



# INFILTRATION MANUAL

PUSHING FOR AMBITIOUS  
CLIMATE ACTION AT  
THE MUNICIPAL LEVEL



Youth Climate Lab



## WHAT IS THE INFILTRATION MANUAL?

In Canada, municipalities account for over 50% of the national greenhouse gas emissions. This underlines the undeniable need for local climate action. **But let's face it, municipal government structures can be daunting. Breaking them down, however, makes it easier to find openings for action.**

*“Never mind the global action, never mind the international bodies that exist - we need to do things at the local level. That's where things can happen. That's where they happen quickly, and affect people's lives immediately.”*

YOUTH COMMITTEE MEMBER

**The Infiltration Manual aims to demystify municipal governance structures and provide youth with practical knowledge and tools on how to take climate action at the local level.** It covers a range of topics, including:

- > **An overview of the structure of municipal government**
- > **A roadmap on how to gather community support**
- > **Tips on how to present an initiative to Council**
- > **A variety of email, meeting, and petition templates**

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This manual is divided into three sections, each composed of several modules that serve as your go-to guide for questions related to municipal government and climate action. **Use our [table of contents](#) to skip to the modules most relevant to you.** Interspersed throughout the manual are examples and insider's tips. **In the appendix, you can also find practical templates.**

## NOTE TO READERS

It is important for us to recognize that the municipal system is rooted in colonialism and has historically and systematically excluded Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC)'s voices. It has also been built with barriers of access to many other identities, including but not limited to disabled folks, people in the LGBTQIA+ community, people without access to traditional education, and non-English speakers. While we hope that demystifying the process will make it more accessible for anyone that chooses to engage with this level of government, we recognize this isn't always a space that feels welcoming or safe for folks that have been systematically left out. The manual provides resources on how to approach these spaces, but remember your wellbeing and safety should always come first.

Participation - from the streets, to the ballot, to city council meetings - is a step towards a government that better represents us all. We hope that by understanding how current systems work, you can advocate strongly for yourself and your communities as we all reimagine ways of advancing climate justice.

# AUTHORS, EDITORS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Municipal climate action is a two-way street: councillors need youth, and youth want to be working on all possible avenues to achieve the just climate-resilient futures we deserve.** Don't just take it from us



- see how youth are key for local governments in this [short video](#).

**The Infiltration Manual is the result of hearing from both sides.** Content is drawn from the experience of young climate advocates who have advanced local climate action first-hand. Their tips and know-how are complemented by that of climate-friendly councillors who provided an insider's perspective on how municipal government really works.

Many thanks to the following people without whom the creation of this manual would not have been possible.

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SECTION 1:  
**HOW MUNICIPAL  
GOVERNMENT WORKS**  
THE WHO, HOW AND WHAT



“ *Almost everyone finds the local government decision making process confusing - even those within it. New councillors often wonder if they will ever figure out how to get things done. People who don't want to collaborate will make it seem even more complicated than it is. Keep pushing and asking questions.* ”

COUNCILLOR COMMITTEE MEMBER

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## WHO ARE THE MAIN PLAYERS?

Municipal governments are made up of two main bodies: the municipal council (elected) and the municipal administration (staff). Both bodies are then subdivided into smaller groups (standing committees and departments). Their role is to manage specific files - from finances to transportation to the environment - and make recommendations to the Council on which actions to take. Municipalities themselves are under the power of the provinces so the powers a municipality has are based on what the province grants them. As such, the municipality's jurisdictions can vary from province to province.

**The table below introduces the main players, their respective responsibilities, and outlines a few tips about them.**

### MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

A group of elected members who make decisions by majority vote on the services and finances of the municipality.

#### Head of Council (Mayor)

Also called reeve, chair, regional director, or warden depending on the municipality

- Serves as a political leader
- Primary public representative of the community
- Chairs council meetings

Keep in mind that the head of council has no more real power than any other councillor. They only hold one vote. However, they wield power in other important ways (e.g. they have easier access to key networks, can draw public focus on certain priorities, and hold the means to mobilize support for ambitious projects, among others).

