2023 Public Banking Institute ANNUAL REPORT

First Bank of the United States

Philadelphia, PA
Founded 1795

First U.S. publicly-owned bank, formed by the nation's first Treasury Secretary, Alexander Hamilton, and credited with enabling the fledgling nation to escape bankruptcy and develop an independent productive economy.

PUBLIC BANKING INSTITUTE
Banking in the Public Interest

STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS

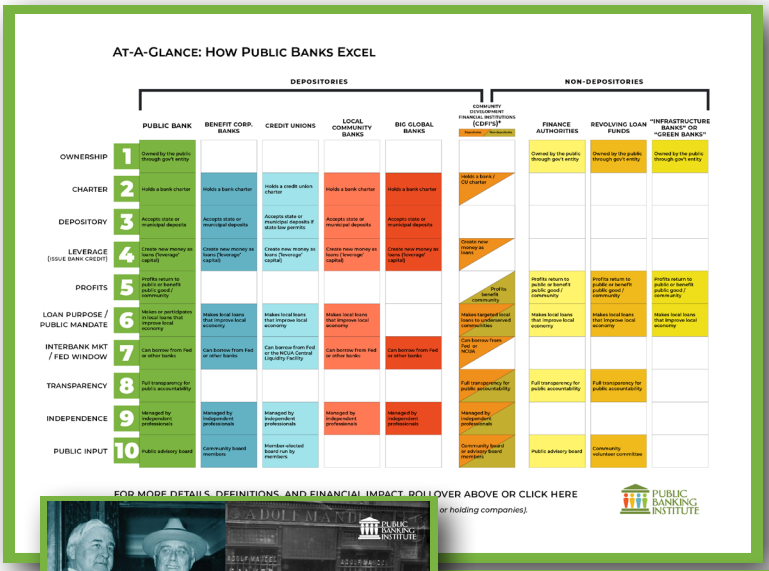
2023 has been a year of important advances for the public banking movement:

- Fully **76% of states** now have a local public banking group or a candidate with a public bank platform.
- A **dozen municipal and state legislative initiatives** were introduced and pursued in 2023.
- Public Bank East Bay in California **hired a CEO**, becoming the first new public banking effort in the nation to bring on a chief executive.
- **Formal business and governance plans** were approved and are being implemented in San Francisco.
- **Funding was approved** for a required viability study in Los Angeles and for writing the business plan of a potential public bank in Sacramento.
- Philly's Municipal Financial Authority, established in March 2022, (phase 1 for a chartered public bank), awaits new mayor Cherelle Parker to **seat its board**.
- New Jersey set aside **$20 million in seed money** for a state-run Social Impact Investment Fund, a revolving fund to work in partnership with existing financing authorities to advance its policy goals and also help lay the groundwork for the eventual establishment of a public bank.

These critical steps were the fruits of ever-evolving advocacy work over a dozen years. Each advance creates pathways for realizing our collective goal of establishing new public banks.

AT-A-GLANCE INFOGRAPHIC AND MORE

In its role as the national information hub for public banking, PBI works to develop high-caliber tools for advancing the movement. Our interactive **At-A-Glance Infographic** developed this year addressed a question lawmakers often ask: "Why do we need a public bank?" This heavily referenced infographic makes it easy to explain and compare the strong suite of capabilities that public banks possess and to demonstrate why public banks excel in improving local economies. It has received numerous accolades from advocates for its usefulness in their local campaigns.



Videos — PBI produced several short videos for the *It's Our Money* podcast series this year, completed scripts for forthcoming videos, and is expanding plans for video engagement in social media channels in 2024.

STRATEGY SHARING, PUBLIC EDUCATION

Newsletter — Our newsletter keeps advocates and supporters informed about public banking legislation and news and enjoys a high 40-50% open rate.

Monthly National Coalition Meetings — PBI hosts monthly virtual meetings for the general public to answer questions, hear from public banking experts, and share project updates.

Monthly Coordinator Meetings — PBI hosts monthly meetings for regional coordinators to share the organizational skills, political insights, and strategic vision gained from years of work on local initiatives, enabling organizers to better navigate the many challenges associated with creating new public banks.

Advocacy support for National Infrastructure Bank campaign — PBI Co-Chairs Ellen Brown and Walt McRee participated in many town halls organized by the Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank, supporting legislation to create a public bank to rebuild America's infrastructure.

