

AN INITIATIVE OF WILDER FOUNDATION

# Wilder Community Engaged Public Policy Development Process (CEPPD)

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

Here, we name the grounding values for the CEPPD process, as well as clearly explain the work, roles, and goals of each of the steps in the process. We anticipate that this document will shift and evolve as Wilder and different communities go through the CEPPD process together.



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Here for good.

We've heard from the community that they'd like to be partners in deciding what changes Wilder tries to make at the Capitol. This project is a result of that listening. We've also heard that Wilder walks into community spaces carrying the baggage of past interactions with community, as well as a power differential. So we want to ground this project in values that address community concerns and also lift up the power of the community. We'll start with naming those values.

### **1. Respectful listening, clear communicating, and consistent engaging**

In the past, Wilder has not shared equal power with the community. We name this, and are working to address this, which includes deep listening.

We will work to meet in a space for equitable control over conversation, stepping back to allow for community voice to lead — not just provide input.

We will work to meet people in a space that allows them to be their most creative selves. This means, to the best of our abilities, providing things like child care, food, and transportation to create the ability to participate. Additionally, we are willing hosts, but are understanding if meeting at Wilder would not make us an equal partner.

Potential questions to ask ourselves or have community to ask us:

- What can the community expect from Wilder?
- What have we learned through this process?
- Who else would benefit from this knowledge?
- How can we best share knowledge back?
- Where is a fair place for us to connect?

### **2. Responsiveness to community throughout process**

We will work to develop a relationship with our community partners, so they feel comfortable challenging us, and so that they are comfortable being challenged by us.

We will work with our community partners to collectively develop a system where we are able to share information, so that we can all remain on a similar footing.

We will be clear in what we are agreeing to deliver and own up when we come up short.

Potential questions to ask ourselves or have community to ask us:

- How would the community like us to show up?
- What mistakes has Wilder made in the process?
- How will Wilder do better?
- How can Wilder best support community growth?
- Is Wilder providing information in a clear and convenient way? How can we do better?

### 3. Collaborative definition of success

Wilder does not own a definition of effective; we'll define that together.

Wilder will partner with community to plan knowledge sharing about the policies and the process.

Wilder would like to elevate and promote the ideas that arise from this process. Let's co-create a plan that we are all comfortable with, and one that will not lead community to feel like they have been co-opted.

Potential questions to ask ourselves or have community to ask us:

- What does it mean to be successful in this partnership? What does it mean to be successful through this process? What tangible things do we want to create together in order to feel successful? How do we want to feel about the process, and our partnership, in order to feel successful?
- Who else would benefit from any lessons learned?
- How do we best get this information to them?

### 4. Collaborative measuring of success

Wilder does not own the ideas of community. Full Stop.

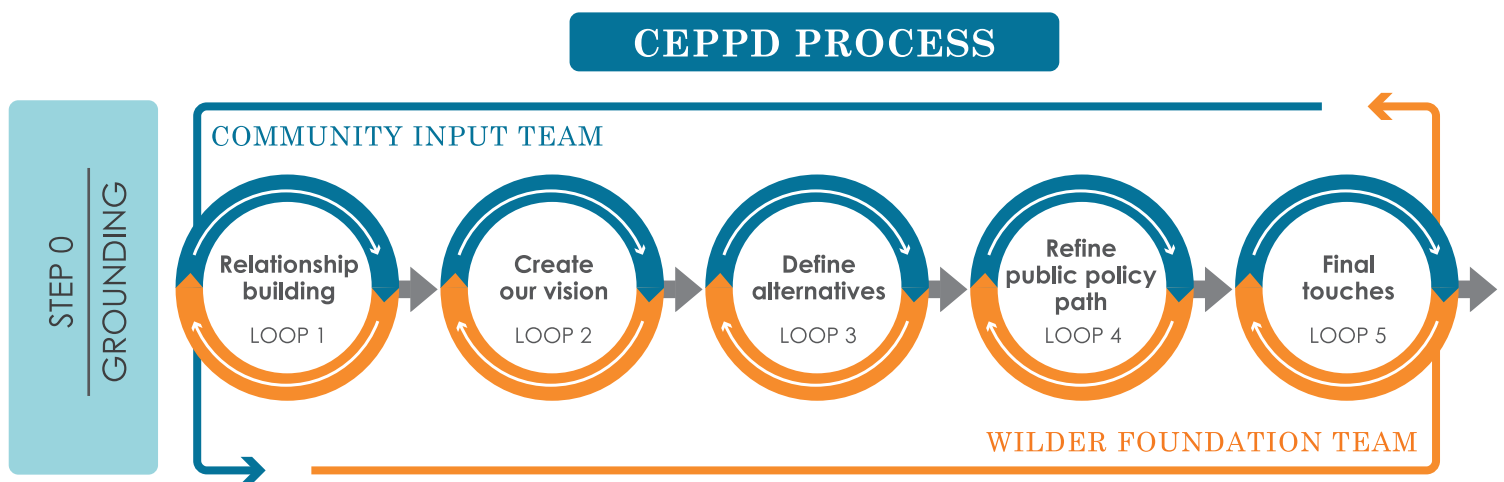
Wilder will work as partners not directors.

