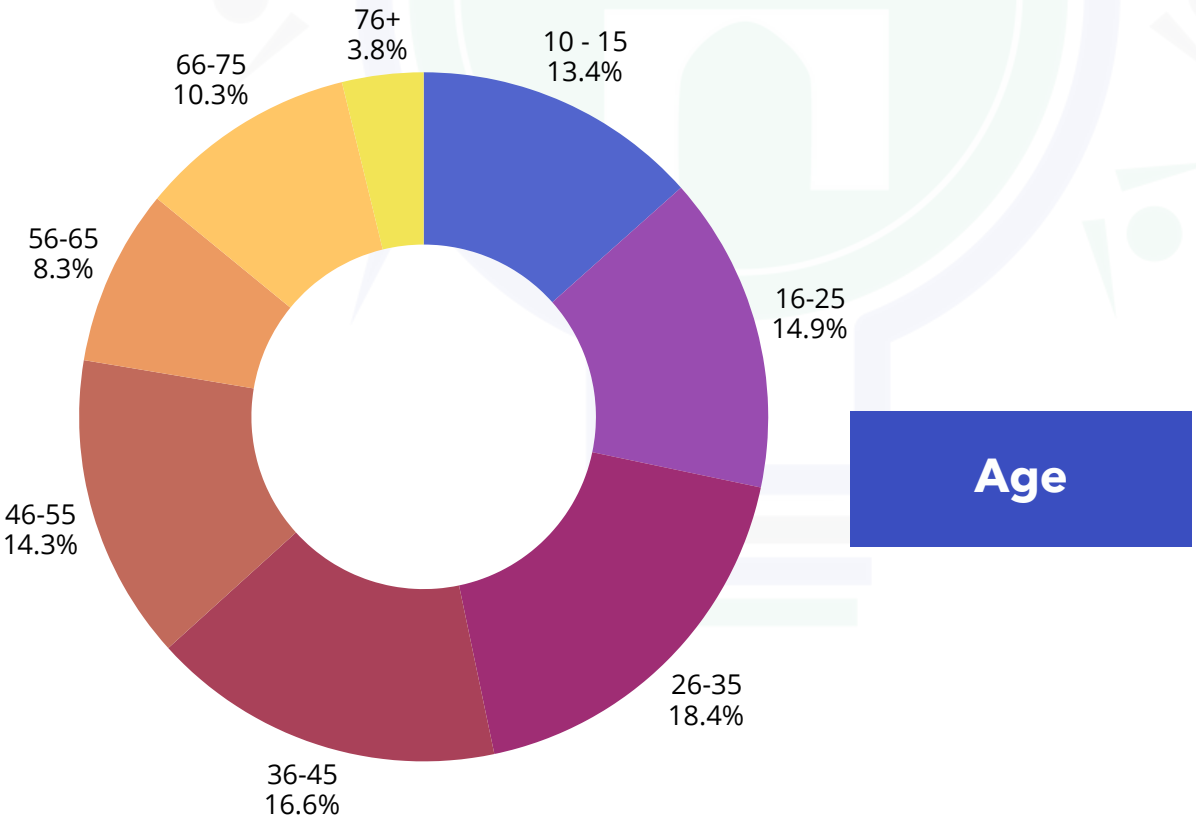
Demographics of our Participants

For the 2025 project cycle, we collected 804 votes from Hartford residents.

