



GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

TOOLKIT

Starting and Sustaining Neighborhood
Bike & Pedestrian Committees

BIKE
PGH!



INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, several neighborhood-specific bike, ped, traffic calming committees have formed. These “mini-BikePGH’s” have been really useful to further our mission and to help bring local input and a neighborhood voice and legitimacy to biking and walking projects. Mostly, these groups do many of the same things that BikePGH does, only on a smaller neighborhood scale. They build community through organizing group rides, they spearhead infrastructure projects like bike lanes and crosswalks, as well as help build support and get ideas for biking and walking initiatives among their neighbors. Moving forward, these committees will be critical if we want to see real change to our streets, save lives, and reduce auto dependency.

While our membership touches every neighborhood in the City and surrounding municipalities, and were integral in helping us accomplish what we have so far, the goal of this document is to help create “super-members” who will be empowered to act for change and continue this momentum. We are a small office in Lawrenceville, so any way that we can multiply our influence and effectiveness, will make our dream of a biking and walking friendly Pittsburgh that much closer to reality.

Neighborhoods across the county are looking to curb reckless driving and to make it an easy choice to ride a bike or walk. They know that these values create a more vibrant town and healthier citizenry. The thing is, many municipalities, neighborhoods and residents, know the solutions, but lack the technical know-how and political willpower to create change. This is where localized bike/ped committees can step in and offer knowledgeable and passionate advocates to build the neighborhoods we all want to live in.

We hope you’ll join our fight in making the region more livable, and start or join a neighborhood bike/ped committee. The following document combines the lessons that we’ve learned from the existing committees with our experience in working with the City of Pittsburgh as well as the national biking and walking movement. We hope that through our experience and access to decisionmakers, combined with your local knowledge and passion, will expedite the changes we want to see.

So take a look and please contact me with your ideas - we’re here to help!

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For more information about the existing bike/ped committees, see: bikepgh.org/advocate

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GETTING STARTED

Change can be made from the enthusiasm of just a few people. Good ideas that legitimately improve people's lives, like making a neighborhood safer to walk in, don't necessarily need professional staff or loads of resources. One thing that is clear is that grassroots advocacy works, but needs the key ingredient of people. So getting people to agree to join a cause and assist with a group's mission should be one of the primary goals. Bringing more people into the fold greatly multiplies your efforts and helps ensure success. But how do you start? Maybe it starts at the local watering hole or coffee shop after a conversation with a friend about a particularly dangerous intersection.

Once you decide that you want to do something and start a group to focus on the issue, then what? You'll find that most people already agree with the idea that drivers should slow down, and that the simple act of taking a walk or a bike ride around your neighborhood should be safe and easy. Here's some tips to get you started:



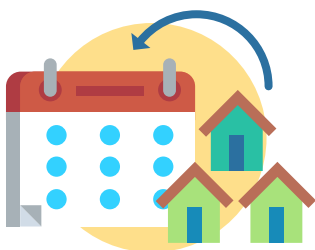
Attend bike/ped committee meetings in other neighborhoods.

There are over a dozen neighborhoods in the area who are looking to make their streets safer for biking and walking. Attend one of their meetings and learn. Check out bikepgh.org/advocate for a list of the various groups and their meeting schedules.



Talk to existing neighborhood groups.

You may be surprised. Existing neighborhood groups and Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are most likely already getting complaints about speeding cars, and would welcome a group of residents to focus on improving the neighborhood. You may find out that there is already a group of people thinking about these issues and could use your energy, enthusiasm, and/or organizational skills.



Find out what other groups, events, and fairs exist in your neighborhood.

Is there a block watch? A running club? A dog walking group? Attend their meetings or events and introduce yourself, and be sure to listen. You will probably find common ground, and may be able to tap into their energy. This also serves to build allies, so that when the time comes, they will already be on your side.

ORGANIZATION BASICS

Now that you've decided to get a Neighborhood Bike/Ped Committee going, it's time to start organizing the group, get people to join, and figure out what you're going to work on. You're now ready to put the word out, call a meeting, and get prepared.



Create a Name.

Try to pick a name that describes what and who you are. If you've made it this far, you are no doubt the expert in this field in your neighborhood, so you'll want to be perceived as official. Depending on neighborhood dynamics, you may not want to call it a "Bike/Ped" group. Rather, you may want something with a bit more of a wide ranging appeal, using words like traffic calming, slow-streets, complete streets, livability, greening, etc. The name can always change after you get people on board.



Set a regular meeting time.

The benefit of being a founder is that you can pick a regular meeting time that works for your schedule. For example, you know that you have the second Tuesday of every month available, so why not set that as the regular meeting time and see who else can fit that into their schedule?



