Amherst H. Wilder Foundation's Community-Engaged Public Policy Development Model

The Model,
The Evidence Behind it,
and How we Built it

Author: Lindsay Turner

Wilder Research

Information. Insight. Impact.

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Contents

Background

From June 2017 through June 2018, a team of four professionals from the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation (www.wilder.org) built an evidence-based, and organizationally-aligned, model for engaging community in developing public policy goals and platforms. We define public policy broadly, to include changes to legislation or public agency policies at all levels of government. Here, we explain why community-engaged policy development is a necessary improvement that Wilder is uniquely positioned to drive.

Who we are

Wilder is an interdisciplinary direct service foundation that seeks to create lasting, positive change in community in many ways. Staff and professionals work in areas including human services, public policy, community convening and capacity building, and research and evaluation. Wilder's employees work to eliminate barriers, transform systems and strengthen community from within.

Why engage community in developing public policy

Wilder Public Policy works to advance social and economic opportunity for low-income people in the East Metro area of the Twin Cities and across Minnesota. In the past, Wilder Public Policy has engaged community members too late in the public policy process. Policy platforms and initiatives were developed without direct input from community members and those affected by proposed changes; community members were only engaged to help advance initiatives that were already developed. We believe community members who criticize this practice because it:

- Leads community members to feel a loss of agency to define challenges and priorities for themselves

- Perpetuates a power imbalance where community members are only engaged to support Wilder's work

- Is ineffective; those who are proximate to a challenge hold a lot of knowledge about what effective solutions would be

Further, continuing to create and advocate for public policy in this way is counter to Wilder's values of being responsive, innovative, and effective.

Leaders in Wilder Public Policy and Wilder Research secured funding to address these harms by engaging community in public policy development earlier and in a more equitable fashion. Dominic McQuerry, Public Policy Analyst, and Lindsay Turner, Research Associate, worked together to build and refine a model of community engaged policy development. Patrick Ness, Director of Public Policy, and Melanie Ferris, Research Manager, provided leadership and guidance.

Wilder Community Engaged
Policy Development Process (CEPPD)

The Wilder Community Engaged Public Policy Development process (CEPPD) is a new initiative from the Wilder Foundation that seeks to improve community engagement in public policy development.

Community is often asked to show up and support policy proposals developed without their direct input in its development. We have heard the community clearly through mantras like "those who are closest to the problem are closest to the solution," and "no decisions about us without us." Moving forward, The Wilder Foundation seeks to support community members in the development of public policy proposals.

CEPPD PROCESS

COMMUNITY INPUT TEAM

STEP 0 GROUNDING

Relationship building	Create our vision	Define alternatives	Refine public policy path	Final touches
LOOP 1	LOOP 2	LOOP 3	LOOP 4	LOOP 5

WILDER FOUNDATION TEAM
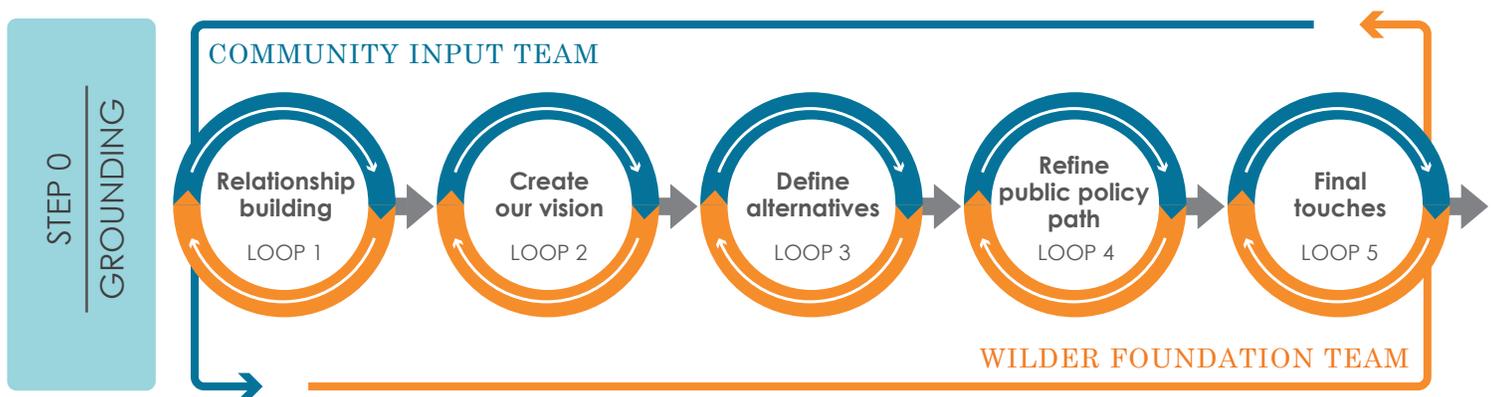
WHY THIS PROCESS?

