

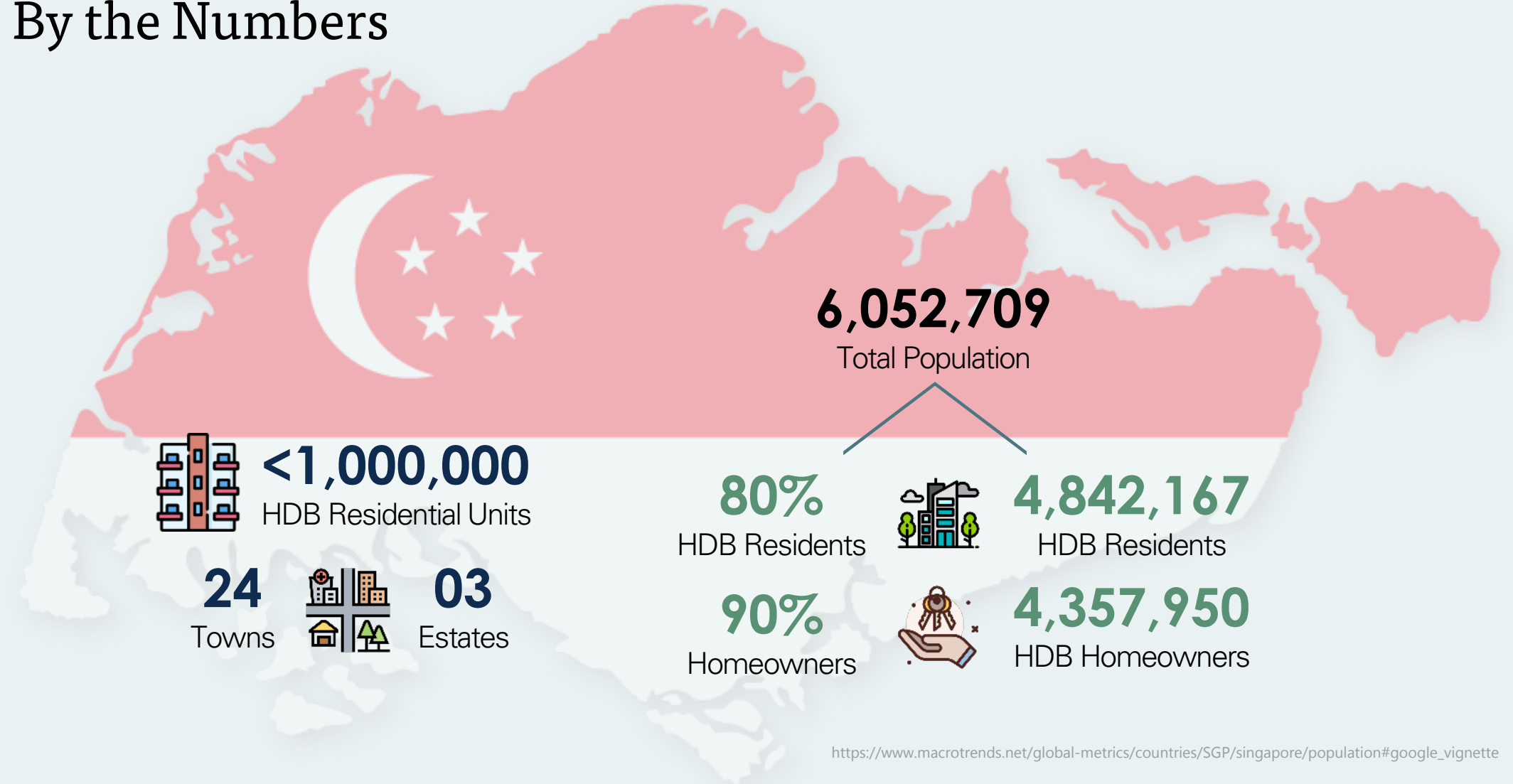
Participatory Budgeting at a Town Council

A Comprehensive Evaluation Framework
for Effective Community Engagement

Agenda

- Public Residential Estates in Singapore
- Town Councils in Singapore
- Residents Engagement
- Innovation Implementation in TCs
- Participatory Budgeting (PB)
- Evidence-based PB Conceptual Framework

Public Housing in Singapore: By the Numbers





Town Councils in Singapore

Town Council Act (Chapter 329A)

An Act to provide for the incorporation of Town Councils to **control, manage, maintain and improve** the common property of housing estates of the Housing and Development Board (HDB), their constitution, functions and for matters incidental thereto.

What Do Town Councils Do?