Race & Ethnicity



Age

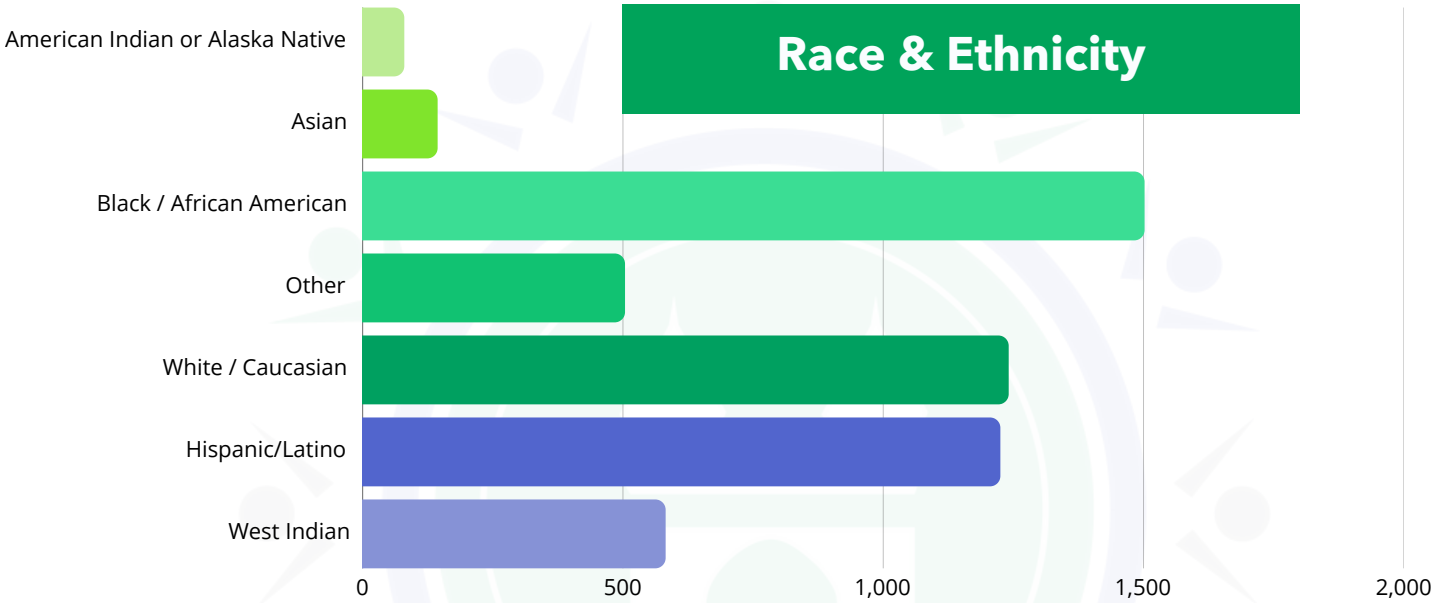


Ten Years of Voting

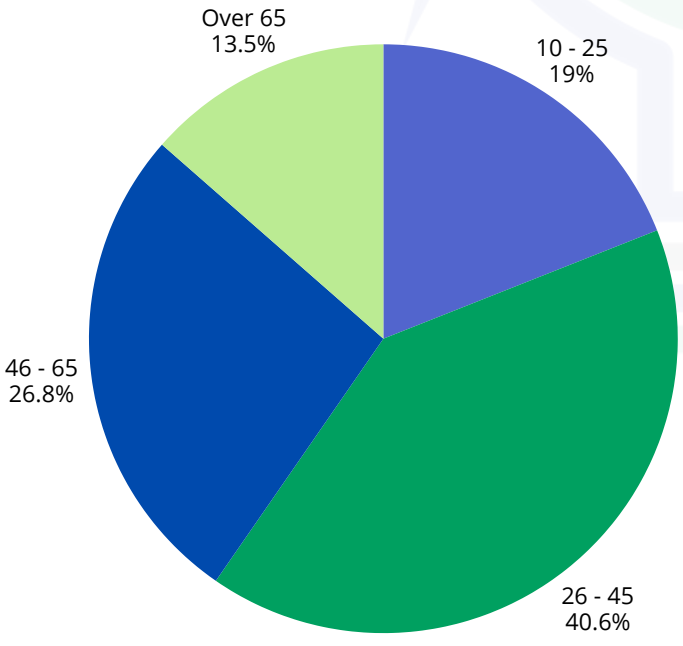
Demographics of our Participants

4,902 votes over ten years and eight project cycles!