The Wilder CEPPD process consists of a foundational grounding step followed by a series of five loops. The overall process as well as each individual loop is structured with three objectives in mind: 1) to build relationships and capacity during the policy development; 2) to continually scrutinize the process; 3) to co-create a concrete and viable policy proposal for introduction. This emerging process is a hopeful step in the direction of increasing capacity and representation in public policy in a way that draws on our existing strengths and builds towards positive and lasting partnerships.

OUR PARTNERS IN PROCESS

Community: Community can be defined in many ways, in this process we aim to work with those directly impacted, direct service workers, and those working in community based organizations.

Policymaker: Getting the policymakers on board is key. This definition includes public actors like elected officials and agency staff at all levels of government city, county, and state.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT LOOPS

Why Loops: This process presents a step-by-step process, but the work never happens in a straight- forward or step-by-step way. The goal of this work is to take our time to get the relationships and the policy right, to get messy and stay in a loop for added time if that is required. There is no path forward on the policy if moving "forward" would move the relationship backward.

GROUNDING VALUES

1. Respectful listening, clear communicating, and consistent engaging

2. Responsiveness to community throughout process

3. Collaborative definition of success

4. Collaborative measuring of success

CEPPD PROCESS WALKTHROUGH

STEP 0 \
GROUNDING

STEP 0: GROUNDING

An opportunity for Wilder team to ask questions like:

Who we are as an organization? \
How we will be seen by our community partners? \
How do we plan to learn and listen?

LOOP 1: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Before we can go on a journey together we need to **get to know one another**. What are our strengths, weaknesses, and ambitions?

End Products

– Mutual understandings and agreed upon roles in the policy development process
– A mutually developed understanding of what success will look like

LOOP 2: CREATE OUR VISION

I we limit our thinking in the early stages we risk missing the chance to develop the best ideas. **Let's think big**, get messy, and generate as many public policy ideas as possible. We'll worry about quality later.

End Products

– Big ideas identified by our community partners that we can continue to mold together
– Information to support process evaluation

LOOP 3: DEFINE ALTERNATIVES

If our vision is a map, now we want to i**dentify different routes** that get us closer to that vision.

Some will be like the freeway, fast and direct but you will miss things along the way.

Others will be the slow back roads, consuming more time, energy and with a greater chance of getting lost.

End Products

– A set of partially formed options for how to pursue the community vision
– A few small evidence bases that speak to the partially formed options
– Information to support process evaluation

LOOP 4: REFINE PUBLIC POLICY PATH

Once we know the options we must **select a path** and figure out how to best navigate it. Where are the trouble spots? Also, where are the off-ramps if we need to take a detour?

End Products

– One policy idea
– Solid literature review
– Documents to support the construction of a bill, including best practices for evaluating impact
– Information to support process evaluation

LOOP 5: FINAL TOUCHES

Once we have arrived, those embedded in institutions might not speak our language.

We will work to **communicate our message** – both to community and institutions – in a way where nothing gets lost in translation.