Potential questions to ask ourselves or have community to ask us:

- What's the best way to measure success/ challenges?
- What's the best way to share, translate, and amplify the community's ideas?

# Community Engaged Public Policy Development Process Loops

Why Loops: This process that we have laid out looks like a step-by-step process, but the work never happens in a straightforward 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” in the loops would move the relationship backwards.



**Purpose:** Before Wilder can effectively work with community partners we must be sure that we get our act together and that all members of the Wilder Foundation that are involved in this effort agree to the values laid out above.

### **Possible Outcomes**

- A clear articulation from Wilder about how we see ourselves showing up that can be considered by our partners
- A system in place to conduct regular reassessments of our past assumptions and evolving relationships

### **WORK Wilder staff**

**Positionality** — Who are you both as an individual and as an institutional actor? Be able to name and describe these things and position your adaptive leadership. (Ex. what does it mean for Dominic as a Black/Latinx individual to move in a Hmong space, what does it mean for Wilder? What does it mean for public policy?)

**Embeddedness** — What are the relationships that we as individuals or Wilder as an organization have to the issues? What are the relationships that each has to the community?

**Continual reflection** — This work of grounding and reflection won't stop when we start engaging with community. New actors will likely move in and dynamics between existing actors will change, meaning we need to keep checking in on ourselves and group dynamics. We will continually work to document and describe the process, both in action and thought.

- Map out relationships. Who is involved, (In our opinion) what space do they occupy, what are our past relationships?
- Personal and group reflection on our identities, and what they mean as we engage in this process.
- Reflection on process documentation — where has the community felt like they were in true partnership? Where and how can Wilder do better?



**Purpose:** The first loop is the most important loop because it sets the foundation for our work together. Before exiting this loop the goal is to be clear on what we are going to attempt and what we hope to accomplish. This means that we will have collectively identified strengths and weaknesses of both groups (community actors, and Wilder actors), a shared understanding what we are able to do and what we aren't able to do, and a collectively developed understanding of what success will look like.

### **Possible Outcomes**

- We know who each other are and what each of us will do
- We all have discussed and determined what success will look like

#### **WORK Community partners**

1. Ask questions — We want to create and hold a space where our community partners are able to ask questions with the understanding that they will receive an answer. Without openness to questions going in both directions we cannot create the collaborative space needed for this process to work.
2. Co-create and understand responsibilities in our proposed partnership — How do we want to work together? Who is going to do what? The only way to answer these questions correctly is to answer them together.
3. Co-create process evaluation — Obviously, if we create awesome policy that then passes into law that's great, but we also want to know about what communities want to get out of this partnership aside from policy language, and the best way to measure those other successes.

#### **WORK Wilder staff**

1. Field questions and comments from community partners — Community members are being engaged in a bunch of different ways these days, sometimes good and sometimes bad. We need to learn what people's experiences have been and what they would like to see out of this partnership.
2. Co-create and understand responsibilities in our proposed partnership — Listening to questions and comments from community members should help inform our collective work, but Wilder will also try to not over-promise just to avoid conflict and disagreements. Again let's work together to figure out who will do what and how to hold each other accountable for these responsibilities.
3. Co-create process evaluation — Based on information and feedback from community, Wilder design team members will build out evaluation materials. These could include a logic model, an evaluation plan, and data collection tools. Interested community members will be included in the evaluation team.

