



ASPEN TECH
POLICY HUB

PROJECT



AMY WILSON

To learn more about
this project, please visit
aspentechpolicyhub.org.

 THE ASPEN INSTITUTE



People Powered Policy

Improving engagement and the local government policy pipeline
through technology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

City governments often struggle to obtain real-time feedback from their constituents on impending policy decisions. At the same time, constituents from disenfranchised communities often struggle to get the attention of elected officials to drive policy change. People-Powered Policy (P3) is a website and strategy that encourages two-way communication between city governments and their constituents. Communities will have a place to share stories, thoughts, and questions about topics they care about, and the platform gives them a direct line to city staff. The platform also allows city officials to solicit input on policy questions and create feedback loops throughout the policymaking process. P3 is being piloted with the City of Oakland, and the project team hopes the model can scale across city governments.



**ASPEN TECH
POLICY HUB**

PROJECT

THE PROBLEM

There are many barriers to participating in local government, and it is difficult for cities to know how their constituents feel about impending policy decisions. When a new policy is being considered, traditional ways of reaching out to communities—such as paper surveys, town halls, and community meetings—are time consuming and require significant resources. For low-income and minority communities, it is particularly hard to affect policy change using these feedback methods. Using the City of Oakland as a case study, this project asked: How might technology give power to residents most impacted by systemic racism to shape local policy on race and equity?

“ *Civic involvement is a privilege for those with ample time and resources.*

*– Candice Elder, Founder and CEO,
East Oakland Collective*

THE SOLUTION

People Powered Policy (P3) is both a website and a strategy that puts political power back in the hands of the people. The website helps government officials to collect stories, thoughts, and questions around issues that communities are facing, packaged in a way that helps representatives understand what is happening in real time, without having to engage in significant research. Council members and cities can use the platform to request feedback from the community, and can see at a glance the public sentiment on a topic. The P3 Strategy also helps cities better use digital technologies to enable more efficient and communicative government work. While Oakland is this project's first testing ground, the team hopes that the P3 model can be replicated in local governments across the country.

ABOUT THE HUB

The Aspen Tech Policy Hub is a Bay Area policy incubator, training a new generation of tech policy entrepreneurs. We take tech experts, teach them the policy process, and support them in creating outside-the-box solutions to society's problems.

The Aspen Institute
2300 N St. NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20037
202 736 5800

 THE ASPEN INSTITUTE