



Inclusive Advocacy & Community Engagement Worksheet

Community participation is a vital component to the development of an advocacy campaign.

This worksheet is designed to help you think through how to best collect input from a broad range of groups and individuals to create a community-informed advocacy plan. See our Bike Walk Every Town resources for guidance on [creating a plan](#).

Equitable engagement is valuable to building strong partnerships and elevating underrepresented voices to incorporate them into the decision-making process. Understanding the implications of race, culture, and socio-economic status in decision-making ensures the community engagement process is responsive and inclusive.

Getting Started

In particular, you should reach out to and engage underserved populations who have historically been left out of planning and advocacy conversations. These groups will be different from community to community but could include immigrant populations, people of color, low-income people, children, elderly, and people with disabilities.

As the individuals most affected by local transportation decisions, these groups are more likely to rely on transit, walking or biking to get around. By involving them in your advocacy efforts, you can create a platform that lifts their voices and helps support your local government in advancing equitable policies, programs, and projects.

In addition to underserved populations, many groups and organizations have a unique perspective on the ways that people get around your community. These people may include bike and pedestrian advocates, neighborhood groups, health organizations, non-profits, senior groups, disability organizations, or school/parent groups. These members will bring either a community-wide perspective to the table or represent a specific segment of the community.

Identifying Contacts

As you begin to identify different groups, organizations and individuals you'd like to involve, many online resources may help you expand your list. Try a general web search to find organizational websites, search for community Facebook Groups or LinkedIn pages, or check your Nextdoor neighborhood page. You might also look to local newspapers and community, school, park district or elected official newsletters. Brainstorming with others may help you add to your list and additionally help you collect emails, phone numbers or other useful contact information.

Getting in Touch

Once you've collected a list of key contacts, you'll need to decide how to reach out. In some cases you may want to reach out directly by email or phone to introduce yourself. At other times it may be more appropriate to ask someone to introduce you. Once you've established a connection, you could arrange a time to meet over the phone, a video call, or in person to learn more about each other's initiatives.

Another way to get in touch with a community group and meet new people is by attending their events. We recommend learning about their work, priorities and how you might support their efforts before asking them to get involved in yours.

If you're looking to collect input about your advocacy ideas from a wider audience, you could also create an online survey using a free tool like SurveyMonkey or Google Forms. Some of your new community contacts may be willing to help you spread the word and share your survey with their networks.

Questions to Ask

Once you've arranged a time to meet a key community contact, in addition to asking questions to better understand their work, here are a few questions you might want to ask them about your advocacy initiatives:

- What do they think of your advocacy ideas and priorities?
- Do they have any concerns or suggestions that could help you improve your plans?
- Are there opportunities to work together and support each other's work?
- How would they/their members like to be kept informed?
- Do they recommend other groups or individuals for you to contact?

If possible, consider looking for ways to compensate people for their time meeting with you, especially volunteers and those representing marginalized groups. If your resources are limited, consider providing in-kind support or a gift card donated by a local business.

- Which organizations work to advance health issues in your community (local hospitals, clinics, community centers, YMCA, food pantries, etc?) Please list below.

Organization/Group	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Outreach (phone, email, event, intro needed)?

- Which additional key stakeholders from your community should you reach out to for feedback and ideas? Please identify below.

Organization	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Outreach (phone, email, event, intro needed)?
Chamber of Commerce/ Business Districts				

Economic Development Groups				
Hospitals				
Neighborhood/ Homeowners Associations				
Colleges/Schools				
Bicycle Advocates				
Environmental Organizations				
Housing Organizations				
Public Safety				
Walking Clubs				
Large Employers				
Museums				

Media & Outreach

Ideas you generate here could be a great place for sharing an online survey, social media page, or website you've developed for collecting input.

Keep in mind, there may be barriers for community members to participate and share their feedback, such as language barriers or lack of internet access. Are there multiple ways you can reach out to the community to collect input that represents a broad perspective?

- Where do people in the community go to find information about local events and happenings (local media, website(s), listserv(s), Facebook page(s), events, local businesses, public library, Village Hall, etc?).

Media Type	Organization Name	Contact Name	Phone	Email

- Are there any upcoming city or village-wide mailings going out (for example water bills, dog tag renewals) that can include additional information such as a link to your survey?

Media Type	Deadline to include information	Contact Name	Phone	Email