- Individual or small group conversations
- Fishbowl conversations
- Large group facilitated conversations



**Purpose:** After getting our working relationship in order we need to start working on what brought us together in the first place: policy development. This is a time to discuss big ideas which will help put a frame around the picture we will paint together.

### **Possible Outcomes**

- A collection of big ideas identified by our community partners
- Information to support process evaluation

#### **WORK Community partners**

1. Share their vision — The entire point of this process is to involve community voice early and often in the policy development process. This vision will guide our path forward as we work towards specific policy proposal. Again this is a starting point and we aren't trying to get a perfect policy at this stage. This loop is the time for bold ideas.

#### **WORK Wilder staff**

1. Facilitate community visioning — Wilder will listen to the ideas and visions of our community partners. Wilder will ask probing questions to help draw out the ideas of community, listen as these are answered, and when invited, add to the conversation. Wilder will work to document as closely as possible so that nothing is lost. We can identify an external facilitator if Wilder does not fit the role.
2. Document, organize information and harvest — Wilder will work either with community or individually to organize everyone's input into a guiding vision to be agreed upon or rejected by our community partners. Based upon what we hear, Wilder will begin searching for research and evidence that deals with parts of the vision.

#### **Host a visioning summit**

- World cafe: How did we get to what exists now? What opportunities and issues exist in this world? How would our ideal world (based around this issue area) be different?
- Group brainstorms
- Story Share with active listening
- Post-it walls
- Draw the future

#### **Synthesis**

- Collective harvest
- Pattern map (idea consolidation)
- Public sector stakeholder engagement



**Purpose:** If the vision section was putting a frame around the picture, this section is about filling what goes in that frame. We will first pass back what we heard in the visioning activities. What themes are emerging? What are some potential directions to pursue?

It should be noted that we are not only looking at the state legislature. The options we put together could require work in a bunch of different places: state level legislation, city ordinances or even just pointing out that a state or county agency could be doing their job differently without changing law, but in a way that will better serve communities.

### **Possible Outcomes**

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

#### **WORK Community partners**

1. Question our plans — We will need community partners to let us know what we got right and what we got wrong with our proposals. For example, a large idea may have been split off into smaller policy ideas that could be used as steps toward the larger vision.
2. Narrow preferences — Developing policy takes a lot of time and we need to decide what plan or plans we would like to fully develop. The hope is that Wilder, blending the vision and supporting research, will be able to provide clear options for the community to choose to continue to move forward.

#### **WORK Wilder staff**

1. Explain what happened between meetings — This is a practice that should start every meeting, with a new or old group of community partners. We would like to practice transparency and developing the skill of showing our work.
2. Package and present information — Building upon the vision conversations, Wilder and interested community partners will put together a list of specific ideas for progressing toward that vision. Wilder is responsible for presenting these ideas in a way that doesn't show preference unless asked for it.
3. Seek answers from research and community partners — In building these proposals it is important that we rely upon both the research as well as the wisdom and vision of our community partners. The ideal is to weave together these two sources of knowledge to create something even stronger.
4. Keep ears open — When incorporating input from more traditionally respected sources (Scholars, published reports, etc.) it can be easy to prioritize that input. We will work to make sure that these sources do not cause us to silence of our community partner's voices.

- Collective Research
- Focus group
- Defend our "thesis"
- "How might we?" activity





**Purpose:** Now that we have some solid ideas, we'll narrow to one really strong public policy proposal with evidence to support it. When we exit this loop the only things that should be left to do are translation into legislative speak and to get the idea passed or implemented.

### Possible Outcomes

- One policy idea or small package of policy proposals
- A solid base of support from research and community input
- Documents to support the construction of a bill, to include best practices for evaluating bill's impact according to community input, literature review and subject matter expert input
- Information to support process evaluation

### WORK Community partners

1. Review the options — At the beginning of this loop there will be a small number of proposals and supporting materials for community partners to sort through. Some might be big ideas and some might be small steps. It will take time to review these materials, discuss them with and without Wilder, and to ask questions to further clarify the options.
2. Choose one plan — After the review, the hope is that we can agree to move in a single direction. If none sound good to the community partners we need to know that as well, and begin the work of identifying what does work for community partners.
3. Give feedback on materials — After a single policy proposal is chosen, work will be done by Wilder and interested community partners to develop more materials to support the vision of the policy. This may include a large literature review, an initial narrative argument for the proposal, or a plain language bill framework. These materials will need to be regularly reviewed and questioned by community partners to make sure that they don't lose sight of the vision.