Set a regular, public location.

Find a spot where you can have a comfortable discussion with 8-10 people. Sometimes bars or coffee shops are a good place to start, but can often be distracting or loud. Ask around, there may be a community group that will offer you space for free or your local library. You can always have meetings at your home, as well, but know that you may be inviting strangers in and it may not feel as welcoming as a public space.





Communication.

Get a Google account, it's free. There are a ton of tools that you will have access to (more on that later), including their "Groups" tool. It's a great way to have email conversations with multiple people, and users are able to choose to have conversations bundled in a daily or weekly summary so as to not clog their inboxes. Also, users can add or remove themselves from the group. It's also a good idea to make a Facebook page and/or Twitter account once you've decided on a name and come up with your mission and vision statement.



Write a generalized mission and vision statement.

A **Mission Statement** is a brief, one or two sentence statement that describes the work your committee or group does. (E.g.: DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the Penn Hills Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee is to improve bicycle and pedestrian conditions for the benefit of all Penn Hills residents.)

A **Vision Statement** is a brief paragraph that describes how your town or neighborhood will be different as a result of your efforts. (E.g.: DRAFT VISION STATEMENT: As a result of the Committee's efforts: Penn Hills will be a neighborhood where more people walk and bike for transit, recreation and health. City roads will include facilities which support [bike/ped?] [all user?] modes as appropriate. Walking and bicycling connections to public transit modes will be improved. Motorists and bicyclists will be educated on how to share the road. Congestion will be reduced as use of single occupancy vehicles for short trips decreases.)



PRO TIP:

Make sure you have the time for this, at least at the beginning. It will take some time and effort on your part to get a group up and running, and people will be looking to you for leadership. This means budgeting time for looking for a space, setting the agenda, putting the word out, etc. Doing a bit of homework, and bringing rough drafts to meetings greatly facilitates the writing process, and avoids having to write something from scratch in a group setting.

THE FIRST MEETING

The first meeting can be intimidating, but preparing for it will help make the meeting go much smoother, as well as being able to get more accomplished. Below are some recommendations, ideas, and requirements to help you plan an effective first meeting.

Create an agenda.

A good agenda has a start time, an end time, and approximate times for each discussion item. Be sure to include time for introductions, follow up actions, and setting the date for the next meeting. Also, end on time.

Set the tone.

Making sure that the first meeting feels friendly, welcoming and inclusive of all ideas and thoughts for everyone to connect, talk, and discuss goes a long way for creating a lasting atmosphere and initial bond between members.

Go over the draft mission and vision statement.

Bring the draft mission and vision statement that you wrote. It's a good place to start a conversation

Pick a committee chair.

A chair will be responsible for making sure meetings happen, signing letters, and generally leading the meeting. This can be you, but be sure to discuss what term limits should be (more on this later).

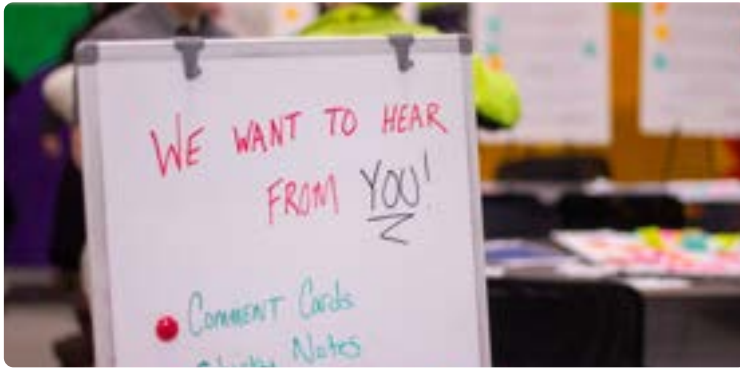
Pick a note taker.

The note taker will be responsible for taking notes, keeping track of "to-dos" and sending the notes out to the group in a timely manner.



PRO TIP:

Be sure to send a reminder notification several days before the meeting, ie. not the day before. In addition to jogging people's memories and getting it on their calendar, it helps reinforce that the meeting is actually happening.



Discuss what infrastructure changes need to be made.

That's why everyone is at the meeting. Most likely you'll find common ground, opportunities and new ideas.

Discuss folk's strengths and weaknesses.

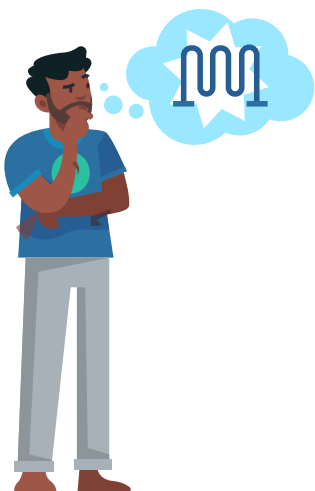
Ask what people think are their strengths/weaknesses and/or preferences in the committee. Some people like to do more of the outward facing work like showing up and speaking at a public meeting or council hearing. Others prefer a lower profile like writing letters, researching information, or running social media accounts. Still others might like a combination of both or something different. It's good to know what everyone is bringing and willing to do for the group.