Race & Ethnicity

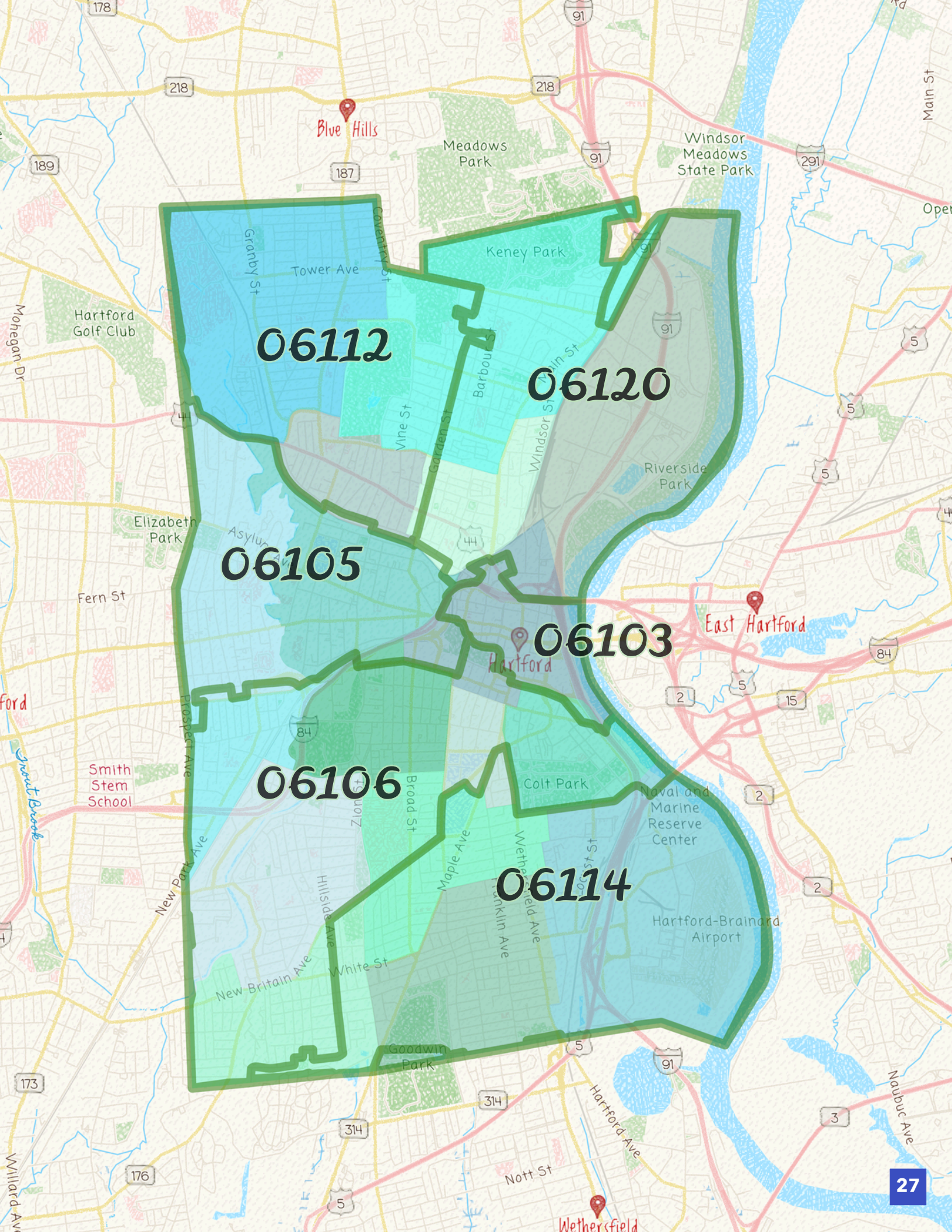


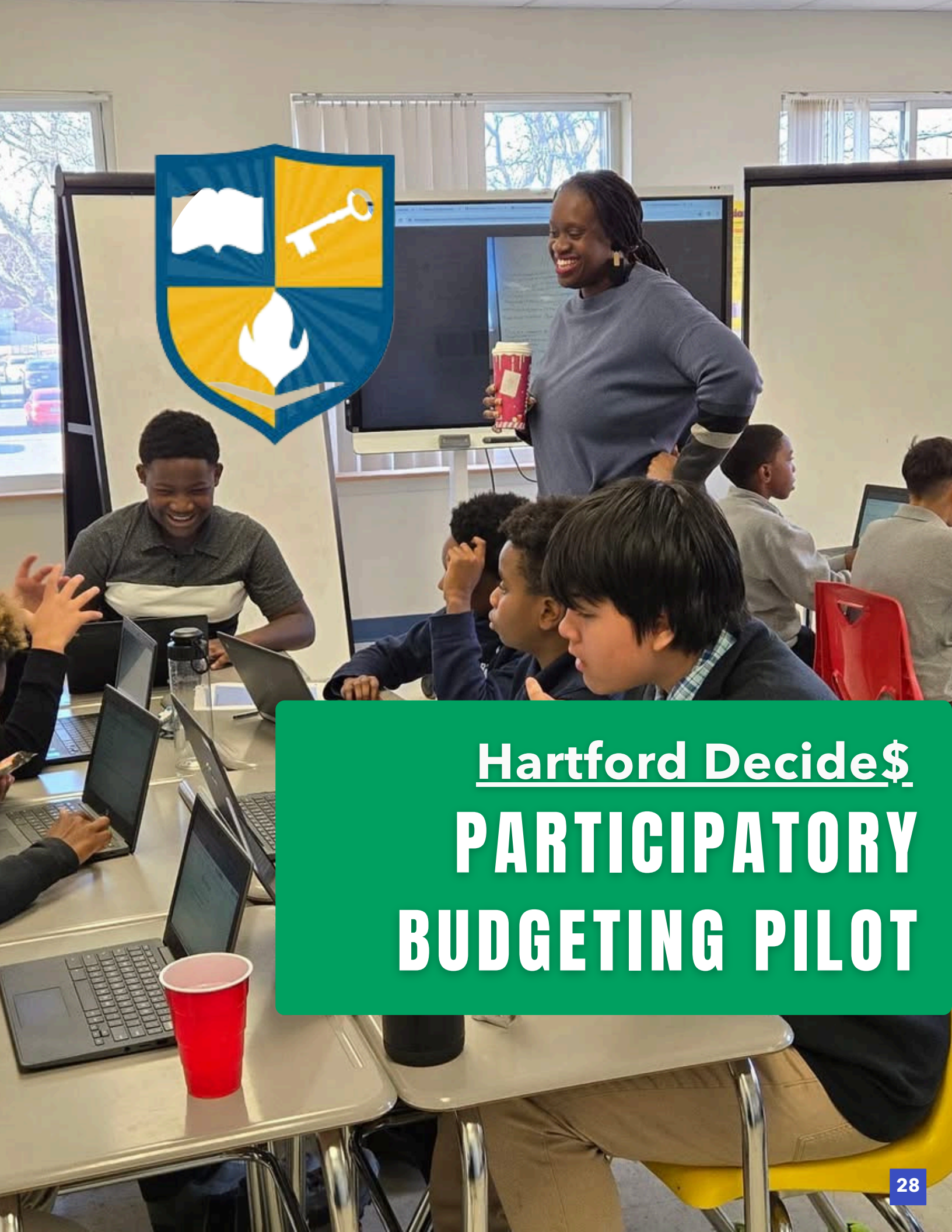
Age



Representation by Zip Code




06112
06120
06105
06103
06106
06114
Blue Hills
Meadows Park
Windsor Meadows State Park
Keney Park
Tower Ave
Granby St
Hartford Golf Club
Riverside Park
Elizabeth Park
Fern St
East Hartford
Hartford
Smith Stem School
Colt Park
Naval and Marine Reserve Center
Hartford-Brainard Airport
Goodwin Park
New Britain Ave
White St
Hillside Ave
Maple Ave
Broad St
Zion St
Prospect Ave
New Park Ave
Wethersfield Ave
Franklin Ave
Hartford Ave
Nott St
Wethersfield
Naubuc Ave
Main St
Vine St
Garden St
Barbour St
Windsor St
Mohegan Dr
Grant Brook
Willard Ave
Asylum Ave
Coventry St



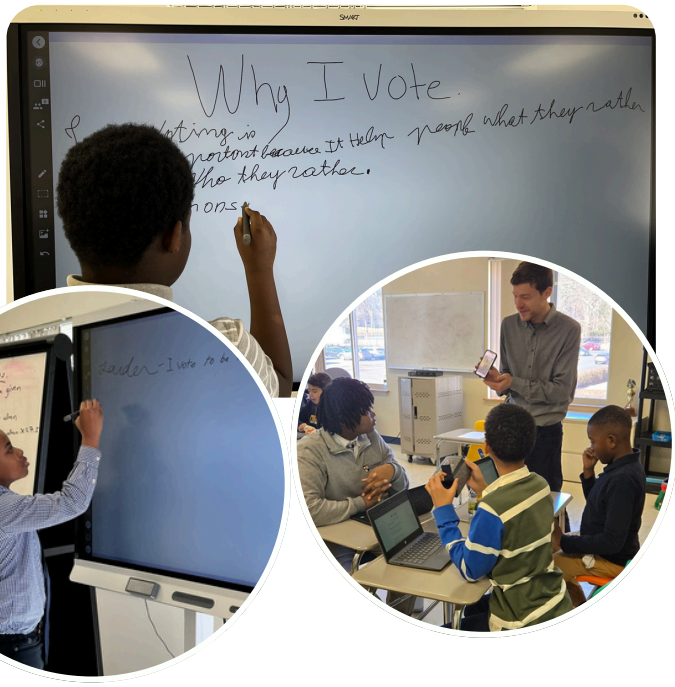
Hartford Decide$

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PILOT

COVENANT PREPARATORY SCHOOL

This cycle, we worked with the 6th grade class at **Covenant Prep** to teach them about the Hartford Decide$ process. This was a pilot program that we plan to bring to...

more Hartford classrooms!





Students articulated the reasons behind voting and explored the significance of cultivating their own sense of self, as this shapes their contribution to society. Their school is guided by the motto: "Inspiring Community Through Excellence in Character, Academics, and Service." This aligned perfectly with our goal of inspiring civic engagement early and cultivating future voters!

PROJECT ON THE BALLOT | 2025

Pet Food Pantry



Project	Location(s)	Description
"Stop the Smoke"	City-wide	The students noted how many sidewalks and streets are littered with cigarette butts, and proposed trash receptacles and signage specifically to encourage people to properly dispose of these.
Pet Food Pantries	Near Covenant Prep, Keney Park area	Little free pantries specific for pet products, to help those who may be in need of dog or cat food.