**Routine Repairs, Servicing
& Maintenance**



Town Improvement & Upgrading Works
(Provision of amenities such as covered walkways, playgrounds)



Cleaning services
for the common areas

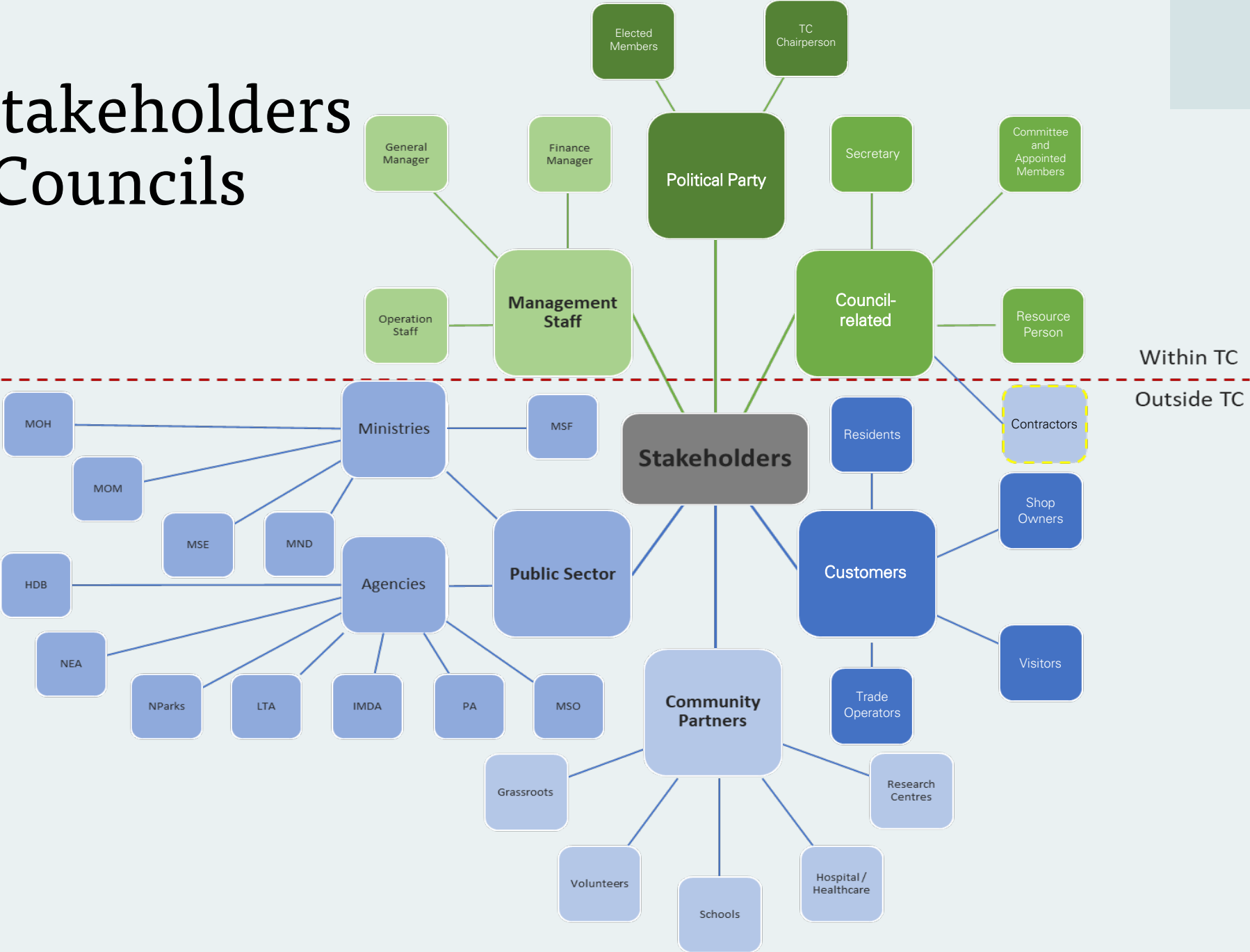


Horticultural landscaping
(e.g., grass cutting, tree pruning, etc.)