End Products

– A bill that could be advocated for by community members or their allies
– Increased community capacity for engaging in public policy
– A shared evaluation of the community engaged policy development process, possibly packaged as a guide for others
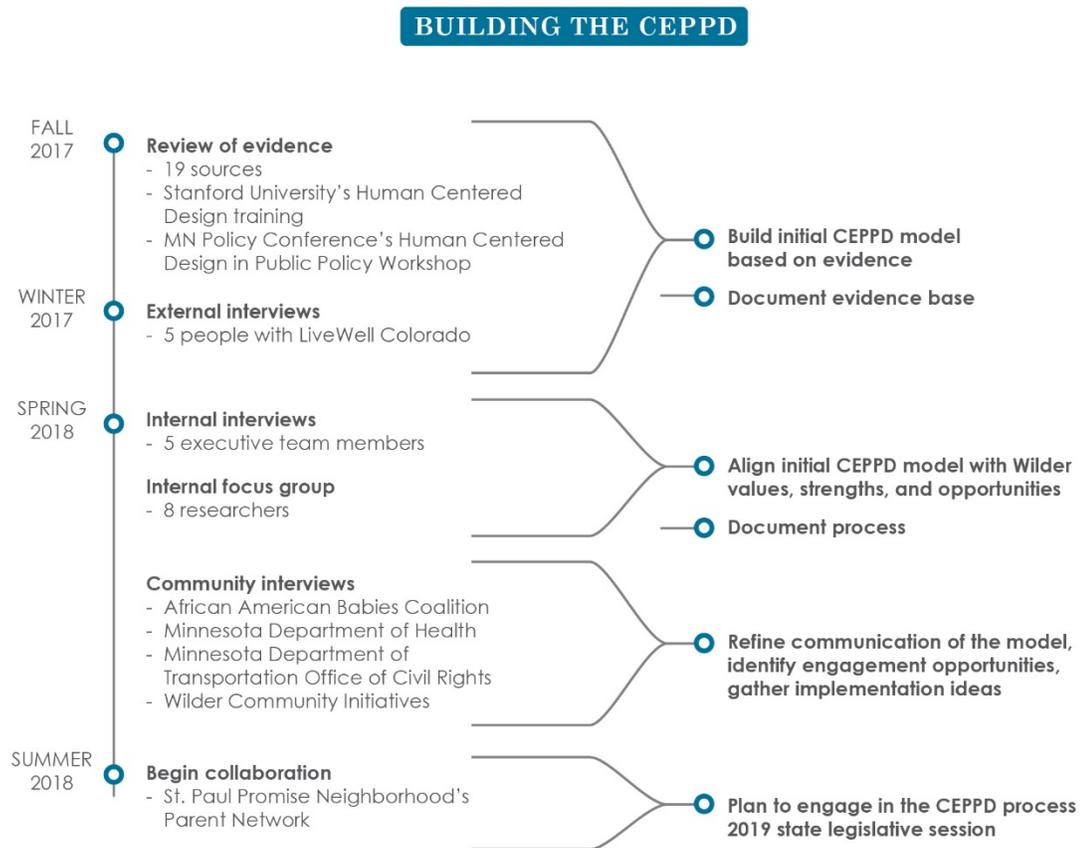
The evidence base for the model

Overview

In drafting, gathering, and incorporating feedback into the CEPPD model, researchers and public policy analysts synthesized information from a variety of sources, and for a variety of reasons (Figure 1).We first used information from external sources to build an evidence-based draft model. We found 19 relevant written resources through a library search. We also interviewed 5 members of a community-engaged policy development initiative called LiveWell Colorado. LiveWell Colorado created one of the written resources in the literature review, and funded 25 community coalitions throughout Colorado to address systems barriers to healthy eating and physical activity. Many of the coalitions succeeded in developing and advancing policy solutions to the barriers. Interviewees included the directors, someone in technical support for grantees, and a coalition leader, as well as one person responsible for evaluating the process and outcomes of LiveWell Colorado's work. We pulled key themes from this evidence base to build a draft CEPPD model.