Public Graffiti Wall	A park	"So people can be creative and not get in trouble for it." We explored both phsyical and digital art wall options. The goal would be to encourage creative expression and community. Art would be temporary and monitored to prevent/address anything inappropriate.



We encourage multiple levels of civic engagement:

learning about the power of voting and democracy, and also learning about how our City systems work; how our tax dollars become infrastructure and public goods. We explored how our ideas can help our community as a whole!



Conversation with a Project Champion

Multigenerational Sensory Equipment in Parks:



Nicole Holmes is a Hartford resident and mother. Her project idea was inspired by her daughter and observing how public spaces can best serve her family's experiences.



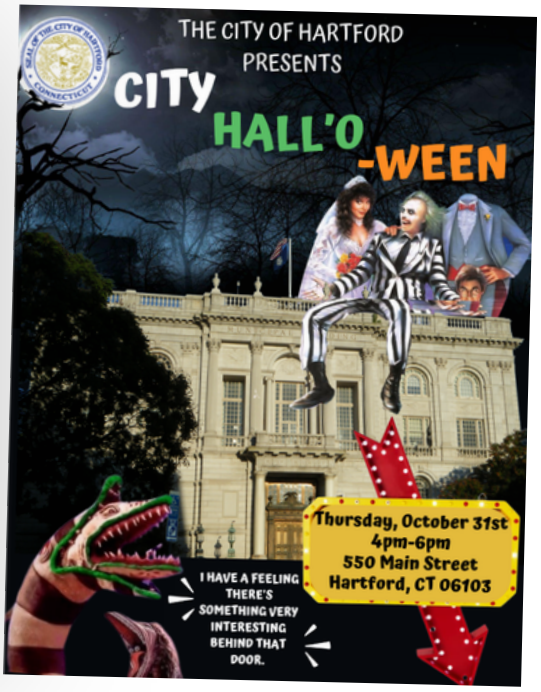
Parks and playgrounds are great multigenerational places already, serving as one of few remaining places where people can meet, enjoy themselves, and not worry about spending money. However, some public spaces can be overwhelming. Nicole's child is neurodivergent and has mobility challenges which means she has to be thoughtful and strategic when she plans her family outings. She's found that playgrounds like Jonathan's Dream, an inclusive, accessible play space for families and children of all abilities, located in West Hartford, has been designed to meet these needs. However, inclusive and accessible design can and should be brought to all of our parks. As a Hartford resident, it is important to her for not only her family, but others who may not be able to drive somewhere else to have more sensory-friendly and mobility-conscious playground options right in their own neighborhood parks.