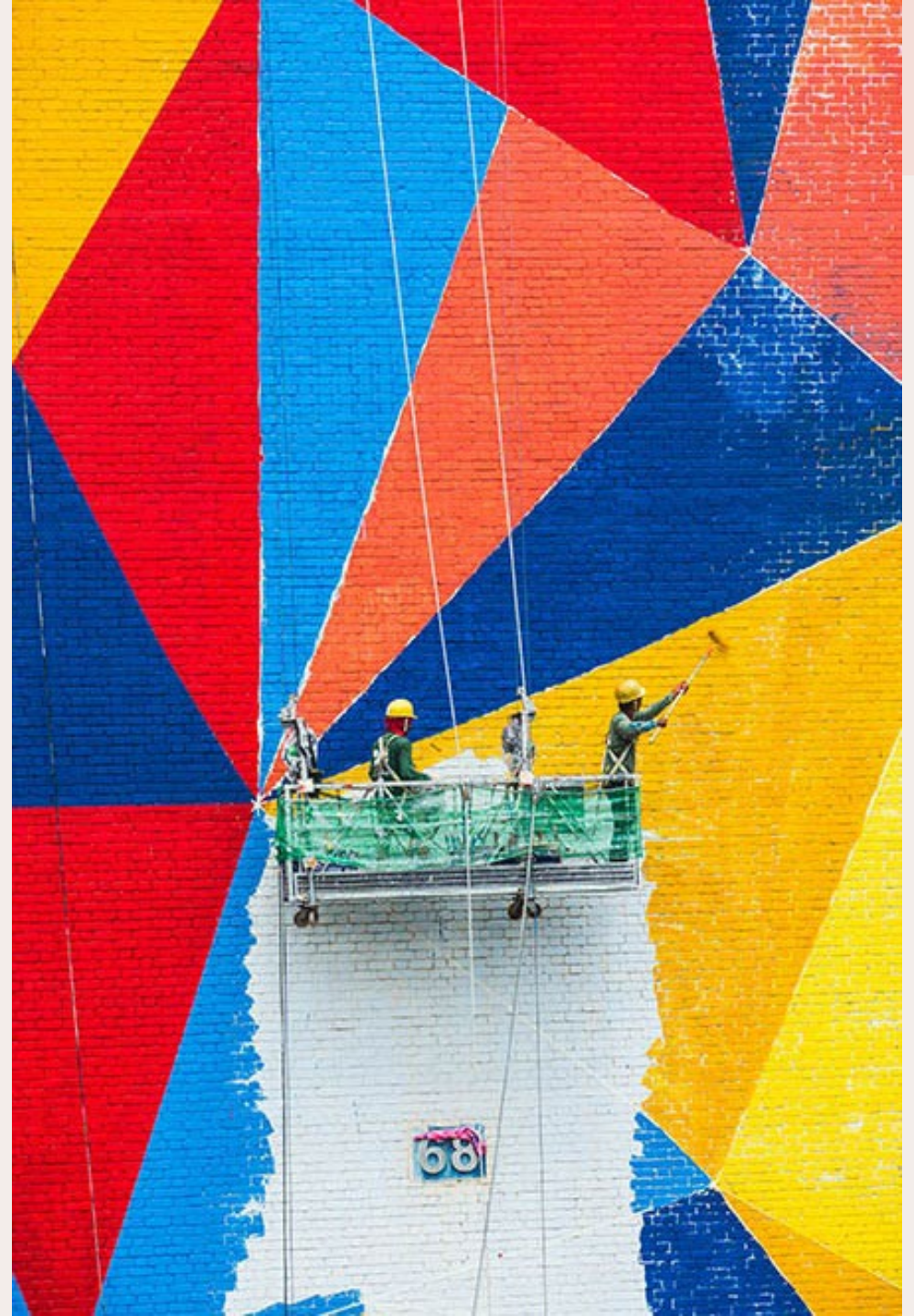


Cyclical Maintenance Works
(e.g., Repairs & Redecorations, Re-roofing,
Water tank replacements, etc.)

Typical Stakeholders of Town Councils



Resident Engagement

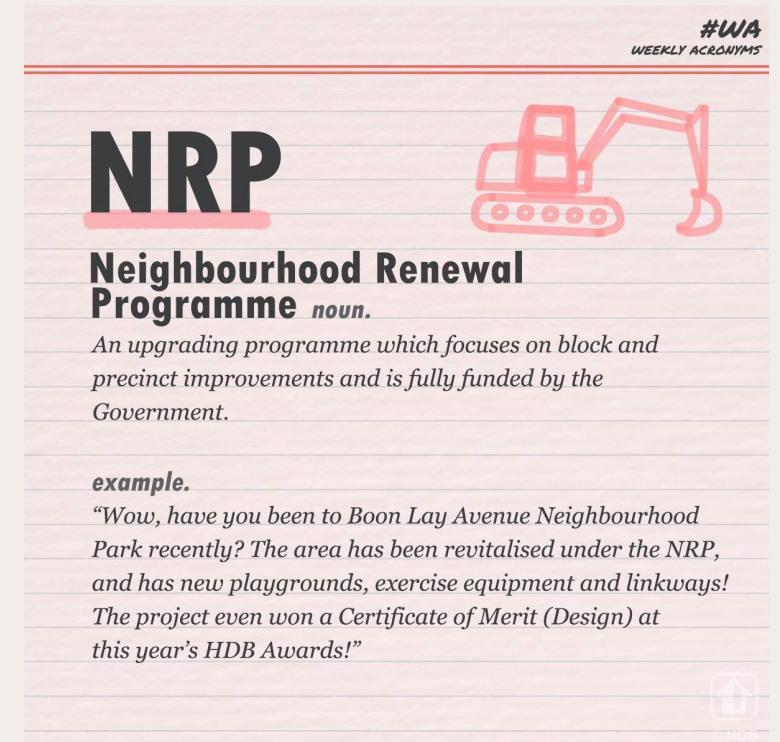


Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP)

- Excerpt from HDB:
“The NRP was introduced in August 2007 in response to residents' feedback during the Forum on HDB Heartware for more active consultation on the improvements to be provided in their precincts. This programme is **fully funded by the Government** and implemented by the Town Councils.