Next, we elicited feedback from key members of the Wilder Foundation in order to align the model with Wilder's values, strengths, and opportunities. Finally, we sought feedback from local external sources to refine our communication of the model, to identify opportunities in the community where we could test the model in the future, and to otherwise guide implementation.

1. Summary of work

BUILDING THE CEPPD

FALL 2017
Review of evidence
- 19 sources
- Stanford University's Human Centered Design training
- MN Policy Conference's Human Centered Design in Public Policy Workshop

→ **Build initial CEPPD model based on evidence**

→ **Document evidence base**

WINTER 2017
External interviews
- 5 people with LiveWell Colorado

SPRING 2018
Internal interviews
- 5 executive team members

Internal focus group
- 8 researchers

→ **Align initial CEPPD model with Wilder values, strengths, and opportunities**

→ **Document process**

Community interviews
- African American Babies Coalition
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Minnesota Department of Transportation Office of Civil Rights
- Wilder Community Initiatives

→ **Refine communication of the model, identify engagement opportunities, gather implementation ideas**

SUMMER 2018
Begin collaboration
- St. Paul Promise Neighborhood's Parent Network

→ **Plan to engage in the CEPPD process 2019 state legislative session**

Here, we present those findings that informed the substance of the model, as well as its improvements. First, we summarize the key findings that informed building the model. A deeper look at this evidence, which included written sources and interviews with LiveWell Colorado members, is in the Appendix.

Next, we describe the findings that helped us align the model with the values, strengths, and opportunities of the Wilder Foundation. Finally, we summarize themes from local external stakeholders and others with advice about how to move from building a model to going through the process of community-engaged public policy development. Due to the limited number of interviews, and diverse and robust experience of those interviewed, we present those learnings that drove development of or improvements to the model, even if those points were raised by only one informant.

Key findings

Building the initial model

Here, we briefly present the key findings from written resources and interviews with LiveWell Colorado that were foundational in a first draft of the model. They may seem simple, but they are supported by robust evidence, and inform the entire model, from the grounding values, to the loop graphics.

Respectful and humble community engagement

Community engagement works best when the physical and social needs of community members are met, and when community members are positioned as partners rather than sources from which to extract information. In practice, this means removing barriers to participation by providing child care, transportation, stipends, and meals; meeting community members when it's convenient for them; communicating in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways; being transparent about the goals and limitations of the conveners; understanding that community members may vary their engagement over time; and providing opportunities for mutual capacity building.

Co-creation in everything

Community engagement works best when there is trust in the community. That means that the community has a say in defining the process and substance of the work. Community members are partners in planning when and where meetings are, how information is gathered, analyzed, and communicated, and who else is invited to the table and for what purpose. Community members are also partners in defining the community's strengths and the issue(s) of focus. Community members are also trusted if they don't believe that public policy development is the way that they want to address a challenge, and are offered opportunities to exit the work with no hard feelings. Finally, community members are trusted to define success, and develop tools and processes to collect and share information that measures the project's process and outcomes.

Aligning the model with the Wilder Foundation

To align the model with Wilder Foundation values, strengths, and opportunities, the CEPPD team interviewed key members of Wilder Foundation's executive suite, did a focus group with researchers from Wilder Research, and solicited feedback from Wilder Center for Communities and Wilder Community Initiatives. The following informed refinements to the model.

Overall, Wilder stakeholders were supportive of the model

Across different areas of the Wilder Foundation, people were supportive of the initiative. Wilder staff also highlighted features of the model that they thought would be key to successful community engagement. From Wilder Research, we heard repeatedly that transparency about seeking public policy ideas would be paramount, and from Wilder Center for Communities, we heard that anybody from Wilder engaging community in this way should be prepared to follow as well as lead. Finally, Wilder Community Initiatives staff expressed particular support for removing barriers to community participation by providing transportation, child care, food, and honorariums.

Wilder Research can play a unique role

We talked to researchers from Wilder Research about opportunities presented by continued partnership. Respondents identified a number of benefits for embedding research and evaluation into a CEPPD process.