### WORK Wilder staff

1. In-depth lit review — After the selection of a single policy package Wilder will assist in the development of a more robust literature review. As a part of this process we will share how we structure our searches and why we chose the supporting evidence that we did.
2. Lead creation of bill materials (narrative, framework, etc.). In this loop we will finalize plan materials to be turned into policy language, and potentially begin working with someone who works in the organization we are trying to change. In addition to the lit review these materials will include a bill narrative, bill framework, and any other required materials.

#### Idea selection

- Model walkthrough
- Present and discuss
- Video presentations w/online voting

#### Policy Refinement

- Lit review
- Policy analysis
- Public sector stakeholder engagement



**Purpose:** We can see the finish line, but don't want to mess things up at the last second. The purpose of this loop is to get final legislation, rules or other proposals drafted while not losing sight of the vision or work done in previous steps. At the end of this we will have our final product ready to be picked up by the community, Wilder, or others, and taken to lawmakers.

### **Possible Outcomes**

- A bill, rule, or other proposal that is ready to have a campaign built around it
- Increased community capacity for engaging in public policy
- A shared evaluation of the Community Engaged Public Policy Development process, possibly packaged as a guide for others

#### **WORK**

#### **Community partners**

1. Participate in bill translation — If interested, we would like for our community partners to be involved in working with outside actors (senate counsel, house research, agency staff or others) to translate our idea into language they can understand. There are often details that seem small, but can have a sizable impact over how statutes are interpreted and implemented.
2. Judge bill drafts — As these bills emerge we will need to work back and forth with our community partners, and whoever is helping to craft the final language. Wilder will be tasked with providing as many answers as possible about the way certain things are written and when asked to provide opinions
3. Approve final language — Review and approve final policy language

#### **WORK**

#### **Wilder staff**

1. Work with government staff and community to translate community idea into official proposal language and formatting — Hopefully in collaboration with community partners, Wilder will work with outside actors to help draft the final policy proposal in a form that would fit within the legal framework of the institution that would be required to make the change. In this process the lines of communication between Wilder and our group of community partners must be strong in order to loop in partners on details that might require input during the drafting process.

# Process Conclusion

**Purpose:** After the process has been completed we would like to get feedback from our partners to help make the next try at policy development better. Also, because this is a community and relationship building effort, we would like to find a way to celebrate our collective work.

## **Outcomes:**

- Content to help put together a final evaluation of how we worked together
- Lasting memories of our celebration of working together

### **WORK**   **Collective**

1. Participate in evaluation — This would include filling out surveys and potentially conducting or being interviewed. Wilder will want to evaluate and would welcome evaluations from our community partners as well.
2. Celebrate — Working in partnership can be challenging and time consuming. It is essential that we take time to pause and reflect on the good work done and look toward our future work together.
3. Locate a base to move policy — This could be an elected official, an existing coalition, Wilder public policy, or the community partners. Once we find who it makes sense to push for the changes we can determine how we would like to keep track of its progress.

### **WORK**   **Wilder**

1. Share findings from Wilder evaluation. Once the surveys and evaluations are synthesized and packaged, Wilder will share the results and feedback with our partners and other interested parties.

# Final thoughts

The Wilder Community Engaged Public Policy Development process aims to be a focused and flexible guide on how large institutions can partner with individuals and community based organizations to support the development of community based solutions. This process is indebted to past works from other organizations and the feedback that we received from many during the development of Wilder's approach. This process is not set in stone and we hope that you will partner with us to construct meaningful policy ideas and to further develop our collective relationship as your community partner.

This project would not be possible without funding from Wilder Foundation's Catalyst Fund, the leadership and partnership of Patrick Ness and Melanie Ferris, and the time, knowledge sharing, and astute questions of so many across the Foundation, from executive suite to program staff. Thank you.

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