### Councillors

- Listen to the concerns of residents, but are also very concerned about the benefits to local businesses.
- Represent residents' views and priorities on Council with the goal of improving the community's welfare.
- Work together to evaluate the effectiveness of municipal services/programmes/policies ([see below](#) for examples related to climate change).
- Help develop policies, depending on which committee they sit on (see below).
- Often a part-time position (except in large municipalities).

Councillors act as the link in between residents and the Council. A significant proportion of their role is heading out into the community (eg: going to events, meeting with community leaders, calling constituents, etc.) to both understand the concerns of their constituents and update residents on the decisions of Council. That being said, in practice, some are elected to Council in order to push through personal projects and don't always lend an ear to their constituents.

*Disclaimer: These "main players" tables primarily reflect the structure of communities recognized by Canadian provinces. In areas that are not recognized by the province, like lake/cottage areas or in First Nations reserves, these "main players" may look differently.*

## STANDING COMMITTEES

Usually an elected councillor and several appointed citizens.

- Committees are set up by topic (e.g. finance, planning, environment, culture)
- Committees review proposals to provide advice to Council
- Members of the public can attend committee meetings
- Sometimes there are opportunities for youth to become committee members. Municipalities will often have an application process, so check your municipal government's website. If in doubt, contact front office staff at city hall or a friendly councillor for more information on how to participate. There might even be a youth-focused standing committee in your community, but don't be afraid to ask for a seat at any of the other tables.

Standing committees are often more informal meeting settings compared to council meetings. If you find it difficult to articulate your ideas in front of Council, standing committees are often a good place to start, but note they may lack power compared to Council.

When getting involved in standing committees (or any other organisation), be aware that as a youth your presence can sometimes be used for superficial purposes. To learn more about tokenism and how to identify it, see our [module](#) on the subject.

## MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

Council is supported by a network of departments and staff, such as:

### Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Acts as the executive director for city staff
- Ensures the effective implementation of policies and regulations
- Advises Council on the operations and programmes of the municipality
- Ensures that the departments are talking and coordinating among themselves to avoid conflicting or duplicated efforts
- Makes sure that the recommendations of municipal staff to Council are holistic (not just focused on one department but a big picture analysis)

The Chief Administrative Officer holds a lot of power because they have control over the staff's priorities and can influence Council's agenda. While they have a wealth of knowledge on municipal operations, they generally lean towards maintaining the status quo and can block a project by highlighting the lack of funds for new initiatives.

Under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer, the Chief Financial Officer also wields a lot of power as they manage, process, and allocate funds for new projects.

### Corporate Officer (or Clerk)

- Sets council meeting's agenda (has some influence over what gets discussed at Council)
- Keeps minutes and creates a record of the meetings (which can be available to the public)

The corporate officer manages the administrative side of the Council. They also certify copies and officialize documents.

### Planning Department Staff

- › Work with stakeholders to set policies for land use and development
- › Provide support and advice to Council on long term plans, Official Community Plans (OCPs), and bylaws
- › Review specific development approval applications
- › Manage public consultations on long-term urban planning proposals and specific development proposals

Planning department staff know all the rules and how they can be changed when it comes to land use policies and developments.

### Engineering Staff

- › Construct or supervise infrastructure projects (e.g. roads, stormwater management)
- › Review outside proposals for construction projects (e.g. new housing development)

They are often the best funded department and can be very traditional in their approach (e.g. may prefer to install a pipe than to preserve a wetland for natural flood control). If you use the language of **“asset management”**, where long-term planning and risk analysis are focused on protection and cost-control, you can help them understand the imperative of acting on climate change and the value of natural assets.

