



Hermosillo's participatory budgeting

Best practice case study: CRECES



Legal Framework for Citizen Participation in Hermosillo

Hermosillo's "Citizen Participation Law" (CPL) establishes the basis for citizen involvement in the local government's decision-making process. It derives from the "State Law of Citizen Participation" and observes 18 basic principles, among them: Democracy, Human Rights, Co-responsibility, Transparency, and accountability. The CPL contains **4 mechanisms** that derive in several actions of citizen participation: **1) Citizen co-responsibility, 2) Interactive democracy, 3) Accountability, and 4) Direct democracy.**

What is Participatory Budgeting?



Participatory budgeting is a form of citizen participation in which community members decide how to allocate a portion of a public budget. The first large-scale experience was implemented in 1989 in Porto Alegre (Brazil), strengthening governance and social inclusion by involving people typically left outside of the decision-making process. By the end of the 1990s the use of participatory budgeting had expanded throughout the world, mostly in municipalities and provincial governments.

Citizen co-responsibility

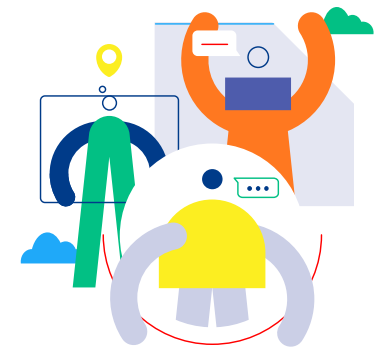
1. To facilitate the collaboration of citizens with government entities for the exercise of public actions and programmes:
2. Local Development Agencies, and
3. The citizen participation committees.

Interactive democracy & accountability

1. Establish the ways citizens dialogue and question public servants about their performance.
2. Open town hall.

Direct democracy

1. Direct democracy is understood as mechanisms for "free, direct, non-transferable and secret voting"
2. The neighbourhood consultation
3. The participatory budget (at Hermosillo comprised in the programme "**PRESUPUESTO CRECES**").



CRECES Participatory Budgeting

CRECES is Hermosillo Municipality's flagship programme. It is a transversal strategy to undertake citizen engagement actions, and improve the management of public services through "quick wins" by promoting direct attention to citizens' needs through the "CRECES committees" and "Citizen Wednesdays" (i.e. townhall meetings).

CRECES is strengthened by satellite programmes such as public works executed through participatory budgeting. The implementation of **participatory budgeting** began in 2022 in Hermosillo and is known as **Presupuesto Creces programme**

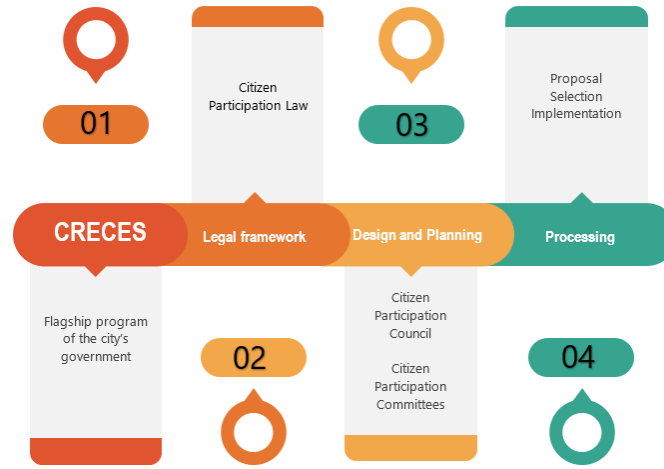
Presupuesto CRECES

Participatory budgeting facilitates the election and prioritization of public works and programmes. The establishment of two institutions was required prior to implementation:

1. Citizen Participation Council: The body that coordinates municipal citizen participation actions and programmes.

2. Citizen Participation Committees: publicly recognized "neighbourhood boards" required to carry out the citizen participation actions, especially those of "direct democracy". Its members are nominated and elected through a voting process coordinated by the Citizen Participation Council. Currently there are **350 CRECES committees**, which fall in three groups depending on the number and characteristics of their members:

- **Neighbourhood** represents large neighbourhoods
- **Communitarian** represents a group of neighbourhoods within the same area.
- **Cause-driven** represents the interests of a group of people that might not live in the same area but are linked by a common cause; for example, bike users, pet-lovers and ecologists, etc., that require the intervention of public space in benefit of the city inhabitants.