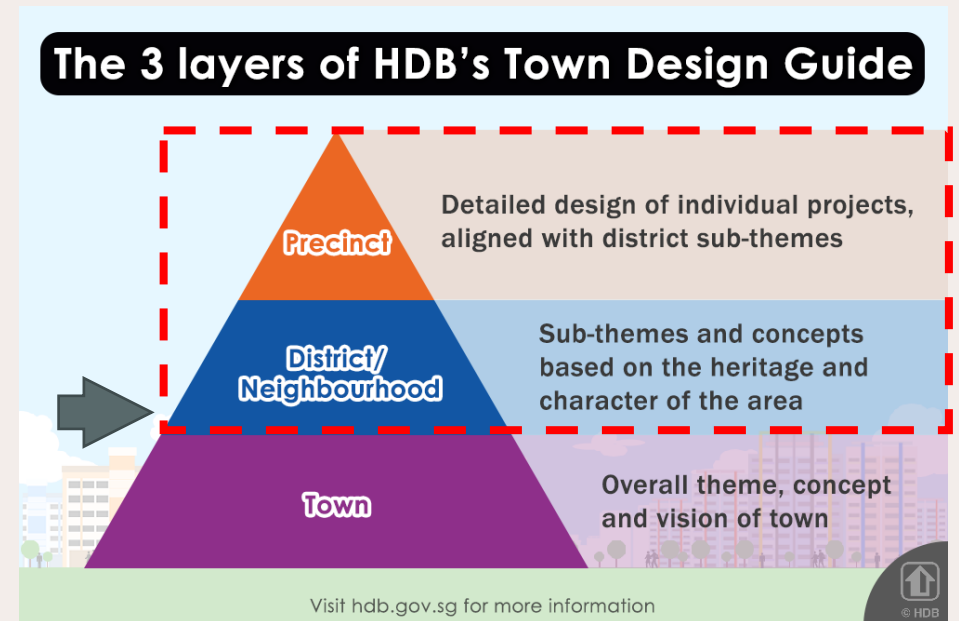
The NRP, which focuses on block and precinct improvements, replaces the Interim Upgrading Programme (IUP) Plus, and covers a larger area spanning 2 or more neighbouring precincts. Blocks **built up to 1995** that have not undergone the Main Upgrading Programme (MUP), IUP, or IUP Plus are eligible.”

- NRP targets older estates for upgrading works to enhance the estate and engage the residents on estate improvement and may include several precincts in a single NRP to improve coordination and alignment.



Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP)

- Common works under NRP may include:
 - Sheltered Linkway
 - Community Garden
 - Ramp/Staircase
 - Pavilion/Shelters
 - Multi-Purpose Hall
 - Game court/Hard court
 - Playground
 - Fitness corner
 - Residents' corner
 - Bench/Seating
 - Drop-off porch
 - Banner post/Precinct Marker
- **Over \$95 million** set aside to fund 23 upgrading projects in HDB neighbourhoods in 2024



Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP)

- Excerpt from HDB:

Public consultation

The Town Council implementing the NRP actively engages residents by seeking feedback on the **proposed improvements** for the neighbourhood through avenues such as **Town Hall Meetings, dialogue sessions, block parties, mini-exhibitions, and surveys.** Feedback is then considered and if feasible, incorporated into the design proposal for the Consensus Gathering Exercise.

The emphasis on **residents' active participation** helps realise aspirations for the neighbourhood.

Consensus gathering

The NRP will only proceed if **at least 75%** of the eligible flat owners in the neighbourhood indicate their support during the Consensus Gathering Exercise."

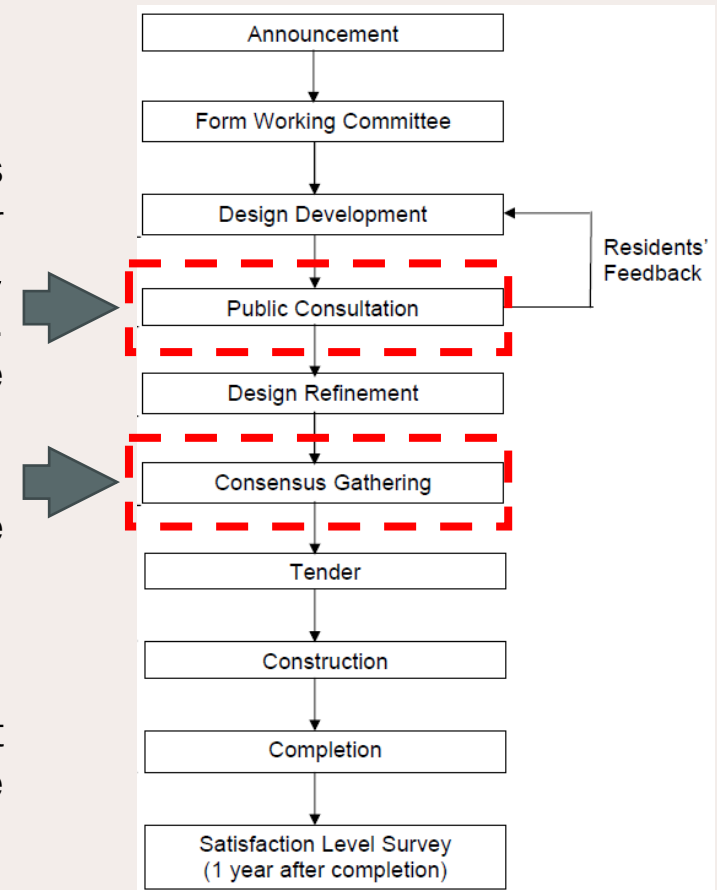


Figure from Handbook of Township Management: The Singapore Model, 2023



Residents Engagement in Public Housing Projects

- Current outreach focuses mainly on types of facilities/amenities, aesthetics and functionality
- May have limited resident influence on major decisions, especially how the budget is utilised
- Engagement typically occurs after design proposals are made, resulting in limited community impact.