- **Shared understanding:** Researchers suggested literature reviews and written summaries or oral presentations to build a common understanding of how a particular public policy presents a community challenge.

- **Evidence-based policies:** Researchers also suggested literature reviews and written summaries or oral presentations to articulate the evidence-base for a proposed policy change. To fully align Wilder Research's involvement with its mission would mean only advocating for those public policy changes that are grounded in evidence. However, a more novel public policy change idea could be the result of a CEPPD process. If that were the case, Wilder Research likely would not advocate as an institution either for or against the change.

- **Process evaluations:** While named as likely being premature without a CEPPD community cohort identified, researchers suggested co-creating a process evaluation of a CEPPD cohort. This would include working with community to: clearly define what success means for the cohort; develop and implement low-impact ways to measure cohort successes and challenges; develop and implement ways to share knowledge with the community and other stakeholders; and build evaluative capacity in community.

- **Evaluation of public policy:** Assuming a CEPPD cohort was successful in developing a policy platform and passing it, researchers advocated for embedding language to evaluate the outcomes of the policy change into the policy package. This would be especially important to a novel public policy change idea.

This feedback led us to make explicit the grounding values to the CEPPD process, and to align those values with those previously articulated in the Wilder Foundation's mission, vision, and values.

External feedback

To gather feedback from potential local partners, as well as explore local opportunities to engage community in policy development, we interviewed Megan Waltz from Minnesota Department of Health, Sameerah Bilal Roby from the African American Babies Coalition, and Sarah Rudolf from the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Office of Civil Rights. They raised the following key points.

Overall support for equitable engagement

Interviewees have robust experience in community engagement and were especially supportive of the grounding values and emphasis on co-creation of the CEPPD model. They also cautioned the Wilder CEPPD team to hold itself to the values of equitable community engagement, which includes seeking and addressing feedback on when we fall short of that goal.

Knowledge sharing is paramount

Interviewees also asked an important question: whose interests are served if information gathered through the CEPPD process isn't shared? This is a caution to ask community members what types of information they want to hear back from the Wilder CEPPD team, and defer to community about the best way to share knowledge back. Anything less and we fall short of an equitable partnership.

Implementing the model

Some of the feedback centered on concerns not with the substance of the model, but likely challenges to actually engaging in the process with community. Here, we present findings and ideas that we hope can guide the model to as successful an implementation as possible.

Cohort engagement

People from Wilder Research and Wilder Community Initiatives reinforced the idea of having a diverse array of engagement options so that those community members interested in leadership roles could be deeply engaged, and those interested in participating one or two times are able to exit the project without fallout.

Clear communication

Wilder Center for Communities professionals highlighted the importance of flexibility and clarity in communication. They were especially concerned that a dense written CEPPD process explainer could be inaccessible to some community members. Researchers mentioned the need for clear communication to Wilder Research on how research resources could best benefit a CEPPD cohort.

Cohort activities

An informant from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) recommended some resources to find activities that help communities articulate their strengths, challenges, and possible ways to address those challenges.

- MDH Community Engagement Plan
- MDH Resource Library for Advancing Health Equity in Public Health
- Aspen Institute: Roundtable on Community Change

Time estimates

Researchers estimated that a small literature review on the evidence for a policy change would take around 4 to 10 hours. Wilder Community Initiatives estimated that for every hour of facilitating or convening a group, it takes around 2 hours to prepare, and additional time to debrief and share knowledge back. Time to prepare goes up as more community members are engaged in co-planning and co-facilitating.

Wilder Center for Communities highlighted the importance of co-creating a process evaluation with community members. Researchers suggested building a logic model or theory of change with a CEPPD cohort in order to inform evaluation planning, and to use ripple effect mapping to measure successes that emerge from a CEPPD cohort.

Lessons from the project process

For a review of the information used to build, align, and refine the model, see Figure 1, above. Here, we make explicit the foundation for our team, and the strengths of our process.

