



WE WANT SAFE STREETS!

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Starting and Sustaining Neighborhood
Bike & Pedestrian Committees

BIKE
PGH!

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, several neighborhood-specific biking, walking, and traffic safety advocacy committees have formed across Pittsburgh and in the surrounding municipalities. These "mini-BikePGH's" have helped us further our mission in ways we could never have done alone, and they have brought invaluable local input and legitimacy to transformative policy and infrastructure changes. 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. These advocates provide critical support for meaningful changes to our streets, and hold decision-makers to bold policies such as Vision Zero. These committees are critical to making real changes to our streets that save lives and reduce car dependency.

While our membership plays a vital role in helping us make change, the goal of this toolkit is to go beyond our membership and help create a culture of safe streets advocacy in every community. We want to see a thriving movement that is empowered to act for change and continue this momentum. We are a small office in Lawrenceville, so supporting community leaders to multiply our influence and effectiveness is the best way to bring our shared dream of a biking and walking friendly Pittsburgh 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 community 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 advocacy groups 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 movement to make the region more livable, and start or join a neighborhood biking and walking advocacy group or "bike/ped committee". The following document combines the lessons that we've learned from existing committees with our experience in working with local governments as well as the national biking and walking movement. We hope that our experience and access to decision makers, combined with your local knowledge and passion will expedite the changes we want to see.

So take a look and please contact us with your questions and ideas - we're here to help!



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For more information about our campaigns, resources, advocate training workshops, and a calendar of advocacy opportunities go to bikepgh.org/advocacy

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*Scan here to see the online
copy of this toolkit + share
with other advocates!*

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. Recruiting like-minded people to join a cause and assist with a group's mission should be one of the primary goals of your group. 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:



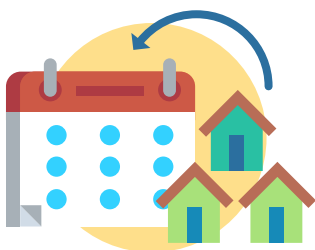
Attend bike/ped committee meetings in other neighborhoods.

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



Talk to existing neighborhood groups.

You may be surprised. Existing neighborhood groups, Community Development Corporations (CDCs), and Registered Community Organizations (RCOs) 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. See examples of other committee names at bikepgh.org/BPC.



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, 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 set up a social media presence once you've decided on a name, and messaging tools like Slack or WhatsApp can help with group communication when people don't check email and social media reliably. When you're getting started, try sending personalized text message reminders to the 5-10 people you most want to have at your meetings.



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 Swissvale Safe Streets is to improve biking and walking conditions for the benefit of all Swissvale 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 our efforts, Swissvale will be a community where people have a great time biking and walking. City roads will be designed to support all users to be safe, and walking and biking connections to everyday destinations including public transit will be accessible and pleasant, supporting a thriving local economy.)



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, review of action items, setting your next meeting date/place, and deciding how to communicate between meetings (Google group, Slack, WhatsApp Community, regular email, or something else). Also, end on time.

Set the tone

Create an atmosphere that feels friendly, inclusive, and welcoming so that people will want to keep coming back! Do this by warmly welcoming people, dedicating time for people to socialize, and ensuring that everyone gets to participate in discussions. It also helps to find out before the meeting if anyone has any accessibility needs that you can address such as wheelchair access, childcare, or dietary needs.

Go over the draft mission and vision statement

Bring the draft mission and vision statement that you wrote and discuss it with the group. What resonates with people? What doesn't? What could be added? You might want to delegate a small group to revise the statements and bring them to the next meeting for approval. From there, it's a good idea to read your mission & vision at the opening of each meeting.

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). You might also want to designate a co-chair and/or other roles!

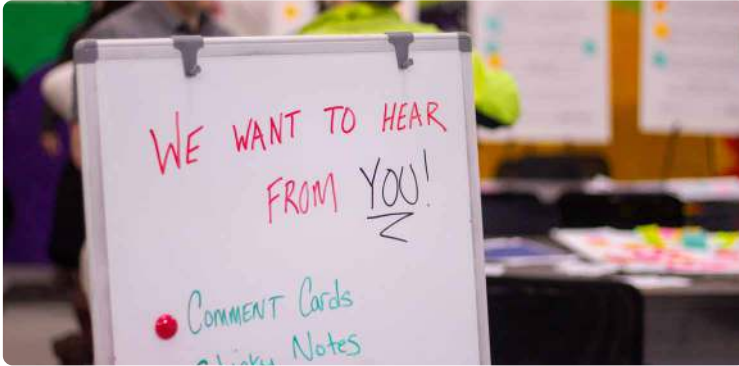
Pick a note taker

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:

Don't wait till the day before the meeting to send a reminder. In addition to jogging people's memories and getting it on their calendar, it helps reinforce that the meeting is actually happening. If you can, send a calendar event invite to everyone.