Her original idea was for a Sensory Path or Garden, which engages all five senses, and was accessible for those whether they were walking, sitting, or in a wheelchair.

The final project proposal evolved to identify specific types of equipment that can be installed to enhance our playgrounds. We hope this idea inspires city, nonprofit, and even private organizations to think about how to incorporate sensory gardens and equipment and accessible pathways into their future spatial planning.

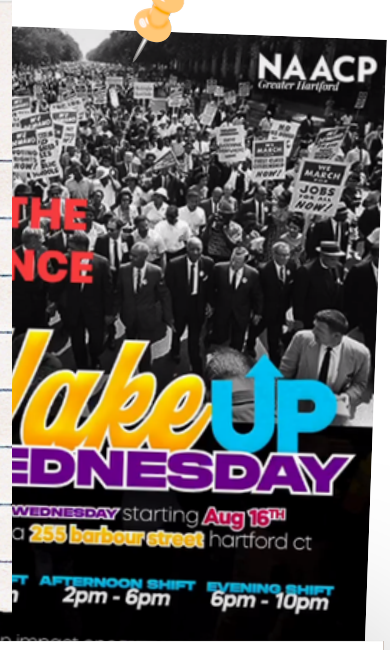
Community Partnerships

















We are enthusiastic about collaborating with the City and other nonprofits throughout Hartford to collectively advance our mission of **democracy through participatory budgeting!** We also cherish the opportunities to engage with all community members, to talk about how their ideas can make an impact, their neighbors' developed projects, and the importance of their votes.

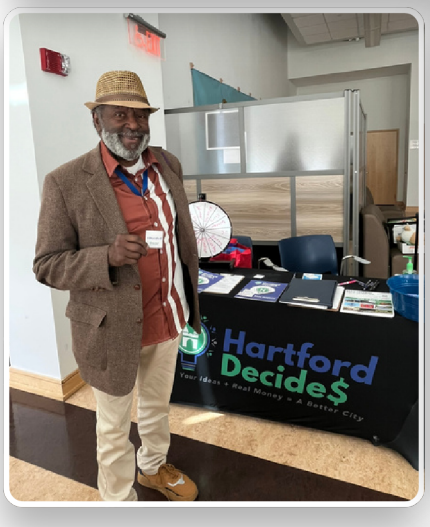


























What's Improved in 2025

Tracking Progress:

Building Better Results

Tracking Challenges:

Building Better Understanding

Tracking Progress

Building Better Results

After a project wins, it becomes the responsibility of relevant City and State departments to make them come to life. These include the Department of Public Works, Schools, and Library branches. Some projects also involve the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

To help ensure progress and check in on implementation to report back to residents and project champions, the Hartford Decide$ team has worked hard to deepen our lines of communication with city officials.

This includes setting up monthly check in meetings with the CIP (Capital Improvement Project) team.

Implementation happens on different timelines for a variety of reasons.

Of the 10 unfinished projects totaling $346,000, 8 are expected to be completed by June 30, 2026—leaving just $52,000 in remaining work. A major celebration for the completion of the Wallace Stevens Bridge project is also planned for late spring or early summer.

Here are winning projects that are still in progress:

Hartford Decide$ Unfinshed Projects

Years	Project names	Percent Complete
2020	Urban Thinkscapes	
2021	Wallace Stevens Bridge Repair	
2022	Hydroponic Garden	
2022	Solar Digital Chargers in Parks	
2022	Solar Digital Chargers in Parks	
2022	Solar Digital Chargers in Parks	
2022	Solar Digital Chargers in Parks	
2022	Solar Digital Chargers in Parks	
2023	Basketball Court Revitalization	
2023	Soccer Field Improvements	
2024	Bus Stop Benches	
2024	Safe Lighted Crosswalk	
2025	Sidewalk Repairs	
2025	Fruit Trees in Parks	

Tracking Challenges

Building Better Understanding

The Biggest Challenge We Hear From Residents:

Street and Sidewalk Repair

More than anything else, residents consistently call for safer streets and sidewalks. It's an issue that impacts daily life—whether navigating potholes while driving, crossing uneven streets, or ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities and wheelchair users. Across the board, street and sidewalk improvements stand out as a top priority for capital investments.