Make a list of priorities and categorize them.

Examples of **short term**: Review local plans, review paving/construction schedule, review development projects, bike rack at a business, safety audits, crosswalks, potholes

Examples of **medium term**: Neighborhood-wide bike racks, bike lanes & sharrows that don't require a road redesign, crosswalks, curb cuts

Examples of **long term**: Bike lanes, road diets, sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks, lighting, trail connections, curb bump-outs



PRO TIP:

Start Small! Pick a few short term, winnable projects to work on, something like a bike rack or a crosswalk project. This exercise will help get you involved in the community, make your name known, and show success to energize people.

Discuss affiliation with another organization or independence.

An important decision to make. More on this in the next section.

AFFILIATION VS INDEPENDENCE

This is a big discussion about if you will be officially affiliated with another local group, or if you will be acting on your own. There are pros and cons to each.



Independent

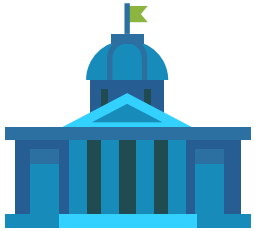
Some groups, like the Lawrenceville Bike/Ped Committee are an ad hoc independent group of residents working to make biking and walking improvements in the neighborhood. While they work independently, existing community organizations like the Lawrenceville Corporation and Lawrenceville United, attend their meetings and help make decisions together. Their professionalism and successful community events have made them the respected go-to citizen group for bike ped issues in the neighborhood. Most neighborhood organizations hear complaints from neighbors regarding traffic, and are usually more than happy to have a group of residents working on this issue.



Affiliation with an existing neighborhood organization.

Other groups affiliate themselves directly with established neighborhood organizations. For example, the Northside Bike/Ped Committee is an official committee of the Northside Leadership Conference. Some of these neighborhood groups have existing committees that you can join where you can spearhead the biking and walking advocacy, maybe breaking off into a stand alone subcommittee one day. This is the case in with Oakland's (now) Bike/Ped Committee, formerly called the Oakland Green Team. This committee of the Oakland Planning and Development Organization, started out with "greening" initiatives and have since added biking and walking to the list of their goals and have

been integral in raising awareness in the neighborhood. Both of these committees have had a paid staffer from the parent organization who helps get the meeting together, sends out the notes, etc.



Government Advisory Committee.

A final option, which is mostly relevant in Pittsburgh’s neighboring municipalities, is to become an official committee of the township. This is called an “Advisory Committee” and will have their own operating rules. The Ross Township Bike/Ped Committee, spearheaded by a town manager, is an example of this type of affiliation.

Obviously, each of these arrangements have their own positives and negatives, and it will be up to the committee, using their knowledge of neighborhood dynamics to determine which version is the appropriate arrangement. Remember, you’re not stuck with whatever you pick now. An independent group can always choose to affiliate down the line, and vice versa.



PRO/ CON LIST

Affiliating your group with an existing organization or government

PRO

- May have access to resources like mapmaking, photocopying, meeting space, software, website
- Easier access to decision makers
- Recognition from City Officials
- May have a paid staffer to help coordinate meetings
- May have access to contacts, newsletters, data, etc
- May be able to obtain grants, donations
- Established relationship with the community

CON

- Need to be more formal in posting agendas, minutes
- Less independence to act on your own
- May complicate event organizing
- May need approvals from others not in the committee to write letters, make decisions, spend money, etc
- Less control over your online presence
- Established relationship with the community



ANNOUNCE AND RECRUIT

Doing a semi formal or formal announcement of your group is a good way to legitimize and make your group official. Publicly announcing it will also help to recruit members and reach a wider audience. Here are some ways that you could announce your group and recruit members.



Send a letter to your councilperson(s).

This is a great way to introduce yourself, tell them you'll be working on these issues in their district, and that they should look to you as a resource. Offering to be helpful to them goes a long way and establishes you as an expert in the field.



Social Media.

Like it or not, Facebook is a major way that people find out about events and news. Likewise, Twitter is a good way to tag Councilpeople, the City, and other officials/organizations as well as report problems.



Hold an event.

Host a happy hour, walk and ride.
Get to know your neighbors!



Organize a safety audit.