Innovation Implementation in Town Councils

Framework for Innovation
Implementation in Municipalities for
the Neighbourhoods' Built Environment:
A Singapore Outlook

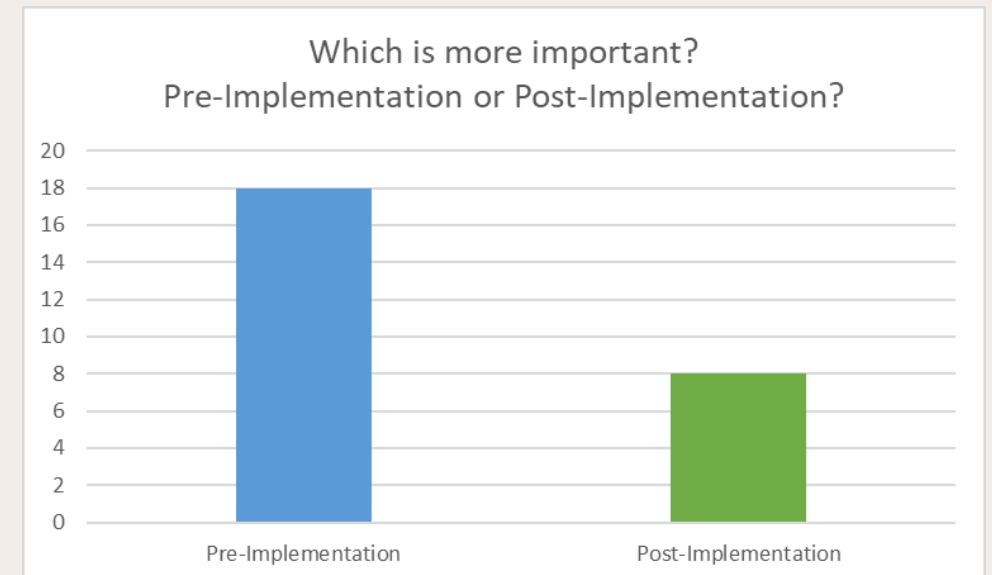
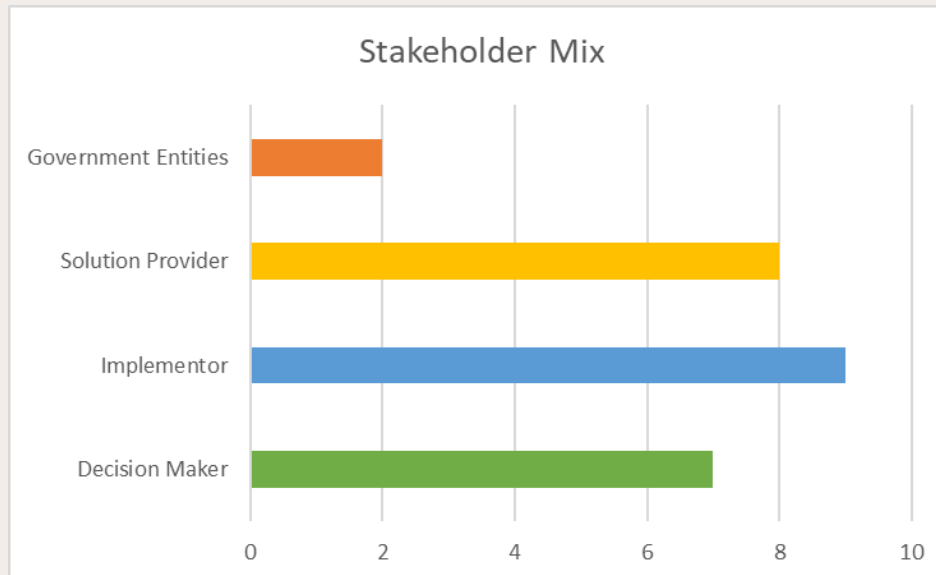
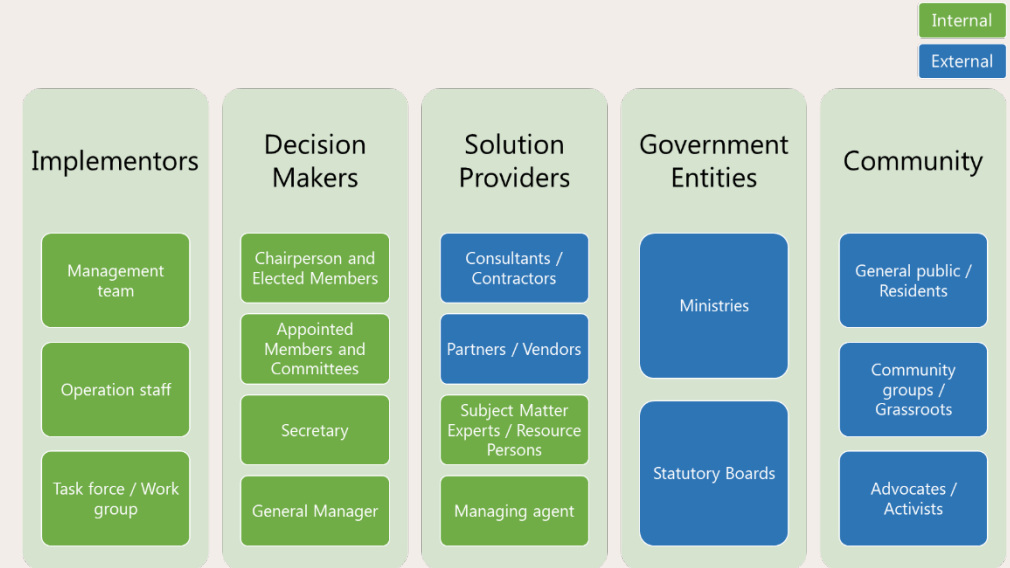
Research Hypothesis

