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## **What if Public Funds Were Controlled by the Public?**

**Through the dry-sounding Participatory Budgeting Project, Shari Davis is pushing a quietly radical idea: Democracy shouldn't be confined to voting.**

Shari Davis has civic brokenness and systemic inequality on the brain. Also: Batman.

What if Gotham didn't solve its problems via masked vigilante? What if Bruce Wayne's fortune was redistributed among the community, and the community decided how to spend it? Davis, 34, has been offering such prompts to young people around the country. The questions are an avenue into a larger point these days: Our democracy needs not just repair but wholesale reimagining.

But where issues like voter suppression, gerrymandering and disinformation campaigns might occupy other reformers, Davis has built a career around a more humble target: the public budget, that joyless document that causes eyes to glaze over while quietly affecting our day-to-day lives at the deepest levels.

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**The New York Times**

By Chris Colin

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