A safety audit is when a group picks a corridor that they'd like to improve, and focuses on documenting all the problems and issues block by block. This information is useful to city planners and can help you figure out where to concentrate efforts. Invite your neighborhood planner and councilperson to this!



Participate in other group's events.

There are most likely some community festivals or farmers markets going on. These are great opportunities to get the word out, as well as offering something fun and interesting to the festival. For example, many groups have borrowed BikePGH's I <3 My Bike photobooth to help register bikes in a national theft prevention and recovery program called Bike Index. Community groups usually have newsletters too where you can announce your regular meetings and events.



Surveys.

Surveys are a great way to find out information about the community's priorities and get the word out about your organization. For example, the Lawrenceville Bike/Ped Committee authored a survey to find out which street cyclists prefer to climb from Lawrenceville to Bloomfield.



Website.

While not totally necessary, it is a good idea to have a place where people can find out the basics about the group, meeting times, issues, etc. There are many free website platforms, or if you are affiliated with another organization, you can ask them to host a page for you.



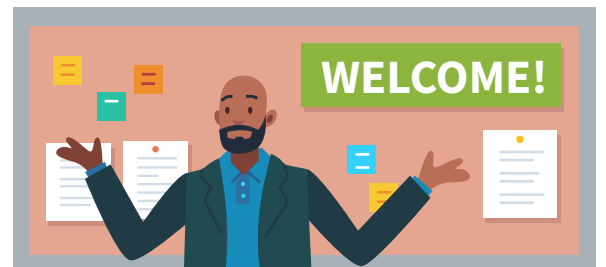
PRO TIP:

From the start, be sure to help build other leaders. You can't do this alone, and no group can last on the enthusiasm and time of one person.



BikePGH Contacts

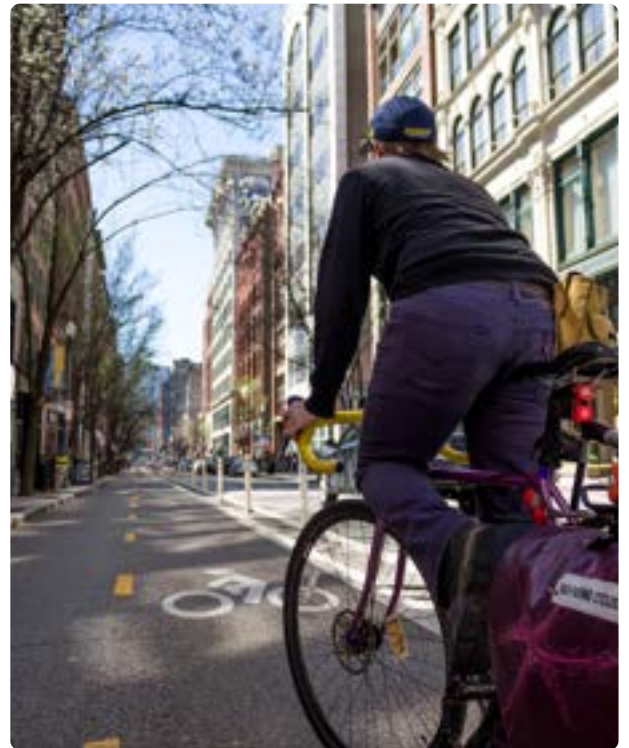
Talk to BikePGH about reaching out to their contacts in your zipcode(s). More on this in a later section.



ADVOCACY AND GETTING STUFF DONE

Advocacy is the process where supporters raise awareness about an issue and work together to turn their ideas into a reality. At this point, you probably have an idea of why you are all together, but what do you want to accomplish? Are you simply trying to promote bicycling in your neighborhood, or reach for much loftier goals like changing infrastructure...or both?

You can classify most of what you do, into three categories: (1) **Programs**, (2) **Infrastructure** and (3) **Policy**. In general, programs are easier to pull off, but may require a sustained long-term commitment of the organizers. While infrastructure projects will require more up-front work, once they are in, are most likely permanent. For instance, it's easy to plan a weekly bike ride or walk, but if you are unable to promote the event and guarantee that ride leaders will show up week after week, then it will most likely fail. On the flipside, getting something like a speed hump or curb bump-out installed will require letter writing, talking to neighbors, building support, and generally doing all the grassroots work necessary to move your idea up the City's priority list. Any of these ideas can be easy or hard, short or long term, so it's important to classify your goals as such, and begin to strategize.



PRO TIP:

There are so many projects that are being juggled behind the scenes on the City level. Before launching any infrastructure campaigns, it's wise to consult with BikePGH to see what's been tried, what's been successful, what's in the works, and if there are ways to plug into an existing project. It doesn't help anyone to duplicate efforts, and it's important to speak as one voice, no matter who that voice is.