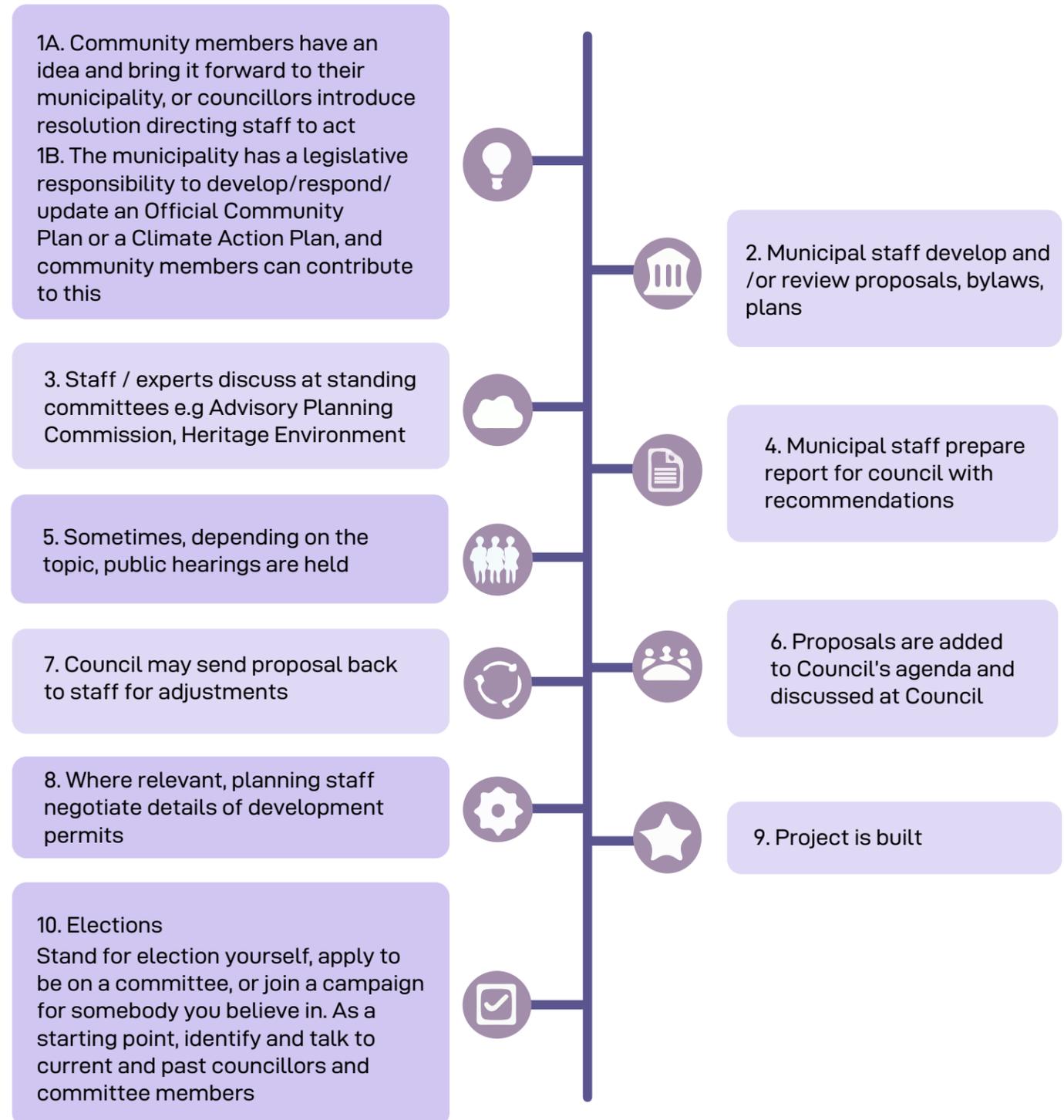
### Front Office Staff

- › Help you apply for events like rallies or strikes on city property
- › Help you locate the right person to talk to

Their job is to help you navigate the different departments of municipal government and to assist you with certain administrative applications. If you aren't getting what you need, you can ask to speak to someone else who can help you.

## HOW ARE DECISIONS MADE?

When working with municipalities, it is essential to understand the step-by-step process of how ideas are turned into actions. **Below is a simplified breakdown of the policy-making process within Canadian municipal governments.**



**16** Keep in mind that each community is different. You have to ask questions to understand how the process works and who wields power in *your* municipality. See [Who are the main players?](#) and [Getting other folks on your side](#) for tips on who and what to ask.