If an innovation implementation framework exists, then Town Councils can better assess innovations, obtain stakeholders' consensus, and manage the innovations throughout the life cycle



Initial Interview

1. A mix of experts were engaged in this first round of interview. 26 experts, varying in position from managers within the TCs to appointed and elected members, and various other stakeholders provided their insights.
2. The stakeholder mix segregated into their broad categories
3. Questions are kept open-ended to encourage elaboration from the experts with the aim to understand how the experts idealise an innovative city or neighbourhood
4. Frequency of keywords relevant to the topic were accessed, with the list of keywords expanding if there were multiple instances where the keyword or equivalent was highlighted by multiple experts.



Initial Interview Findings

Frequency of keywords across interviews

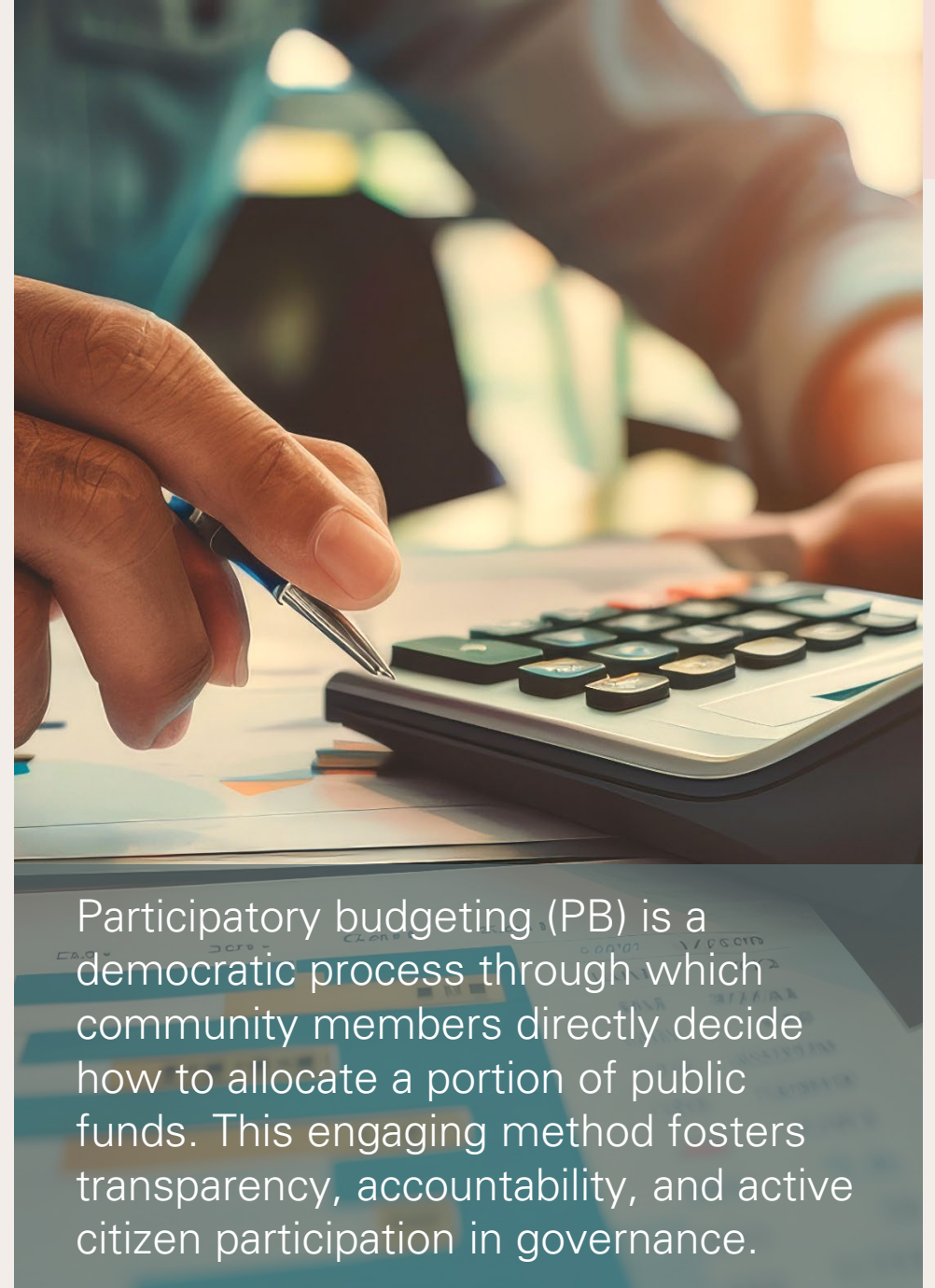


1. Resident involvement (23)
2. Communication/Education (20)
3. Tangible benefits for stakeholders (16)
4. Stakeholder engagement (20)
5. National effort (5)
6. Funding/Cost (21)
7. Social impact (23)