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 folks' 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 speaking at a public meeting or talking with elected officials. Others prefer a lower profile like writing letters, researching information, or running social media accounts. Still others might like a combination of activities or something different like planning group rides/walks. It's good to know what everyone is energized by and willing to contribute to the group.

Make a list of priorities and categorize them

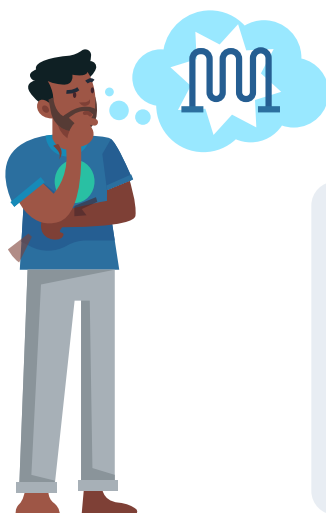
Examples of **short term**: Review local plans, review paving/construction schedule, review development projects, bike rack at a business, safety audits, crosswalks, potholes

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

Discuss affiliation with another organization or independence

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



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.

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 Lawrenceville Bike/Ped Committee are an independent group of residents working to make biking and walking improvements in the neighborhood. While they work independently, representatives from 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 separate group of residents working on this issue.



Affiliation with an existing neighborhood organization.

Other groups affiliate themselves directly with established neighborhood organizations. For example, For example, the Polish Hill Safety & Mobility Committee is an official committee of the Polish Hill Civic Association. 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. These committees sometimes have paid staffers from the parent organization who helps get the meetings together, sends out the notes, helps manage their budget, etc.



Government Advisory Committee.

A final option, which is mostly relevant in Pittsburgh’s neighboring municipalities, is to become an official committee of the local government. This is called an “Advisory Committee” and will have their own operating rules. Dormont’s Safe Mobility Commission, appointed by their Borough Council, is an example of this type of affiliation.

Obviously, each of these arrangements have their own benefits and drawbacks, 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 and Instagram are where many people find out about events and news. Likewise, tagging Councilpeople, the City, and other officials/organizations on X (aka Twitter) is a good way to get attention on problems. The “bicycling412” subreddit at [r/bicycling412](https://www.reddit.com/r/bicycling412) is also a great place to share events and ask questions.



Hold an event

Host a social hour, walk, or ride.
Get to know your neighbors!



Organize a safety audit

Pick a street or intersection you'd like to improve, and document all the safety & accessibility problems and opportunities in the area. This can help you decide what to work on or demonstrate issues to decision makers. Visit bikepgh.org/advocacy/resources for a guide



Participate in other local events

There are most likely some community festivals, block parties, or farmers markets going on. You could set up a table with a map and post-its to collect ideas about what is and isn't working about local biking and walking infrastructure. Also community groups usually have newsletters 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, Better Streets Lawrenceville 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.



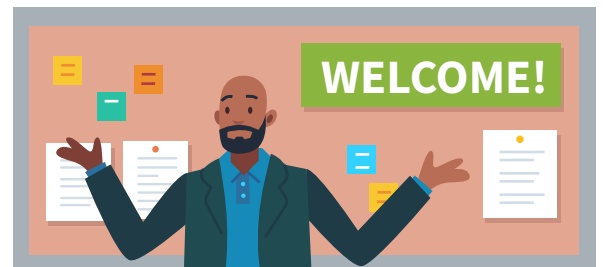
PRO TIP:

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

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 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 a coalition if possible.

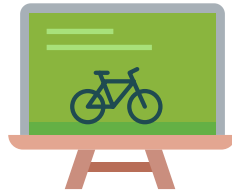


PROGRAMS



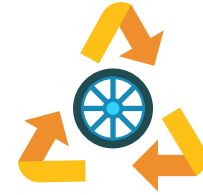
Short

Bike to Work/School Day “bike bus”, bike maintenance pop-up, neighborhood rides/walks, etc.



Medium

Safe Cycling Classes, lecture/workshop series, etc.



Long

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

INFRASTRUCTURE



Short

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



Medium

Bike racks in a business area, bike lane, applying for City’s traffic calming program, influencing a development project



Long

Protected bike lane, trail, sidewalk, neighborhood plan, Neighborway

POLICY

While infrastructure improvements can transform a specific street or neighborhood, changing policy can lead to transformation across an entire region. For example, the City of Pittsburgh’s Complete Streets Policy has helped incorporate street designs for all users at the beginning of a project, so that we don’t have to push for safe biking and walking at a late stage in the design process.