**Understanding the steps of the decision-making process is not enough.** You also need to know how you can take action and influence the process at each step. See our [Infiltration Points](#) table for examples on how you can do just that.

## WHAT CAN MUNICIPALITIES DO, AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO CLIMATE CHANGE?

Municipal governments are one of four tiers of government in Canada, which include provincial, federal and Indigenous governments (First Nations, Metis settlements, Inuit communities). It is worth noting that while Indigenous and municipal governments are markedly different, they share many of the same areas of jurisdiction below. These jurisdictional similarities stem from their similar proximity and level of direct responsibility to their citizens, and have in certain cases led to some of the most innovative work done at the local level.

While the scope of this manual is focused on the municipal government tier, it is important to understand the relationship (or lack of) between your colonial municipal government and the governance of the traditional territory it is settled on. To understand more about differences and similarities between these governments see the [Stronger Together](#) guide by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Cando.

**17** Below is a non-exhaustive list of areas under municipal jurisdiction with high opportunity for climate-related interventions.

| AREA OF JURISDICTION  | EXAMPLES OF WHAT MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS CAN DO  |
|---|--|
|  <p><b>TRANSPORTATION</b><br/>(approx. 1/3 of local GHG are from transportation)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Support local public transit (e.g. bus lanes, shelters)</li> <li>→ Support electric vehicle use (e.g. charging stations)</li> <li>→ Support car sharing</li> <li>→ Reduce car use with bylaws (e.g. local roads, parking, pedestrian space, bike lanes, multi passenger lanes)</li> </ul>   |
|  <p><b>BUILDINGS</b><br/>(over half of local GHG emissions are from buildings)</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Energy efficiency requirements for buildings</li> <li>→ Education/rebates/financing for retrofits, heat pumps</li> <li>→ Allow/encourage tiny homes, laneway homes</li> <li>→ Regulate fuel use in buildings (note that the authority to do so varies by jurisdiction, so check situation in your community)</li> </ul>   |
|  <p><b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Encourage local investment in green business ventures</li> <li>→ Create business 'greening' programs to help them transition</li> <li>→ Develop local green business certifications</li> <li>→ Implement a sustainable/social procurement policy for municipal purchases to consider packaging, energy use, and local purchasing</li> <li>→ Divest from fossil fuel investments or advocate for others (e.g. pension plans) to do so</li> <li>→ Prioritize local banking</li> </ul> |



### ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION

- Protect and restore natural areas within the city or town
- Use nature based solutions (e.g. daylighting or swales) for stormwater management, flood/erosion control, etc.
- Plant/protect trees, encourage/require green roofs
- Replace pavement with permeable surfaces, effective rainwater management



### LOCAL FOOD SECURITY

- Establish & support a local food council
- Provide space for community gardens, food markets
- Recognise and respect Indigenous protection and knowledge concerning local medicine sources and community gardening efforts



### WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Collection of recycling, compost
- Support for local sharing, reuse and repair
- Collect & dispose of solid waste responsibly, deconstruction bylaws
- Local rules on single use plastics
- Sustainable procurement for local government purchases
- Support zero waste practices via bylaws



### LAND USE / PARK SPACE

- Land use planning to minimize emissions while addressing social equity questions (e.g. density levels, transit planning, affordable housing plans)
- Designate green/natural areas as protected from development



### COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 100% Renewable commitments
- Community solar/hydro/wind farms
- Local distributed energy systems



### GHG EMISSION MEASUREMENT

- Measure emissions from city government operations
- Develop a community GHG inventory
- Sign onto national and international commitments to reduce GHGs (e.g. [Partners for Climate Protection](#) or the [Global Covenant of Mayors](#))



### EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- Plan for and deal with climate related emergencies such as wildfires and floods

END OF SECTION 1



## 22 GETTING OTHER FOLKS ON YOUR SIDE

To get your project or pitch rolling, a good starting point is to identify key leaders and stakeholders (i.e. people or groups with an interest or who are impacted by the outcome of your project) in your community. This is important because it helps you become acquainted with potential supporters, understand what each actor brings to the table, and gives you a better idea of where the main barriers may lie moving forward. It can also help you build awareness and support in your community.

