



How to Effectively Engage with Your Elected Officials



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Set Realistic Expectations



Local vs State vs Federal

You are going to have more access to your local Mayor/Town Manager than you will have to President Biden.

Remember to keep the discussion focused on an appropriate scope of action. Align the topic with the correct level of government.

Be as brief as possible and keep a solutions oriented mind set. This is not the time or place for a list of grievances and complaints. It's also not necessary to provide a comprehensive background on your system. What's wrong, and how can it be fixed.

Don't forget to engage early and often with the staff! It is critical that you establish positive relationships well before you need something!!!

Represent your System



- Check your personal opinions at the door
- Transit is bipartisan...
- But the points of emphasis may vary
- Frequent and brief
- Be honest and prepared
- Positivity 😊

Start Early



It's never too soon to engage

- Pay attention during the primary and general election campaigns
- Reaching out early in the process can have a positive impact on candidate positions and level of knowledge
- It's far easier to explain the benefits of transit before incorrect information takes hold
- Don't waste the time in between the election and the actual start of term/swearing in
- You must be an informed voter personally and aware of the policy positions in advance so that you can begin to prepare
- Avoid letting a negative experience poison the well. You should avoid carrying a grudge and be ready to move on
- Focus on areas where goals align. Compromise isn't bad!!!

Relationship Timeline



Primary through retirement (and beyond)

Start Early (Primary)

Is transit a campaign focus?
Is it viewed positively?
Has the candidate been to your system?
Do they know the benefits of what your system does?
Does the campaign have your contact info?

Stay Connected (Not Just When You're In Need)

Do you know key members of staff?
Do you check in periodically rather than just when you have an ask
Do you follow up with appreciation, regardless of the outcome?
Do you remain publicly positive as much as possible?

It Never Ends (It's a Small Industry)

People change roles but you never know who knows who!
You want your system to conjure positive thoughts, even if they never board a bus!
Be respectful ALWAYS!