Implementation of Participatory Budgeting

PROPOSAL

The gathering of proposals is conducted mainly via CRECES Committees. The proposals are qualified by the Citizen Participation Council, considering economic & technical viability, legal feasibility, and relevance for a public space improvement. Hermosillo categorized the proposals in **four groups**:

- 1 Community Development:** Interventions for public space development and regeneration.
- 2 Road Safety:** Safer streets for pedestrians and drivers.
- 3 Human Development:** Training workshops: Education, sports, culture, and upskilling, etc.
- 4 Sustainable Hermosillo:** Public work for cleaner, environment-friendly communities.

SELECTION

Validation and prioritization take place through the Neighbourhood Consultation process; within the framework of the participatory budget, the citizen consultation results in the gathering and selection of proposals for public works in Hermosillo. The consultation is organized primarily via CRECES Committees, which include:

- 1** Creation of a catalogue of proposals and budgets.
Training workshops on participatory budgeting.
- 2** Dissemination and validation of proposals with citizens (consultation and voting). The consultation is not binding for the authority, as the elected public works are subject to the capabilities and attributions of the local government.

*Voting was open for one day in each sector or district. In 2022, there was **24,506 participants**.*

IMPLEMENTATION

Scheduling and execution of the budget per project (ongoing) is overseen by the Citizenship Participation Council. Once the funds are assigned, the projects must be executed within the fiscal year of release. To ensure that the proposals are executed in alignment with the original idea, the government contacts the authors of the proposals before starting the public works. The proposals are qualified by the Citizen Participation Council, and processed to comply with 4 criteria:

- 1** Economic viability
- 2** Technical viability
- 3** Legal feasibility
- 4** Validation of proposals by the community for public space improvement

Results

Participatory budgeting in 2022 allocated \$2 million USD (1.82 million EUR) through Presupuesto CRECES:

- More than 400 proposals received and 24,506 votes registered.
- 65% of budget allocated to 61 small-scale projects in 61 zones.
- 35% allocated to 6 large-scale projects, divided by sectors or districts of the city. Each of these key projects are allocated 120,000 euros each.
- Most of the winning proposals were mainly focused on community development, road safety, and improvements of public spaces.

The citizens that worked on the "Colorful Kino" project took the initiative of advertising it and promoting it by their own.



Neighbourhood consultations.



Hermosillo's Mayor with Creces Committee



Examples of Selected Projects

Kino Mucho Color: a complete reconstruction of the local pier in Kino Bay, making it attractive for tourists in the area. It includes mural paintings, infrastructure improvements and public security.

Puerta Real Park Renovations: detailed proposal of renovations based on needed improvements: games for children, sidewalks, watering systems.

Park refurbishment for pets: designation of new dedicated spaces for pets and their owners. Requested by several neighbours.

Somos Real del Carmen, no Real del Crimen: cultural workshops and sports lessons to decrease the probability of violence in their neighbourhood

Green lung and pollinator garden in public cemetery: proposed by an environmental action group. Promoted re-use of public cemetery as new public space, with gardens incorporating native species.



Lessons Learned & Recommendations

- 1 The creation of a catalogue facilitates the dissemination of proposals.
- 2 Citizen must participate through the whole validation process, providing feedback to proposed projects. The creation of committees facilitates the process.
- 3 Voting is the hardest part: both in person and digital tools must be incorporated. Opening enough centres in rural or disperse communities was a challenge.
- 4 Implementation of selected projects must be completed (or in process of being completed) before opening a new participatory budgeting process. A rate of at least 70% completion should be the goal.
- 5 There is room for improving the formula behind the public budget distribution. The last edition's formula was based largely on the population and the rate of local property tax payment (45% and 40%, respectively) while the number of committees in the community weighted 15%. The latter is used to promote citizen participation and neighbourhood committees.
- 6 Geographical delimitation of the neighbourhoods and communities must be constantly updated as demographics change.