**Each community and Council is unique.** Identify your local network of key players by talking to folks that may have some insights, such as:

- › Councillors, present and past
- › Resident/neighbourhood association members
- › Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community organizations, think tanks, and citizen groups who have dealt with Council
- › Land defenders who understand, support and amplify each other's work
- › Local environmental organizations
- › Youth groups who may have experience in your community
- › Local reporters who cover city hall
- › Local business organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, or Board of Trade, and other industry groups (e.g. real estate, retail, tourism, etc.)

23 In addition to identifying a general network of important players, ask yourself who are the most influential ones. *Who holds the authority to make concrete decisions? Who will be instrumental in setting the agenda? Who can mobilize their networks to support you?*

**350.org made an [activity resource](#) to help you organize information on key players.** It is super helpful so take 20-30 minutes to complete the activity. If you need an extra hand, take a look at our [chart of main actors](#) and ask yourself who are the influential ones in relation to your project.

Some likely candidates for holding the power within municipal government are:

- › A group of like minded councillors who often vote together.
- › The Chief Administrative Officer who can limit initiatives due to budget concerns, the “need for more study” or who can give reminders that “we tried that years ago and it didn't work.”
- › The Corporate Officer who determines what gets on council agendas
- › The Chief Financial Officer who can also be a back-stop to climate initiatives, particularly those with a clear financial impact such as divestment.



Outside of municipal government, powerful actors can include the following:

- › Major businesses, especially if they are big employers
- › Downtown business associations
- › Indigenous governments (see potential areas of jurisdictional overlap in the resources in [Section 1](#))
- › Chamber of Commerce
- › Developer associations (home builder associations)
- › Resident/community associations
- › Special interest associations and civil society groups (depending on the project, it can range from heritage societies to seniors groups to sports clubs)
- › Places of worship
- › Unions (either work unions or student unions)
- › School district boards

*Hint: a quick Google search of these terms + the name of your community may go a long way.*

The circles of power are often fairly small at the municipal level so you'll easily recognize familiar faces and names once you start looking.

**Not sure what to ask when meeting or reaching out to potential supporters? Here are some basic pointers:**



1. Tell your story: Start by introducing yourself and your project/pitch.

a. See storytelling tips outlined in our [meetings templates](#)

2. Advice and information: Ask a few questions on your municipal government decision-making process or for advice on your project/pitch. For instance:

a. Which councillors vote together?

b. What are the key priorities for them at the moment, and how can my efforts align with that?

c. Who was instrumental in getting a new policy through?

d. Who sunk the project when it looked like a done deal?

e. Who finds effective ways to delay change indefinitely?

f. Who on staff or council seems to really care about climate, enough to take some risks?

g. What corporate interests carry a lot of weight?

h. What advice would you have for me to move my project one step further along?

Remember that the process is confusing even for those within it. It's okay not to have all the answers, to ask more questions, and to become more informed.

3. Network: Ask whether they know of one or two people who could offer their help in some capacity or who would be able to offer more information.

4. Follow-up: Following the meeting, send them a quick email thanking them and summarizing the conversation. This way, they have your contact information and can reach out to you afterwards.

See our [email templates](#) for additional tips on how to reach out to get a meeting.



### Where to meet key decision makers?

There are countless opportunities to chat with councillors and city staff: ask for a meeting with them, drop by city sponsored open houses, go to events that councillors are likely to attend (such as official openings or big community events), ask councillors how you could join advisory boards, invite them out for a discussion over coffee or meet them at their office. Follow them on social media to see what upcoming events they might be going to. In some cities, you can subscribe to receive the city's press releases via email which provide updates on council meetings and other useful information. In any case, don't miss any chance to chat with them. Get to know them and let them get to know you!