Foundation for the work

Wilder's CEPPD design benefited from three foundational elements:

1. **Personal support:** Everybody involved in building and refining the CEPPD model believed in the benefits of engaging community in public policy development. Furthermore, other key internal stakeholders at the Wilder Foundation, including members of the Foundation executive team, also thought positively of this type of community engagement.

2. **Organizational support:** Relatedly, Wilder Foundation resources were dedicated to build the CEPPD model, which was necessary as the core design team did the work.

3. **Diverse perspectives:** Wilder's CEPPD design team was interdisciplinary, drawing two members from Wilder Public Policy and two members from Wilder Research. We also incorporated feedback from professionals and executives across service areas in the Foundation, and professionals and community members who have engaged in similar processes in Colorado and in Minnesota.

Strengths of our process

Our team shifted how we did the work in response to challenges that we faced early on. Here, we present the factors that were effective in addressing team challenges and moving the work forward.

Bi-weekly team meetings

Initially, we started with infrequent team meetings and struggled against inconsistent capacity and accountability, and lack of clarity around next steps. The work felt nebulous, and we had questions as big as: how can we, as actors in an organization, build a model for community to develop public policy? Shouldn't that be coming from the community, and if it's not, isn't that an indication that we shouldn't do this? A simple but important fix was to enlist administrative help to schedule bi-weekly team meetings. We began to meet regularly in the winter of 2017. We were able to keep the majority of those meetings, and used them as times to discuss what we had done to build or refine the model, get feedback, and brainstorm next steps to move the work forward.

Self-evaluation

At team meetings, we frequently asked ourselves some questions to inform and improve our work process. Those questions were:

- **What worked well?**
  All of our answers centered on ways to make work explicit or concrete – developing an agenda for the meeting, sharing documents and progress ahead of time, identifying potential stakeholders and informants.

- **What was hard? Or, where were our assumptions incorrect?**
  No themes emerged in response to these questions, which could be an indicator that asking about difficulties gave us space to address them before they became systemic issues.

- **Anything else?**
  Aside from "no, there's nothing else," there were no themes in response to this question either.

Smaller "working" meetings

Frequently, the next steps that came out of the bi-weekly team meetings included scheduling a working meeting for Dominic and Lindsay. These working meetings were another area that improved the work process, and they usually involved incorporating learnings from interviews into the model and explainer documents.

Appendix: Evidence base

Background

Through a review of 19 relevant written sources (see References) and interviews with 5 informants with involvement in community-engaged policy development through LiveWell Colorado, we answered three questions:

- What are best practices for engaging community in the development of public policy ideas?

- What organizations/groups have been successful at developing public policy through community engagement, and what, if anything, do the organizations or the policy initiatives have in common?

- What are best practices for evaluating the process and outcomes from engaging community in developing public policy ideas?

The information gathered during this investigation informed Wilder's Community-Engaged Policy Development (CEPPD) Model.

In reviewing the literature, not all resources outlining the community-engaged process contemplated public policy as the method to address a community challenge. This could be due to the relative novelty of community involvement in the policy development process. However, themes emerged around community engagement generally that also appeared in sources and interviews describing community-engaged policy development. Therefore, we answer the first research question by explaining components of community-engaged development generally, then reporting information specific to community-engaged policy development.

To answer the second question, just four written sources were located that dealt specifically with community-engaged policy development. The organizations had community-engaged practices in common, though no subjects in common.

Four sources informed an answer to the third question.

After reading about the Colorado Food Policy Network, we reached out to and interviewed five people involved in LiveWell Colorado. LiveWell Colorado funded community coalitions throughout the state to address systemic barriers to healthy eating and active living. Many of the 25 community coalitions succeeded in developing and advancing policy solutions to barriers. Interviewees included directors, someone in technical assistance to grantees, a coalition leader, and an evaluator of the initiative, and centered on equitable community

engagement, how communities develop policy solutions, and lessons learned from evaluating the initiative. The responses supported the written evidence.