PROGRAMS



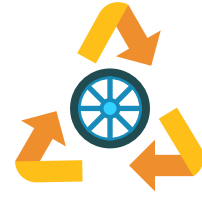
Short

Park(ing) Day, OpenStreets, Bike to Work Day train, yield to pedestrian signs, etc.



Medium

City Cycling Classes, forum or topical discussion, etc.



Long

Weekly Ride, Recycled bike shop, youth programs, etc.



INFRASTRUCTURE



Short

Bike rack at a grocery store, crosswalk, pothole fix, wheelchair curb cut, reviewing plans



Medium

Bike racks in a business area, bike lane, sharrows, influencing a development project



Long

Protected bike lane, trail, sidewalk, neighborhood plan



PRO TIP:

Keep an eye on opportunities. Something like a repaving project or road reconstruction can move a bike lane idea from long term to short term if you are able to mobilize and focus on the issue.

WINNING CAMPAIGNS

No matter if it's a program or infrastructure improvement, it's helpful to structure each project into a "campaign." Structuring each campaign as a singular goal will help you think through the issue and figure out all of the moving parts, people you need to talk to, and resources that are available to you. All advocacy efforts begin with planning a campaign that has tangible, measurable goals and objectives, so a little bit of up front brainstorming will go a long way.

Below are the steps to help you define, refine, and strategize around your idea. No matter if your campaign is big or small, it helps to go through this exercise so that you know what you are getting into. Depending on the complexity of the campaign, not all steps need to be completed, or even in the order that they are presented. BikePGH uses this framework when assessing our own goals when working with the City and other stakeholders.

This is a great time to assess the number of people that you've been able to get around the table (and see if you need more) and figure out what you can reasonably accomplish and win.

Much of this section is taken from the Alliance for Biking & Walking's Winning Campaigns workbook. They no longer exist as a formal organization but you can get a copy of the workbook if you email us at BikePGH. The full version goes into more detail, going through more exercises, and learning some great tips.

STEPS TO A "WINNING CAMPAIGN"



1. Define the Issue



2. Set Goal(s)



3. Assess Resources



4. Strategize



5. Communicate



6. Set Tactics and Timelines



7. Manage Resources



1. Define the Issue.

Your mission may be broad (e.g., “making Oakland a better place to bike and walk”) but the defined issue of an advocacy campaign should be sharp and narrow (“the Fifth/Forbes Corridor needs bike lanes”). Defining the issue can be a good group activity early in the process.

Ultimately, the result should enable everyone to describe the problem and to describe the solution. Use the following exercises to refine the definition of the issue, using just a few sentences for each item.

Identify the problem.

(e.g. Brownsville Rd is dangerous for biking)

Formulate a preliminary solution.

(Brownsville Rd needs bike lanes)

Illustrate how to implement the solution, the “fix.”

(The City needs to assess the parking needs of Brownsville Rd, and use some of that real estate to slow down cars and dedicate some of that space for people on bikes)

List people who care and what’s at stake.

(Parents whose kids go to the school, elderly people crossing from their retirement community)

Create a quick pitch.

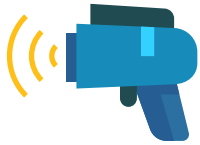
Put these four elements together in a few sentences that can be recited quickly. This is the statement of the issue. (Brownsville road is dangerous. Due to the random and underutilized on-street parking, the roadway becomes widened, enabling drivers to speed on their way to the highway. People have trouble crossing the street and would also like to ride bicycles on the otherwise convenient and direct corridor. The City needs to improve the conditions of the road so that people of all ages can safely walk and bike to their jobs and our great shopping districts.)



2. Set Goal(s)

Dig deeper into the the “fix,” you proposed in the last exercise. What is the specific change you hope to achieve? What are some of the steps that will need to be accomplished to achieve this goal? Does the goal fit within your group’s mission and vision? Is the goal “SMART”—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely? You can divide these goals into 3 types: long term, medium term and short term. For the purposes of campaign planning, your long-term goal should be achievable with this campaign. Your short- and medium-term goals are incremental steps toward your long-term goal. It’s OK for the short- and medium-term goals to be small. Those victories keep people energized to win the long-term goal! Be sure to include a target or completion date with each goal.