8. Environmental benefits (16)
9. Community champion/touchpoint (7)
10. Transparency (8)
11. Accountability (8)
12. Placemaking (7)
13. Wide demographic (15)
14. Visibility (10)
15. Direction from decision maker (10)
16. Feedback (13)
17. Non-monetary support from government (13)
18. Novelty (8)
19. Maintainability/Longevity (9)
20. Risks (5)

Participatory Budgeting

Introduction to Participatory Budgeting (PB)

17

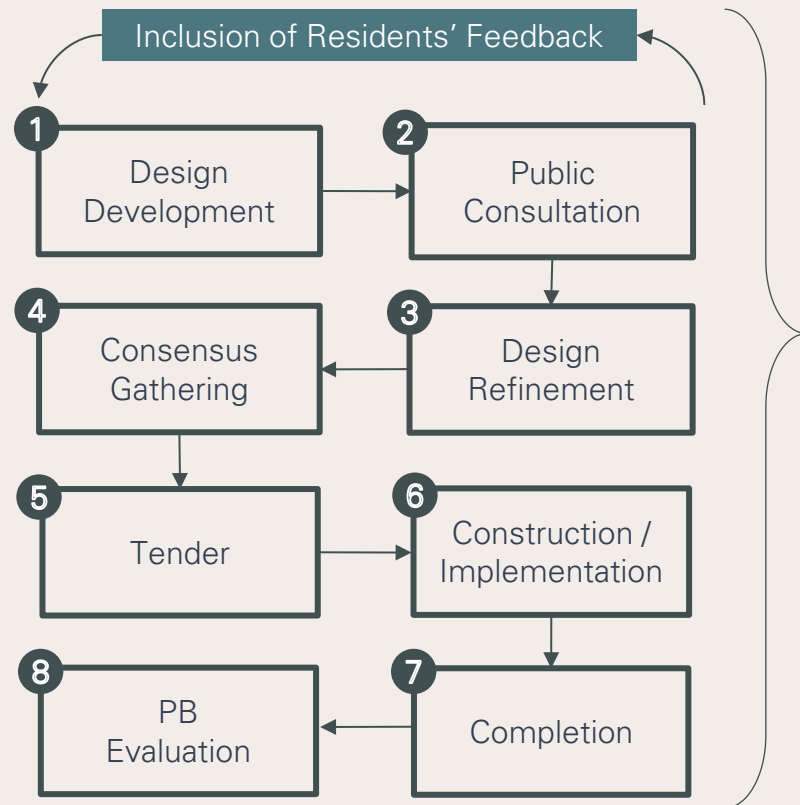


Participatory budgeting (PB) is a democratic process through which community members directly decide how to allocate a portion of public funds. This engaging method fosters transparency, accountability, and active citizen participation in governance.

What is it, and Why do it?

Current Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP)

Limited delegation of power & transactional relationship



A process where ordinary citizens come together to decide how to spend a given amount of public funds

Participatory Budgeting (PB)

Empowers residents through inclusion and capacity-building in processes such as:

Priority Identification |
Deliberation & Negotiation |
Proposal Development |
Budget Allocation | Voting