Find out if your municipality has any of the following policies or plans in place: complete streets, vision zero, primary walking routes, an active transportation plan, or a traffic calming policy. If not, or your existing policies need improvement, that could be a meaningful campaign!

Policy campaigns can get complicated, but they can have a big impact. Reach out to BikePGH with your ideas and we’ll be happy to help you think through your next steps!



CHOOSING A CAMPAIGN

No matter if it's a program, infrastructure improvement, or policy, structuring each project into a "campaign" will help you focus your planning and resources effectively. Your group might have many ideas for campaigns that you could work on, but you'll want to focus on one or two at a time so that you can stay focused and energized. An effective campaign is one that fits the interests of your group, addresses a real need in your community, grows your base of supporters, and is realistically winnable. Use the table below to help you think through three possible campaigns and choose one or two to focus on first.

Write the names of your potential campaigns in the boxes at the top of each column. Then, rank each campaign with a 0, 1, 2 or 3 in each box next to the criterion: a '3' for very high fulfillment of that item, '2' for moderate, '1' for low and '0' for not at all. In the bottom column, add up your scores. Of course, the "bottom line" shouldn't dictate your final choice, as some criteria may be more important to you than others, but a lot of support for one campaign should tell you something.

	Potential Campaigns:			
Winnability	1. Aligns with similar previously successful campaigns.			
	2. Is realistically winnable.			
	3. Results in definite and quantifiable improvement in the community.			
	4. Makes long-term improvements to the bike/ped environment.			
Community Involvement	5. Enlists the involvement of important groups of people.			
	6. Fits your org's mission, culture, and resources; unifies your community, not divides.			
	7. Involves current members in a meaningful way.			
	8. Attracts new members.			
	9. Many people care and at least a few within your constituency are very passionate about this issue.			
Organizational Strength Building	10. Builds your group's political power.			
	11. Leverages positive media and promotion of your organization.			
	12. Has strong fundraising potential. (All 0's if irrelevant.)			
	Totals:			

WINNING CAMPAIGNS

Once you have chosen your campaign, it's time to create a strategy to win! A campaign strategy is a written document that defines your issue, articulates your ultimate goal, identifies your targets, clarifies your capacity, lays out your messaging, and describes the various actions you'll take to win.

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 figure out what you can reasonably accomplish together. You might need more support.

This section is a simplified version of materials shared at the full day Strategies For Winning Campaigns training that BikePGH hosts at least once each year. Visit our resources page at bikepgh.org/advocacy/resources for the workbook, additional advocacy skills workshops, and more in-depth tools.

STEPS TO A WINNING CAMPAIGN STRATEGY



1. Define the issue



2. Set goals



3. Assess resources



4. Identify Agents of Change



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 the solution. Use the following prompts to refine the definition of the issue, using just a few sentences for each item.

Identify the problem

“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. For example “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 goals

Dig deeper into the the “fix,” you proposed in the last exercise. What is the specific change you hope to achieve? This is your singular long-term goal for the campaign. Write it down, and make sure it’s SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Relevant means it fits your group’s mission and vision. Time-bound means there’s a “by when” date.

Then, what are some of the steps that will need to be accomplished to achieve your long-term goal? These are your medium- and short-term goals. It’s OK for the medium- and short-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



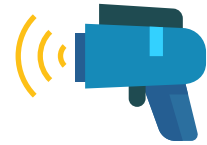
Long-term

There is a protected bike lane on Brownsville Rd by X Date.