GOAL EXAMPLES



Short-term

Contact Councilperson, Contact neighborhood group, Assess speeds with the speed gun



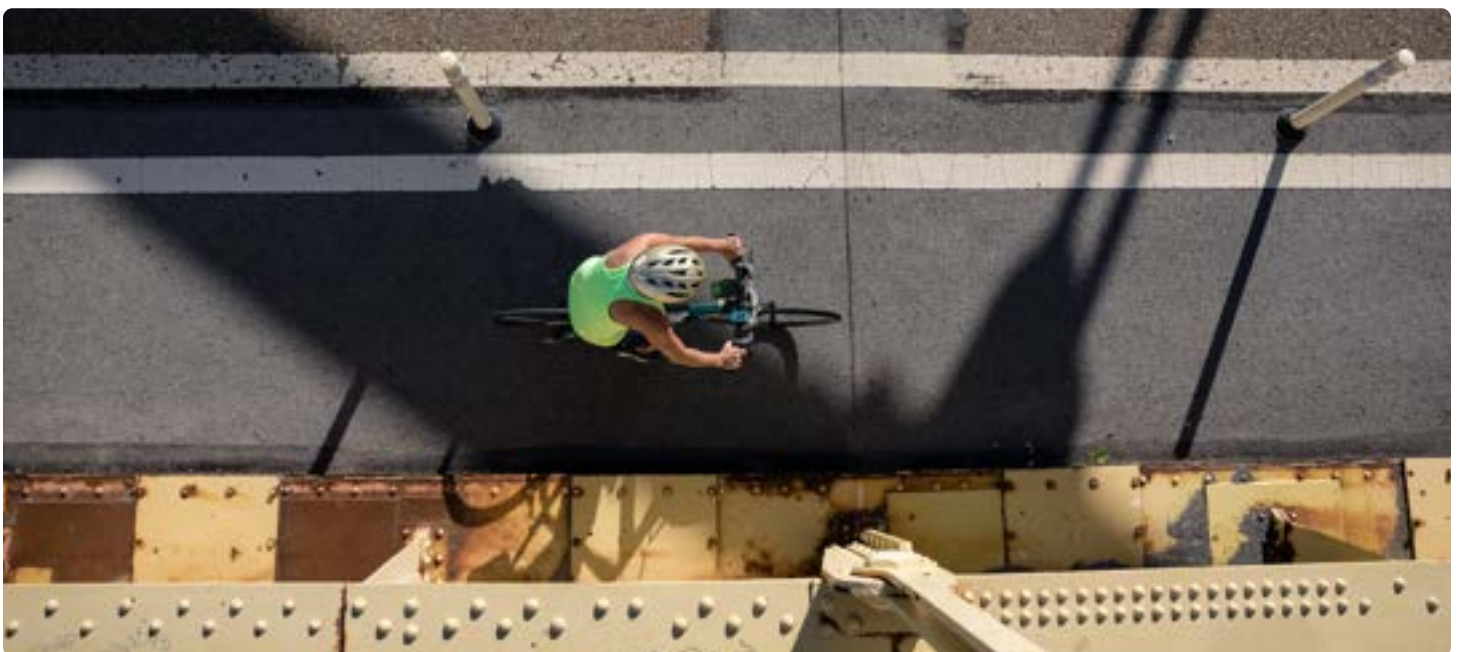
Medium-term

Work with City Planning to organize traffic count, Public Meeting



Long-term

Install bike lane, Thank you letters





3. Assess Resources

Think about your potential campaign and the group you're assembling. What resources do you have access to execute your campaign? What strengths do you have as a person or a group that you can capitalize on? What weaknesses do you have as a person or a group that you'll need help addressing? Who shares your vision, and will join you in pursuit of your goal? Is there a planning entity in your area you can approach for help? Are there opportunities out there that you can take advantage of to move forward? Are there threats that you'll have to counter? These questions can be analyzed using the classic "SWOT" matrix, standing for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

S.W.O.T. MATRIX

Strengths (Internal): E.g. Group includes a diversity of members, of all ages	Weaknesses (Internal): E.g. Members are very busy, difficult to get people to show up
Opportunities (External): E.g. Mayor is pushing complete streets initiatives	Threats (External): E.g. Vocal neighbors who "hate" bicyclists



4. Strategize

While this has all been strategizing up to this point, we need to drill down further and see who it is that we need on board to win the campaign, i.e. the Power Players.

Who has the power to make the change that you need to achieve your goal(s)?

In identifying or “targeting” these people, be as specific as possible. These members will be what the Alliance calls the “Agents of Change” for your campaign. These are the people that you will directly need to reach out to in order to get on your side and make things happen.

The following exercise will help you identify your targets. Be as specific as you can be. If you don’t have enough specific info to identify the individual you need to talk to, identify the organization or group he or she may belong to. Remember, the “totally opposed” are not worth your time and shouldn’t be on your list. The people and groups who agree with you should not be primary targets, but are perhaps Secondary Agents of Change, who can help you persuade their undecided colleagues, your Primary Agents of Change.