Community-engaged development, generally

Common steps in a community-engaged process were found in 14 written resources reviewed, though not always in the same order. Interviewees from LiveWell Colorado bolstered these themes.

A foundational issue is to decide when to call upon the community; this drives the variation in sequence. Some projects – those that either assume to know the challenge to be addressed, and/or assume to know a method to address the challenge – call on the community after having defined the challenge or the method. Some in the community could experience having a pre-determined problem or process as a loss of agency. This project defines public policy as the problem-solving method. The Wilder team should clearly and frequently explain this limit to community and allow for community members to disengage if they are not interested in developing public policy.

In involving the community, facilitators should:

- Continually: address the human needs of community participants.

    - Addressing **physical needs** could include providing transportation, child care, food, monetary incentives for attending meetings/providing information, and planning – or offering redundant – meetings to accommodate a variety of work schedules.

    - Addressing **social needs** could include seeking and honoring feedback on how community members would like to be involved, seeking and honoring feedback on when and how to share knowledge back to participants and partnering organizations, and providing opportunities and support for membership engagement across a spectrum of activities and responsibility levels.

Written materials and interviews with LiveWell staff supported the above.

- **Continually: engage with humility and empathy with diverse stakeholders.** This leads to deeper understanding of the community, builds trust, and centers the voices of those who are impacted by any change sought. Many resources advocate for diverse and broad coalitions/partnerships. Informants from LiveWell Colorado reported spending between 6 to 18 months in a relationship-building stage, suggesting that those involved in the CEPPD process should be prepared to move on the community's timeline.

- **Early on: work with the community to define its strengths** in order to place value on the resources already in the community and increase the likelihood of creating an effective, lasting, problem-solving process. This was a common theme from the literature as well as interviews with LiveWell Colorado executives and staff. LiveWell staff specifically recommended deference to the community on who could best lead the work. Ideas for specific activities to move through this work in the community are found in the bootcamp bootleg card deck and Praxis Project slide deck, below, References.

- **Early on: work with the community to define its priority challenge.** A clear, community-led, definition of the priority challenge is key according to all relevant resources, including interviews with LiveWell Colorado staff. Said one LiveWell Colorado staff member:

  > *"It's worked to say that the initiative has to touch on healthy eating and active living, but they're the experts on what's going to be best for them."*

(Ideas for specific activities to move through this work in the community are found in the bootcamp bootleg card deck and Praxis Project slide deck, below, References.)

- **Later: work with the community to take action.** Again, there is support for creating diverse opportunities for involvement, and for continual information sharing back to the community. Staff with LiveWell Colorado recommended making space for deep community member involvement, as community leadership frequently drove the success of some initiatives. Some written resources support coalition-building with other organizations, and others support the idea of the community fully defining the method to address their priority. Activities could include:
  - Creating or expanding a networks/partnerships
  - Community organizing, activism, and advocacy
  - Media engagement
  - Community events

- Continually: evaluate progress, and work with community to change course as needed. To co-create an evaluation, facilitators and community can consider:
  - What kind of knowledge and data will drive goal-setting?
  - How will the community and partners gather information that can be useful, confidential, and fair?
  - Who will design the evaluation plan, how will it be shared, and with whom?
  - How will the information gathered inform change – either to the direction of the project, or to improve some aspects of the initiating organization?

Resources support sharing as much information back to the community as possible, and tailoring dissemination methods to participant preferences. This theme was also raised in interviews with LiveWell Colorado, with an emphasis on the benefits of flexibility in defining success, and measuring and communicating outcomes in a way that aligns with the community's strengths and capacity.

Community-engaged policy development

Four written resources specifically outlined community-engaged policy development and are noted in the attached reference list. In addition to advancing the above community-engaged process, these sources explained who should be stakeholders, how and when to engage policymakers, and possible criteria to determine which policy idea(s) should be advanced. With only four resources dealing specifically with community-engaged policy development, information is included below even it only appeared in one source.