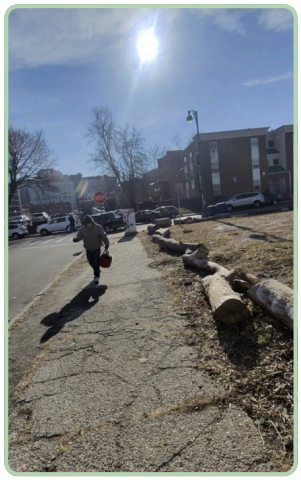
Winning Project: Sidewalk Repairs

This project was one of the top priorities chosen by residents across every demographic including children 10 years and up.

We greatly appreciate the dedication and hard work of the **Department of Public Works** in maintaining our community. Your efforts make a significant difference in our everyday lives, and we are truly grateful.

The Challenge

- Hartford's streets and sidewalks were built over many decades, with different materials and standards.
- New England weather, heavy use, and aging underground infrastructure cause ongoing damage.
- Coordinating with multiple departments and underground utility work can slow things down, as seen with the Wallace Stevens Bridge Project Winner.
- Balancing urgent repairs with long-term planning and available funding.



The Cost

Repairing and replacing sidewalks and streets is a major investment.

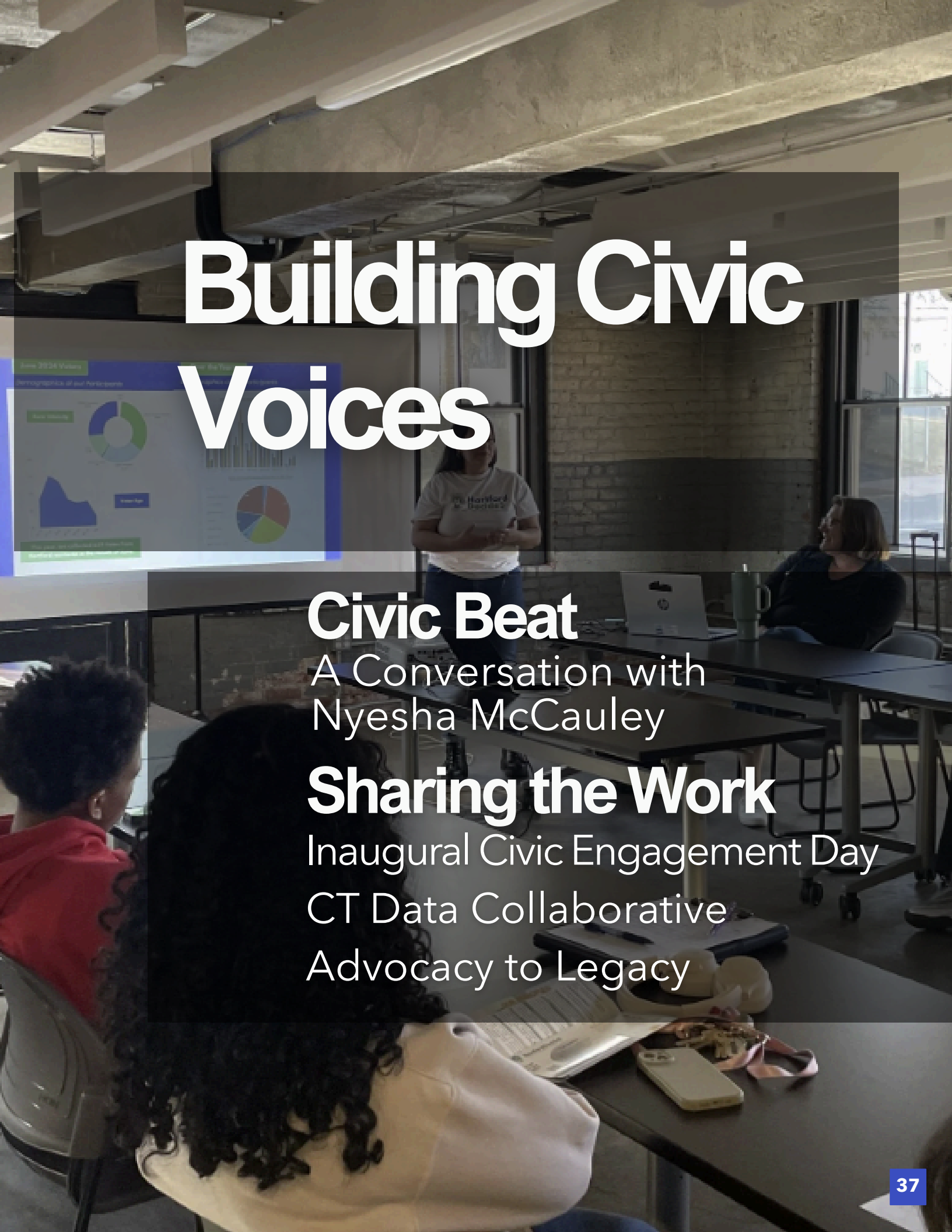
Estimated Cost to Complete Sidewalk Repairs

One City Block = **$54,250**

Estimated Cost to Complete Street Repairs

$500,000 to $1.5 million per mile





Building Civic Voices

Civic Beat
A Conversation with
Nyesha McCauley

Sharing the Work
Inaugural Civic Engagement Day
CT Data Collaborative
Advocacy to Legacy