Primary Agents of Change Specific people (list names) who have the power to make the change you seek	Secondary Agents of Change People who have influence on the primary agents
E.g. An undecided City Councilor	E.g. Another Councilor, City Planning Staff

Now, think about Public Audiences. “Public Audiences” are the community groups that can be recruited as stakeholders with an interest in your campaign. Start by identifying just a few public audiences, so that you can tailor your message to effectively reach just the segments of the public you need to address. Think in terms of geography (e.g. neighborhoods, towns, counties) and constituencies (e.g. soccer moms, low-income people). Then start thinking about just how you’ll make contact with this audience. The media you choose in the next section will depend upon the public audiences you identify in this section.

Public Audiences for Change (Identify two or three public audiences)

E.g., Parents with kids, seniors who walk/bike, neighbors seeking slower traffics on their roads, etc.



5. Communicate

At its core, advocacy depends upon communication—talking to people, getting press, writing letters and editorials, using social media, etc., so that you can convince them to support your campaign.

Effective communication depends on the message as well as the medium. You will be best served if you can provide a comprehensive range of objective reasons that support your campaign. These can focus on its benefits for economic development, transportation, health, recreation, etc. Before you start reaching out to the agents of change and the public audiences you've targeted, you need to brainstorm about your message and how you will most effectively reach those audiences (e.g. letter, meeting, email). Not everyone is going to agree that whatever it is you're proposing is worth the time and money it may cost. Make sure your communications emphasize tangible benefits as well as “feel good” arguments. It is always better to argue from the standpoint of fulfilling a need, rather than a want.

Arguments can rely on both rational appeals (a sidewalk will improve safety) and emotional appeals (a sidewalk will make the neighborhood a nicer place to live). Effective advocacy blends these argumentative approaches, providing clear logic as well as more emotional reasons.



6. Set Tactics and Timelines

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Complete the following worksheet to come up with a list of concrete, specific actions you will pursue on a definite schedule.

Each of your tactics should meet the following criteria:

- Effectively achieves your campaign goals.
- Is appropriate to our organization’s culture and will strengthen, not divide us.
- Addresses a primary or secondary agent of change, or an identified public audience.
- Is fun, or at least not so daunting that we will alienate our base of supporters.
- Is achievable.
- Is realistic and we have the time, money, and people necessary to execute it

Tactic/Action	Lead Person	Date of Completion



7. Manage Resources

For the most part, many of the campaigns that you choose will consist of managing time and volunteers, and not so much in managing money. People need to show up, write letters, help with communications and tactics.

It is imperative that the organizer of an advocacy effort uses volunteer time and labor carefully and respectfully. Make sure that when you ask for help—whether it’s showing up at a public meeting, writing a letter, or staffing an information table— that what you’re asking your people to do is necessary and important. Make sure to make your volunteers feel valued and included in the overall effort.

The Alliance emphasizes managing resources using a circular process of Asking (for help or funds), Thanking people for their time or money, Informing people about progress and needs, and Involving people in the advocacy effort, which leads back to Asking.

HOW CAN BIKE PGH HELP?

- **Neighborhood Committee Toolkit** - Useful information on organizing a committee, advocacy, and getting things done
- **Civic Calendar** - An online calendar with listings of committee meetings, public meetings, and other important ways to engage in your community
- **Become an Advocate Page** - We'll list your committee on our Advocate page
- **Attend your meetings** - We try to attend as many of your meetings as humanly possible



- **“All-Neighborhood Meetings”** - Quarterly meetings to help coordinate efforts and share best-practices
- **I <3 My Bike Photobooth** - Our bike theft prevention photobooth is available for your group to use at events. Great way to engage residents
- **Radar Gun** - We have a radar gun that you can check out to help in your advocacy efforts
- **Publications** - The Pittsburgh Bike Map, Urban Biking Companion, Crash Card, and Advocacy Postcard are some of our printed materials that you can distribute
- **City Cycling Classes** - In-the-saddle training can come to your neighborhood
- **Guest posting on the BikePGH blog** - Reach a larger audience and write something about your committee for our blog
- **Connections to elected officials and city planners** - We've worked long and hard to maintain good working relationships with city officials and staff
- Technical assistance and support is just an email or phone call away.
- Workshops, networking events, mutual aid calls
- **Press** - Our experience can help you create quality press releases to attract media interest in local projects and priorities

Check out bikepgh.org/advocate for more info.



PRO TIP:

Coordinate campaigns with BikePGH, especially before advocating in City government or with large institutions. We may already be working on something and have years of experience, so coordinating the best tactical response is key. We need to speak as one voice, otherwise it gets confusing and watered down when speaking to decision makers.

TOOLS



311 - The City's non-emergency helpline is an important tool to get things done and build support. You can call, use their email form, or twitter. Know it, love it.