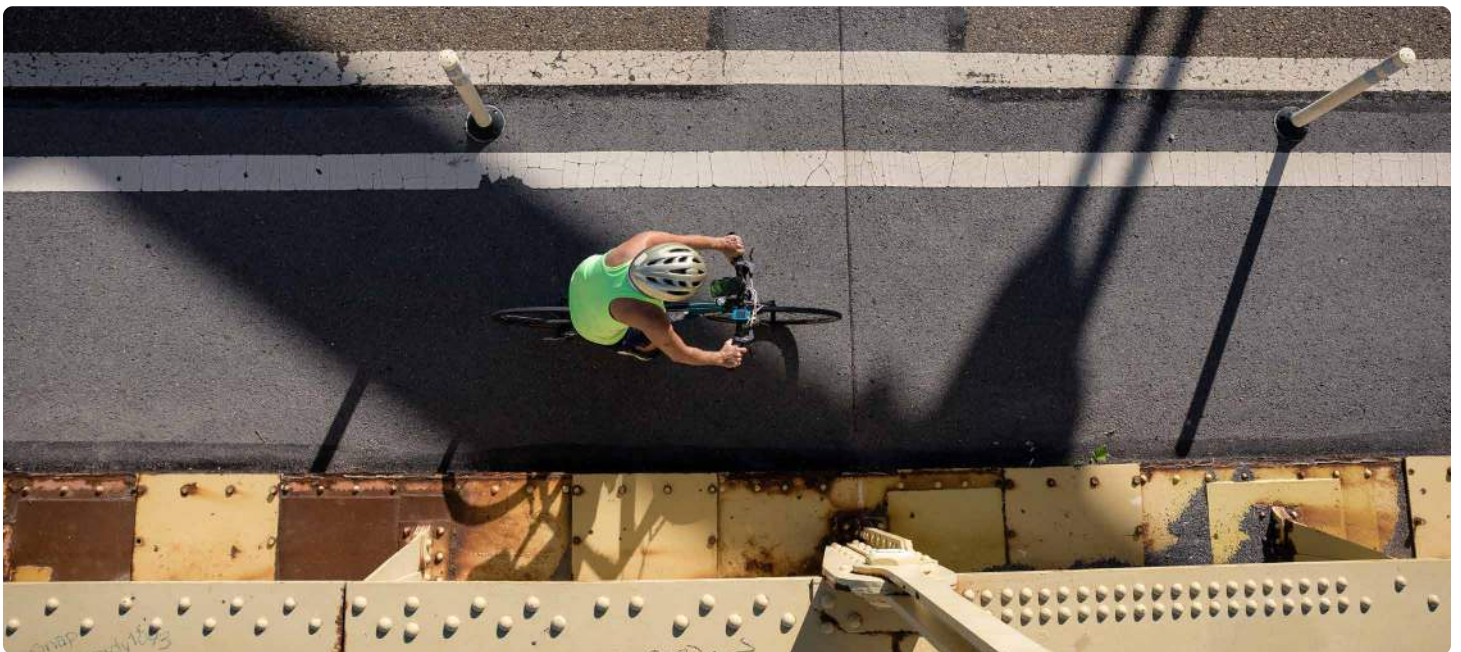
Medium-term

Work with DOMI to organize traffic count, Public Meeting



Short-term

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





3. Assess resources

Think about your potential campaign and the group you're assembling. What resources do you have available to execute your campaign? What strengths do you have as a person or a group that you can leverage? 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, other allies working on projects with shared goals

Threats (External): E.g. Vocal neighbors who "hate" bicyclists



4. Identify Agents of Change

Now that you know what your campaign is about and your capacity, it's time to determine who you need on board to win your 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 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 they 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, Department of Mobility and Infrastructure	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. Think of it in terms of building a broad coalition of support. 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. parents, wheelchair users). Then start thinking about 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, older people 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 your Agents of Change 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 equity, economic development, air quality, 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. social media, meeting, email).

Use the following prompts to think through your message. You should be able to combine all five elements into an “elevator speech” you can say in one minute or less

HOOK: *(A way to get attention and connect with your target/audience.)*

PROBLEM: *(The issue and what’s at stake?)*

SOLUTION: *(Your campaign -- what you’re calling on your target to do.)*

BENEFIT: *(How will the solution help people?)*

CALL TO ACTION: *(What can the person you’re speaking with do to help?)*



6. Set tactics and timelines

In many respects, all the planning you've done up to this point boils down to this step-- when you create your to-do list of actions or "tactics" that need to be taken to win your campaign and a timeline for their completion.

What needs to be done? Who will contact whom? What will be the first coordinated effort your group will undertake? How will you communicate your message to the world? How will you begin to develop community or political support? Will it be an informational public meeting? A series of one on one meetings? A letter to the editor campaign?



All of these possible actions and tasks are "tactics" in the sense that they are what you are doing to accomplish a long term "strategic goal"—usually, addressing the issue your group came together to address. Note that as you proceed, unanticipated opportunities may present themselves, so tactics may change and evolve. As mentioned above, the advocacy process is not usually linear nor neat. It does not always move in a single direction in a perfect step by step fashion, so it's important to be flexible and be able to change. Sometimes you'll need to revisit a step, or start a new sequence of tactics based on circumstances and changes. In any advocacy process, participants should be willing to reconsider tactics, add audiences and groups to reach out to, and continually hone and refine messaging.

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 your organization's culture and will strengthen, not divide it.
- Addresses a primary or secondary target or an identified public audience.
- Is fun, or at least not so daunting that you will alienate your base of supporters.
- Is achievable & realistic: you have the resources & skill necessary to execute it.
- Easy to execute for your side & surprises your opponents.