CIVIC BEAT with Nyesha McCauley



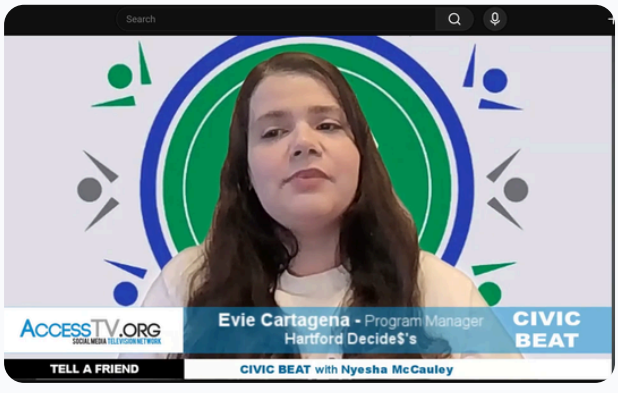
**On April 8, 2025, Hartford Decide$** Program Manager Evie Cartagena and Board President Zoe Chatfield had the privilege of joining Nyesha McCauley on AccessTV.org to discuss Hartford Decide$ and the impact of participatory budgeting in the community.

The conversation highlighted how the process works, how participatory budgeting was introduced in Hartford, and the work underway at the time to encourage residents to get out and vote.

They were asked thoughtful questions about how community members are engaged in civic participation and the types of projects residents have proposed and selected for city implementation. Topics included both completed initiatives and projects currently moving forward through the participatory budgeting process. Overall, it was a valuable opportunity to raise awareness about participatory budgeting and showcase the importance of resident-led decision-making. Hartford Decide$ sincerely thanks Nyesha and J Stan McCauley for welcoming them onto the show and providing a platform to spotlight this work.

WATCH FULL CONVERSATION





April 8, 2025

AccessTV.org

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

- How participatory budgeting works
- Encouraging voter participation
- Hartford Decide$ GOTV
- Engaging the community
- Current projects and intiatives

Hartford Decide$
Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City

SPECIAL THANKS

Hartford Decide$ wants to thank Nyesha McCauley and J Stan McCauley for featuring this important civic and community work!

thank you!

YOUR VOTE. YOUR VOICE.

Inaugural Civic Engagement Day



Saturday, September 28

10am-3pm | Yard Goats Club, Dunkin' Park

Presented by: CT State Community College Capital, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, San Juan Center, Inc.

Planning Partners: The Village Where real change happens, Hartford Public Library, Greater Hartford Arts Council, Hartford Public Schools

On September 28th, **Hartford Decide$** had the privilege of tabling at Your Vote, Your Voice inaugural Civic Engagement Day held at the Yard Goat's Club. This free, family-friendly, nonpartisan event brought together community partners to educate residents on the power of voting, connect attendees with valuable community resources, and build confidence around civic participation.

The day featured brief educational and interactive discussions, voter registration resources, games, food, music, and prizes. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about a wide range of important topics, including voting access for individuals with disabilities, early voting, Project 2025, immigration and citizenship, felony disenfranchisement, what was on the Connecticut ballot, and ways to stay civically engaged beyond Election Day.



Hartford Decide$ was honored to participate in this impactful event and support efforts to empower residents through education, engagement, and community connection.

Hartford Yard Goats

CT data collaborative

Hartford Decide$
Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN ACTION

Youth Data Youth Votes Stronger Communities





Hartford Youth Data Fellows engaged directly with **Hartford Decide$** to learn how participatory budgeting allows residents to decide how public funds are allocated. Through this session, Fellows explored how community ideas are developed, refined, and ultimately funded based on resident voting.

This experience demonstrated how data can support community-driven decision-making by identifying needs, tracking priorities, and ensuring resources reflect what residents value most. It provided a real-world example of how civic engagement and data work together to create more transparent and equitable outcomes in Hartford.

Hartford Decide$ works to meet residents where they are, engaging diverse neighborhoods across the city to facilitate an inclusive and accessible democratic process.

ABOUT CT DATA COLLABORATIVE

CT Data Collaborative empowers communities by providing accessible data, training, and tools that help residents, organizations, and young people understand local issues and use data to drive informed decision-making

YOUTH CIVIC LEADERSHIP



We had the opportunity to participate in **Advocacy to Legacy,** a partnership focused on youth civic leadership, where we presented on participatory budgeting. Students ranging from freshmen to seniors engaged thoughtfully in the process, asking insightful questions about how participatory budgeting works and how community decisions are made. They were then able to cast votes on projects they would like to see implemented in their neighborhoods, giving them the chance to exercise their voice and experience civic engagement firsthand.

Advocacy to Legacy

Advocacy and Legacy, LLC was established in 1991 by Violette Haldane to empower her family and community in self-advocacy for personal change. The organization emphasizes education, health, financial literacy, and home ownership through workshops in community organizations, churches, & schools.

To learn more about Advocacy to Legacy, LLC please visit https://www.advocacytolegacy.org or scan the QR code.