Google - The company has several tools that you'll find extremely useful in your organizing efforts and make it easy to work with other people. Best of all, they are free to use, you just have to sign up for a Google account.



Google Groups - Most organizations use this tool to host online email discussions and organize documents. Users can subscribe and unsubscribe themselves, as well as set notifications on a daily or weekly basis.



Google Docs - One of the best ways to share and create documents. You can post images, flyers, and other documents that anyone in the group can have access too. Also, you can create a document that multiple people can work on and edit at the same time. Google has versions of many Microsoft products, like Word, Excel, and Powerpoint, and the files can be downloaded to be compatible with those programs, or as a pdf.



Google Forms - Google's free online survey tool. It automatically compiles the answers into a spreadsheet



Google Maps - A great tool for tracking things in your neighborhood, that you can make publicly available online. There are many different icons and ways to represent everything from where you need bike racks and crosswalks, to speedy sections of road in need of traffic calming. Visualizations help you discover things you may not have noticed.



Doodle.com - An online tool to help you organize meetings by finding out everyone's availability. Eliminate the 30+ email threads where everyone is trying to figure out a date and time that works for the meeting. Highly recommended.



Alliance for Biking and Walking Winning Campaigns - The Alliance no longer exists but the materials can be found through the League of American Bicyclists. This toolkit borrowed heavily from the Alliance document. Go find the original for even more great advice and exercises.



Streetmix.net - An excellent online tool where you can create your dream cross sections of roads, just like the pros. This is seriously fun.

REFERENCES AND GUIDES

All of these are available online for free to download.

- **AASHTO** - The “bible” that traffic engineers consult when designing roadways. It’s useful to familiarize yourself with it.
- **MUTCD** - The book that standardizes all of the signs and road markings in the USA. If something is not in this book, it’s difficult to get installed.
- **NACTO** - A progressive guide to people-friendly street design, spearheaded by urban areas in the US to help install innovative infrastructure geared toward biking and walking. While it’s fairly new, the Federal Highway Administration has given states the go ahead to use these designs.
- **City of Pittsburgh Bike Plan** - Even though it was published in 1999, and many of the recommended actions have been completed, it still serves as a useful tool to see how the City works.
- **City of Pittsburgh Bicycle Parking Guidelines** - Everything you need to know about installing bike racks, bike corrals, and permitting in the public right of way. pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/bicycleparking
- **Strava heat map** - Figure out where people are riding in your community. This website aggregates millions of rides of people using their smartphone app visualized onto a beautiful heatmap. Fascinating stuff. labs.strava.com/heatmap

IMPORTANT LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

All of these are available online for free to download.

- **Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI)** - This is the newest department in the city and through its 3 divisions of planning, policy, and permitting, it is in charge of the transportation issues throughout the City. It manages the operation and access to public right-of-way (i.e. Streets, sidewalks, and the like).
- **Department of City Planning** - As the name implies, they try to figure out the big picture change in the city, or the “where,” “when,” and “why” of change. They are responsible for working with communities to make sure they are comfortable with projects. This is where the City’s Bike/Ped Coordinator and the Neighborhood Planner assigned to your neighborhood is housed.
- **Department of Public Works (DPW)** - These folks figure out the “how” of installing bike and ped infrastructure.
- **PennDOT** - Many roads, even within the City of Pittsburgh, are owned by the State, and may be your target. Their PennDOT Type 10 map is easily found on the internet and will tell you which roads are owned by the state or by the municipality.

- **Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC)** - These folks control how federal and state monies are distributed toward transportation projects. Keep an eye on them, as there may be some grant money available for biking and walking projects, especially if you represent a municipality that is not in the City of Pittsburgh.
- **Port Authority** - A key partner toward reducing auto dependency and creating a pedestrian friendly environment. As things like bike lanes may affect their operations, it's important to engage them early.
- **Friends of the Riverfront** - The go-to organization who maintains the Three Rivers Trail System.
- **Trail Pittsburgh** - Organization responsible for building and maintaining the recreational trails in our region's park system.
- **Allegheny County Economic Development** - Housed in the County Executive's office, this department works on the planning, and sometimes execution of infrastructure projects.

CONCLUSION

Thanks for reading. We hope you find this document useful in your advocacy efforts. For us to create the city we want to live in, we all need to work together. Unfortunately, none of this will come easy, and will take time, energy, and commitment.

This Toolkit is not meant to be treated as a rulebook rather a guide to help you figure out how to approach problems and help find solutions. Each neighborhood is different and opportunities arise, sometimes by surprise, so we need flexibility to work effectively.

Please let us know how to improve this Toolkit. We're all working together to make a walking and biking friendly Pittsburgh region, so any input will be helping us all!