Bringing Positive Outcomes / Impacts

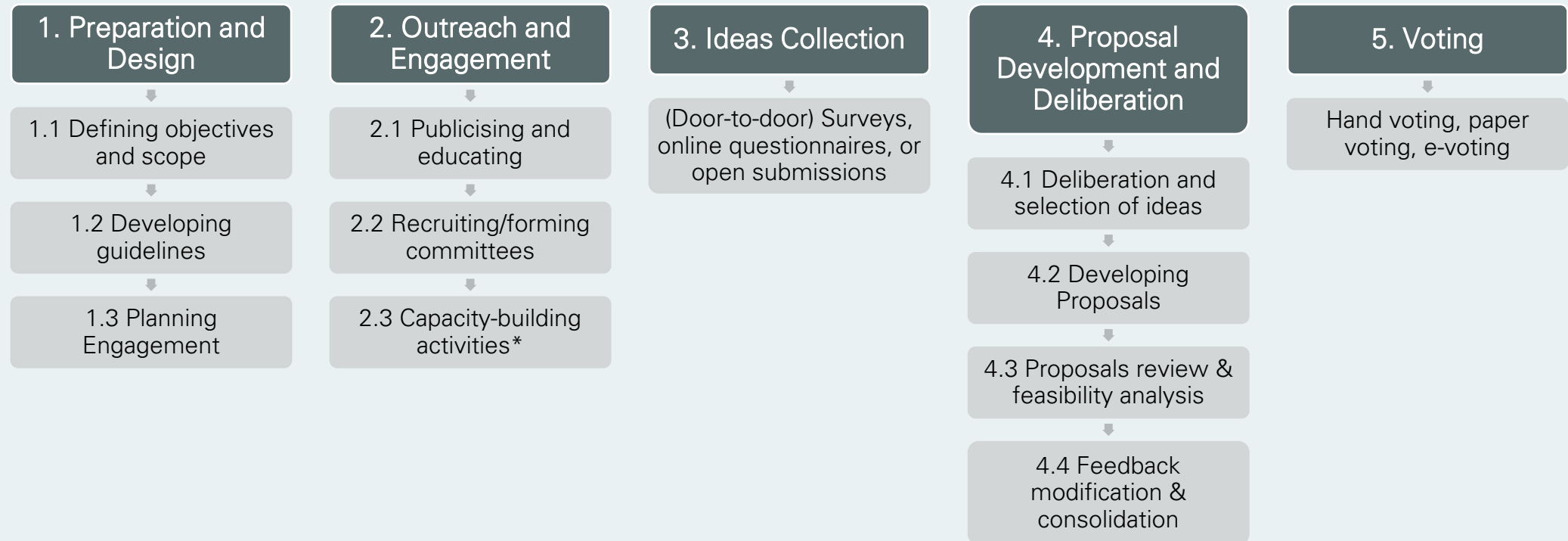
Residents

Town Council

Larger Community

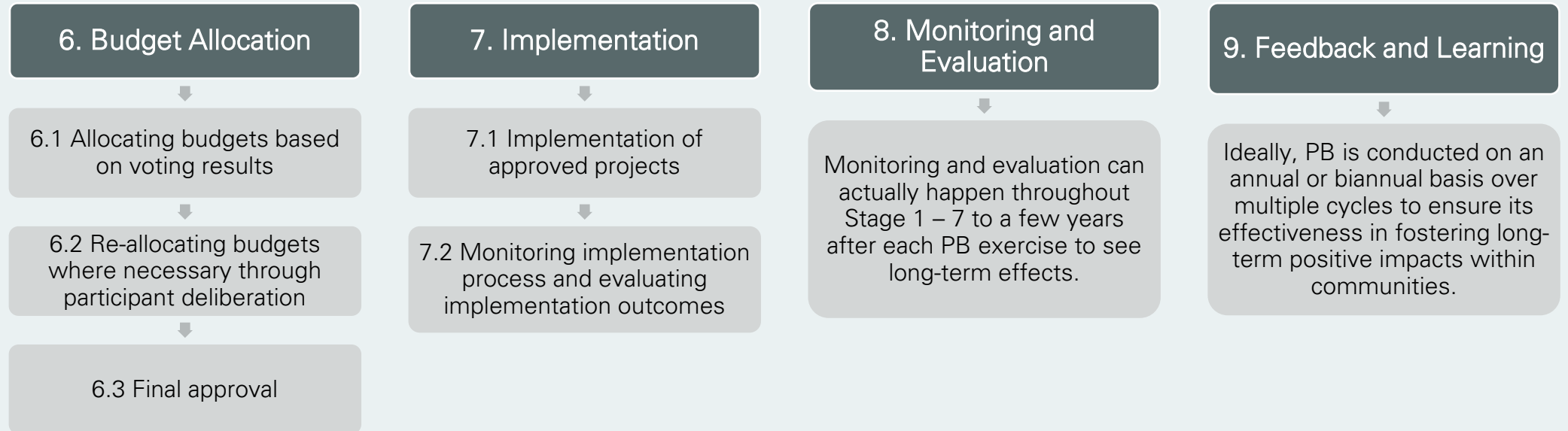
Evidence-based PB Conceptual Framework

PB Cycle and Stages



* Capacity-building activities should target not only ordinary citizens but also officials, facilitators, and other relevant stakeholders. This will ensure that all parties involved in the PB process have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute effectively to each stage of the PB cycle.

PB Cycle and Stages



Expected Outcomes

- **Community Outcomes:**
 - Increased understanding of budget
 - Strengthened **community bonds**
 - **Empowered residents** initiating projects
- **Town Council Outcomes:**
 - Better **resource allocation** based on public needs
 - Stronger **connections with residents**



Thank
you

Wee Keng Boon
General Manager
EM Services Pte Ltd

Participatory Budgeting at a Town Council

A Comprehensive Evaluation Framework
for Effective Community Engagement