Hartford Decide$

Your Ideas + Real Money = A Better City

WANT TO GET INVLOVED?

VOLUNTEER

- Help Get Out the Vote
- Outreach
- Events
- Social Media Management

PARTNER

- Collaborative Programming
- Partnering Events

JOIN THE BOARD

Hartford Decide$ is powered by a volunteer working board. That means we give our time and labor into the outcomes you see!

WE'RE LOOKING FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS WILLING TO DONATE THEIR TIME ON A MONTHLY BASIS.

REQUIREMENTS:
A STRONG BELIEF IN THE POWER OF PB!

GET IN CONTACT!

hartforddecidespb@gmail.com

KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO GET INVOLVED? SEND THEM OUR WAY!

@HARTFORDDECIDES

Got Ideas?

Got an exciting idea? Jot it down here so it's ready to submit for our next cycle!

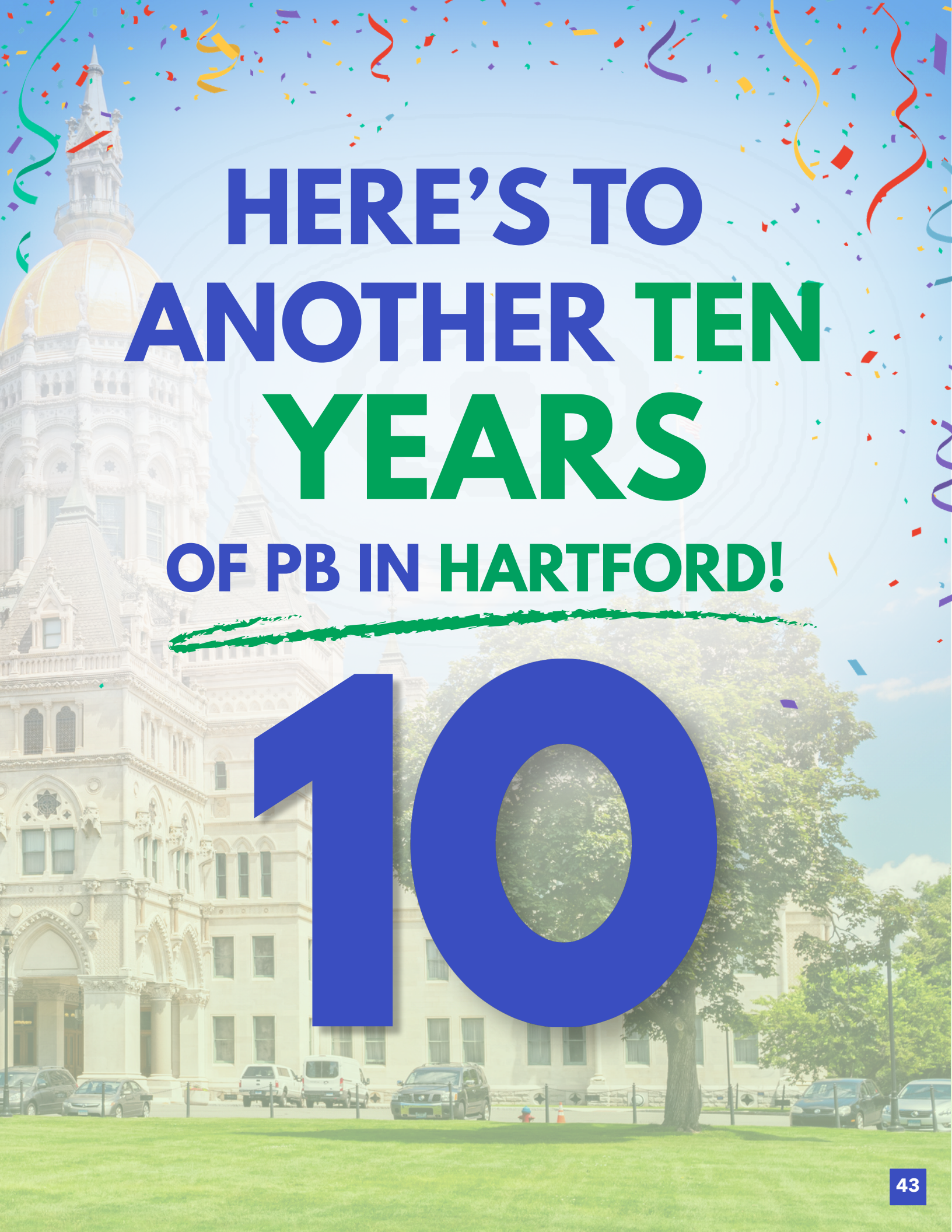
Follow us on Instagram and Facebook or visit our website to stay tuned.

Project Name/Idea: *(What's your idea? Give it a name or short description)*

What problem does it solve? *(Tell us how your idea helps the community)*

Who benefits from this idea?*(Is it for kids, seniors, everyone?)*

Do You have a location in mind?


HERE'S TO
ANOTHER TEN
YEARS
OF PB IN HARTFORD!
10

LET'S SHAPE HARTFORD TOGETHER!

Got Ideas?

www.hartforddecides.org

Hartford Decide$

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hartforddecidespb@gmail.com