First, the Community Tool Box outlines the following aspects unique to using policy as a tool to address community challenges:

Participants in community-engaged policy development should be those stakeholders impacted by policy, including:

- Who the policy would benefit

- Who the policy would control

- Who would have to administer/enforce the policy

- Who works with/serves a population directly affected by a policy

- Organizations/businesses who stand to change revenue, mode of operation, or otherwise because of a policy

- Policymakers and other public officials

These ideas were supported by interviews with LiveWell Colorado staff, as well, who regularly work with coalitions to identify stakeholders impacted by policy changes and amplify their engagement and input.

Facilitators/community members should research and explain the benefits to policymakers when seeking to engage policymakers in a community-engaged process. Benefits can include:

- A greater likelihood of developing an effective policy

- Community ownership and support of the resulting initiative and its implementation

- Political gains for the policymaker

- The opportunity to learn of new challenges and opportunities from constituents

- The formation of diverse constituent coalitions who understand their common interests

- Community buy-in that creates long-term change

- Helping to create momentum in the community to tackle one challenge after another

Facilitators/community members should consider which policymakers may be most open to community involvement. Policymakers may be most open to community involvement when:

- The community asks for the policymaker's involvement

- An issue has reached crisis proportion

- The policymaker already has a long-standing issue as a priority

- There are resources to address the issue

- A prominent figure is concerned about an issue

- It is obvious that a downhill slide must be stopped

- The policymaker has engaged in a strategic process that points to addressing a particular issue

Finally**, two resources explored criteria to choose which issues or policies to work on/towards**. To advance the racial justice mission of the Grassroots Policy Project, policies should:

- Have a universal goal and strategies to achieve that goal that target people of color

- Address disparate outcomes for people of color

- Increase access to public/private resources for people of color

- Allow full self-expression, culturally and spiritually, for people of color

- Increase civil participation by people of color

- Involve people of color in the process

The Praxis Project's sample criteria judges proposed policies on whether they:

- Result in real improvement
- Are winnable
- Are specific/local
- Allow for short-term victory
- Reflect community concerns
- Shift the balance of power for the better
- Fit goals and vision of the community
- Are achievable using the resources that currently exist in the community
- Will set the community up for the next initiative
- Will strengthen community organizations
- Will help stakeholders fundraise
- Will help build community leadership

Evaluating community-engaged development, policy and otherwise

As noted above, community-engaged development should include community-engaged evaluation of the initiative. Four written resources explored possible evaluation indicators for such initiatives. Two of the four dealt specifically with evaluating community-engaged policy development, and those two also included possible evaluation tools/questions. Those tools/questions are not discussed below, but could become relevant once the evaluation plan is made. One interviewee had robust experience in community engaged policy development

Possible indicators

Across all community-engaged change initiatives, there are common frameworks of indicators to notice, measure, and assess the changes they are contributing to. These include:

- Participation indicators, or who is involved?
- Progress indicators, or what happened?
- Performance indicators, or how/how well did the process go?
- Possibility indicators, or what can the community do next?
- People indicators, or what's changed for those impacted?

- Policy changes, or what system-level changes occurred?

Those in power are typically more interested in people indicators and that determining causality in this realm can be difficult, sometimes prohibitively so. An interviewee endorsed both these ideas. There is also support for the idea that involved community members can be more interested in evaluating process satisfaction and community capacity building.

Those resources dealing with community-engaged policy development advocated measuring:

- Shifts in social norms

- Strengthened organizational capacity

- Strengthened alliances

- Strengthened base of support

- Improved policies

- Social capital of initiative

Additionally, the Food Policy Council included measuring the greater context, or how supportive the community was before, during, and after activities, in order to be better able to speak to the changes made by the Council.

Criteria for selecting evaluation indicators

Given capacity concerns, it is unlikely that all indicators can be equally well captured, shared, and used to improve direction of the initiative. In selecting those indicators to improve, community-engaged evaluation supports selecting those that are both grounded in the community's vision of success, and as simple and useful as possible.

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