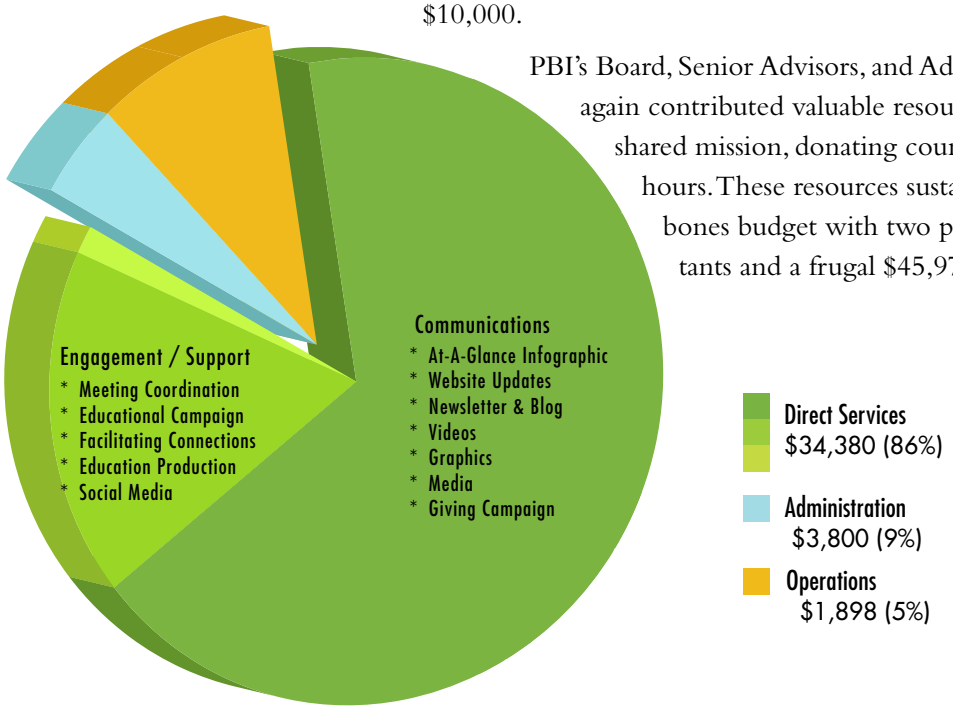
Legislative Guidance — PBI provided counsel for the drafting of federal legislation for the Public Banking Act of 2023 and for Public Banking legislation at state and local levels.

Advisory Board Salons — PBI hosts periodic discussions with the notable economists and academics of our Advisory Board to explore emerging issues of the economy, public banking, and the future of the movement, greatly informing our work.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

We opened 2023 with reserves of $12,889 and are grateful to have received $58,442 in donations from over 100 individuals, mostly small contributions and two large donations of $25,000 and $10,000.

PBI's Board, Senior Advisors, and Advisory Board again contributed valuable resources to our shared mission, donating countless volunteer hours. These resources sustained a bare-bones budget with two part-time consultants and a frugal $45,972 in expenses.



2023 RECAP

- **Ellen Brown**, Co-Chair, continued to write and speak on public banking and the national economy as a regular contributor to national publications and podcasts and as a frequent panelist for town halls hosted by the Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank.
- **Walt McRee**, Co-Chair, continued to consult with regional public banking groups nationwide, including New Jersey's Public Bank Implementation Board, and coordinated twice-monthly national Coordinator and Coalition Meetings. His focus includes exploring new strategic pathways for public bank adoption and expanding our Board and Advisory Board.
- **Nichoe Lichen**, Senior Advisor, continued to provide many hours to coordinate, guide, and support the work of our consultants. Her experience and expertise has been the "glue" that has enabled the organization to operate with such modest means.
- **Scott Baker**, Senior Advisor, tracks trends within the banking industry and analyses the impact of corporate money systems on public financial resources. He provided expert testimony for several local advocacy groups.
- **Earl Staelin**, Senior Advisor, wrote legal memos on important regulatory issues and provided opinions and testimony for several public banking legislative hearings.
- **Cimbria Badenhausen**, Engagement and Support Director and Charitable Giving Coordinator, coordinated and provided technical support for our national Coordinator and Coalition Meetings, connected legislators and organizers with resources, kept track of donor relations, posted on social media, managed PBI's bookkeeping, and kept its records.
- **Suzanne O'Keeffe**, Communications Director, researched, designed, drafted, and coded our interactive At-A-Glance Infographic, wrote several video scripts, and edited *It's Our Money* podcast videos and shorts. She continued to update our website, executed our year-end giving program, created our regular newsletter, and kept track of legislation and related news.

ADVISORY BOARD

PBI Advisory Board from left: Prof. Gar Alperovitz, Prof. Mehrsa Baradaran, Prof. Tim Canova, Dr. Amara Enyia, Dr. Thomas Greco Jr., Thomas Hanna, Sen. Bob Hasegawa, Prof. Robert Hockett, Prof. Michael Hudson, Prof. Thomas Marois, Amaya Pawar, Prof. Bill Sinclair, Tom Tresser, Prof. Richard Wolff.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR 2024

We believe 2024 will see another significant leap forward for the public banking movement. Important initiatives are being readied for legislative introduction at municipal, state, and national levels. Regulators will begin reviewing formal business plan applications for a public bank charter this year.

Anticipating a period of significant expansion, PBI is developing campaigns that will best support this crucial stage of public bank adoption. We will be broadening our connections, strengthening coalitions, and delivering more high-caliber tools.

New short videos and podcasts as well as the launch of a Substack series will be part of this coming year's public awareness efforts.

Issues identified at our Advisory Board Salon discussion included the need to develop plans and alternative frameworks to address potential future banking crises. Public banks can be strong cornerstones underpinning local economic prosperity. As fully transparent institutions accountable to the public, they can provide financial stability when the private financial edifice falters.

Working with our network of national public banking experts and advocates, PBI aims to realize the promise of public banking for America. The systemic risks and failures of our private banking system are becoming more visible. Public banking's time has come!

OUR VISIONARY COMMITMENT

The Public Banking Institute's mission is to inspire, enable, and support the creation of public banks, which have a mandate to serve the public interest and local economies nationwide.

Ellen Brown J.D.
Founder and Co-Chair

Walt McRee
Co-Chair

Dr. Curtis Gregory
Board Member

Dr. Joshua Hall
Board Member

Madeline Merrit
Board Member

Peter Winslow
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Nichoe Lichen
Senior Advisor

Scott Baker
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