



**De-fund the
police?**



**Re-imagine
public safety?**



**Re-create
public health?**

Here's how.

Policy-Making by and for the People

Across the country, the people are demanding an end to policing as we know it. They're calling for a radical re-allocation of resources - from overfunded and broken police departments to long underfunded programs in housing, health and education.

Traditional top-down planning and policy making has led to systems that undermine equity and deny justice. **As we re-imagine places where we all can thrive, the people most impacted by systemic racism and police violence – Black and Brown communities – must lead the way.**

This 7-step HOW-TO GUIDE lays out a framework for community-driven policy making - clear directions about who, how and what you need for planning and policy-making by and for the people.

#processmatters #theknowablepath

Community-Led Policy-Making in 7 Steps

1

MOBILIZE

Draft your core team – a small and diverse group of key stakeholders – community leaders, activists, and practitioners that will help guide & inform the process throughout. Be clear about what you’re doing, why you’re doing it and what you’re not doing. Allocate resources. Community-driven planning requires patience, hard work and funding.

2

RESEARCH

Analyze quantitative AND qualitative data. Ground your research in demographic, economic, health, and other key indicators and the experience of community leaders, activists, academics, elected officials, and agency personnel. Learn about previous community planning and priority setting efforts. Research innovative models to learn from and build on.

3

DESIGN

This is not your father’s planning process. Design a process that is inclusive and accessible. The experts here are community members. One-sided Town Hall meetings and long-winded presentations must go. This is a time to listen and learn. Work with your core team to co-design informational materials and engagement tools. Think critically and creatively about what is relevant, actionable, and centers lived experience of Black and Brown communities.

4

OUTREACH

Spread the word to community members - especially those that have been traditionally excluded from decision making - through trusted community partners. Fund community-based organizations, local leaders, service providers, and faith-based institutions among others to activate their networks and reach out to their members.

5

ENGAGE

Make participation easy - provide translation and interpretation, childcare and refreshments and schedule meetings at convenient times and locations for working people. Meeting formats and engagement tools must be interactive and accessible. Track participation throughout. If critical populations are not represented, adjust and broaden your outreach tactics.

6

DEVELOP

Present and discuss relevant information and examples driven by community priorities, informed by data and shaped by a constant feedback loop. Facilitate honest trade-off discussions, inspire out-of-the-box thinking, co-create solutions and build consensus on a set of actionable immediate and longer term recommendations.

7

IMPLEMENT

Make the plan real – on the ground and in neighborhoods, systems and institutions. Co-create mechanisms with communities to measure progress toward goals and ensure government accountability to the people. The work does not stop here. Create ongoing opportunities to engage communities towards deep and lasting systemic change.

Principles



Equitable

Focus on communities most impacted by over-policing, disinvestment and racism



Just

Reckon with the past and imagine a different future



Inclusive

Create the conditions that make participation easy for those who have been systematically excluded from decision making



Accessible

Present information that is user-friendly, interactive, relevant and culturally appropriate



Accountable

Be transparent about who is making decisions, how information is being used, and how decision makers will report back to and be held accountable by communities

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**WHERE THE
PEOPLE SHAPE
THEIR CITY**

As Minneapolis City Councilmember Jeremiah Bey Ellison said, “...the how we got here is known – and the path out is knowable.” In the wake of a crippling pandemic and the abiding trauma of state-sanctioned murder and police brutality – we must chart that knowable path, to radically re-think the neighborhoods, the city, the nation that we want to live in.

HOW we do that work is almost as important as the work itself. Quick budget shifts and limited reforms will not win the transformative change we need in this decisive moment. We must dig in and commit to: a shift in power, valuing local wisdom and abundance, relevant and accessible data, and to the patience, humility and perseverance required for true collaboration. In short, the hard work of policy making led by the people.

That work starts and ends with the people most impacted by both the acute and everyday violence of disinvestment, disparity and oppression. Black and Brown people, Native peoples and immigrants.

Now is our time to re-imagine democracy and re-shape government – to nurture just, equitable, and resilient communities through deep and lasting participation, and the radical re-creation of the systems that shape our lives.

Let’s chart the knowable path with communities in the lead.

#processmatters #theknowablepath

Hester Street designs and facilitates deeply democratic planning and policy making to advance racial and economic justice and radically re-create cities shaped by low-income communities of color. To learn more about what innovative policy making can look like and deliver, visit:

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