Tactic/Action	Lead Person	Due/Do Date

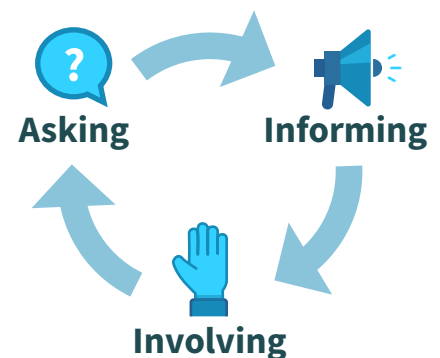


7. Manage resources

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.

Think about managing your resources as 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 BIKEPGH HELP?

Advocacy Resource Library - Access maps, data, advocacy guides, training materials, technical information, planning documents, and more!

Civic Calendar - An online calendar with listings of committee meetings, public meetings, and other important ways to engage in your community

Get-Involved Page - We'll list your group in our directory.

Advocacy Training Workshops - We regularly lead training workshops to teach new and seasoned advocates alike the skills you need to be successful. You can also view our archive of recorded workshops.

Guest posting on the BikePGH blog - Reach a larger audience and write something about your committee for our blog.

Outreach - We can share about your events and action alerts on our social media and send occasional targeted emails to our members in your neighborhood. We can also help you attract media attention to your events and projects.

Attend your meetings - Invite us to attend your meetings. We try to attend as many as we can and be as helpful as possible.

Publications - The Pittsburgh Bike Map, Urban Biking Companion, Crash Card, E-Bike Guide, this toolkit, and fun BikePGH stickers are some of our printed materials that you can distribute for free.

Connections to elected officials and city planners - We've worked long and hard to maintain good working relationships with city officials and staff.

Find these resources and more on our website at bikepgh.org/advocacy, or email advocacy@bikepgh.org for technical assistance and support.

You can also go there to sign up for our [Outspoken advocacy newsletter](#) and join our [Bike/Ped Advocacy Slack](#) chat space for the latest news and opportunities.



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 report problems, suggestions, and close calls. You can call, use their online form, or report via the MyBurgh app. Issues with more reports get higher priority.



EngagePGH - The City regularly posts updates on infrastructure projects, policies, and community events at engage.pittsburghpa.gov. Go there to share feedback about proposed changes and learn about public meetings.



How do we decide? - Sooner or later your group will need to make a decision about something, possibly even a tough decision. Use this guide to help you find a decision making process that works well for your group.



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



Strava Heat Map - Figure out where people are riding in your neighborhood. This website aggregates rides from people using the Strava app to show the most used routes.



Project Sidewalk - Conduct a virtual “walk audit” of your neighborhood to take stock of your local walking infrastructure and identify problem areas.



Communication Tools - Many advocacy groups use [Google Groups](#) to host online email discussions by simply emailing one address instead of many. Users can subscribe and unsubscribe themselves, as well as set notifications on a daily or weekly basis. Other groups use tools like Slack or WhatsApp's “Communities” feature to create topical chat rooms where members can communicate between meetings about projects, news, rides, and more.

IMPORTANT LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

- **Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI)** - DOMI is in charge of transportation issues throughout the City through its three divisions of planning, policy, and permitting. It manages the operation and access to public right-of-way (i.e. Streets, sidewalks, and the like).
- **Department of City Planning** - It's useful to reach out to your neighborhood planner. They can help you stay up to date on projects and receive feedback.

- **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.
- **Pittsburgh Regional Transit** - 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 stewards the Three Rivers Heritage Trail system.
- **Registered Community Orgs** - The “RCO” in your neighborhood is who the City looks to for input on new projects. Consider attending your RCO’s meetings and/or becoming a member.

CONCLUSION

Thanks for reading! We hope you find this toolkit to be useful in your advocacy efforts. For us to create the communities we want to live in, we all need to work together. Your time, energy, and commitment is a huge contribution to all of us.

Remember, although we hope this toolkit will get you moving in the right direction, your community organizing journey will be unique. Each neighborhood is different, so you’ll get to be flexible and innovative when unexpected challenges and opportunities arise. That said, you’re never alone in this work. Please share your challenges, learning, and successes with us so we can support you, cheer you on, and help other advocates grow from your experience.

And, of course, if you ever have feedback for us about this toolkit or anything else we do at BikePGH, please let us know. You can email us anytime at advocacy@bikepgh.org.

Onward!



SCAN ME



Advocacy Toolkit, 2nd Edition