## BUILDING SUPPORT FOR YOUR PROJECT/PITCH

“ Getting to know what city staff and city councillors are working on and networking with them is not as intimidating as it may seem - they are human too and are genuinely seeking guidance in their work! Most have loved seeing youth wanting meaningful political engagement and are eager to offer support. ”

PEEL COMMUNITY CLIMATE COUNCIL

Once you have identified a [few key people](#) to pitch your idea to, think about how you will approach them. See our [meeting template](#) for how to conduct a meeting and our [email templates](#) for reaching out to potential partners.

Here are some general relationship building tips to keep in mind:

### Show appreciation

People are often more receptive to collaborating when you show appreciation. If you want to stand out from the crowd, showing that you've done your research can go a long way. For instance, it can be as simple as thanking a councillor for running for office, highlighting something they have championed in the past (e.g. supporting public housing or changes in the public transit system), or ideally, finding a specific action a stakeholder has taken to improve the community.

### Find common ground

Learn what you can about who you're meeting with (interests, background, what they're working on, etc.) so that you can identify and highlight areas of common ground. Even if you feel like you have very little in common, everything helps to build a bond. Environmental justice intersects and overlaps with so many other areas so there is always a way you can build on what they are interested in to frame the conversation around issues you both care about.

*"If you are struggling to find shared values, it could be a mutual appreciation for a community project or local sight, both caring for families, both valuing hard work."*

- Councillor Committee Member

### Listen

Now that you've got them listening, you can make your pitch, but allow lots of time for them to talk, too. This is your time to actively listen and to use open-ended questions to find out what they think. It is through listening that you can find out their concerns and fears, and do your best to respond to them.

### Be patient

It will take more than one meeting to build a relationship and get a councillor on your side, but it will pay off if they see you as polite, persistent, and informed. You'll also get help in tailoring your ideas to make them more acceptable to decision makers without losing your "must haves."

### Know your boundaries and worth

Be firm and clear about what you want while knowing your boundaries and limits. Your participation in the system is not only deserved, but needed. However, if at any point you feel offended, threatened, or patronized, name this to the people in the room, document the instance, and decide the best course of action for you.

While you can choose to stand strong in your identity and speak up or invite a conversation to continue this dialogue, know that there is no shame in taking a step back and knowing when to cut your losses. These spaces can be frustrating and at points feel intransigent - some battles are simply not worth it. Relationships, at their core, are based on trust and respect so consider those fundamental in any relationship building exercise. Remember there are multiple avenues to achieve change, and none of them should come at the cost of your well being.

*Note: We used the example of a councillor here, but the same tactics work for any of the other main actors: city staff, the president of the local chamber of commerce, or a member of the neighbourhood's seniors group.*



### The importance of allies

Having an ally on your side can make all the difference - whether it be to bring credibility to your project, to help you navigate the administrative process, or to lend a hand in following up with commitments. To identify climate friendly councillors, check out [Climate Caucus](#) so you can see which of your councillors or directors are members.

## BRINGING OTHERS TOGETHER

When you reach out to ask people to take action, you want to have a crystal clear ask: **What exactly you are asking them to do, how they should do it, and why it will make a difference or positively impact their causes.**

Are you asking people to write personalised letters to Council, publish editorial articles in the local paper, or attend council meetings to show support for a motion? **Whatever you're asking your supporters to do, keep the request short and simple. Make sure you include all relevant details, and attach the broader strategy or plan that this work falls into (they may not read it, but context helps).** Try to preemptively answer potential questions when contacting them.

The way you reach out to them is equally important. **A personal, direct request for help will be much more likely to result in people taking action than sending a generic mass email.** Check out our [Email template to request others support your action](#) as a base to adjust to your own needs.

### Actions to keep your supporters engaged

As a team, ask yourselves what are your individual strengths and weaknesses? From there, you can assign roles/responsibilities/actions better suited to your interests and abilities to keep your supporters engaged over the long run. Promotion and building excitement for your campaign are key aspects of the process so it is worthwhile to consider how you can maintain supporters over time.

Here are a few examples of actions you can take:

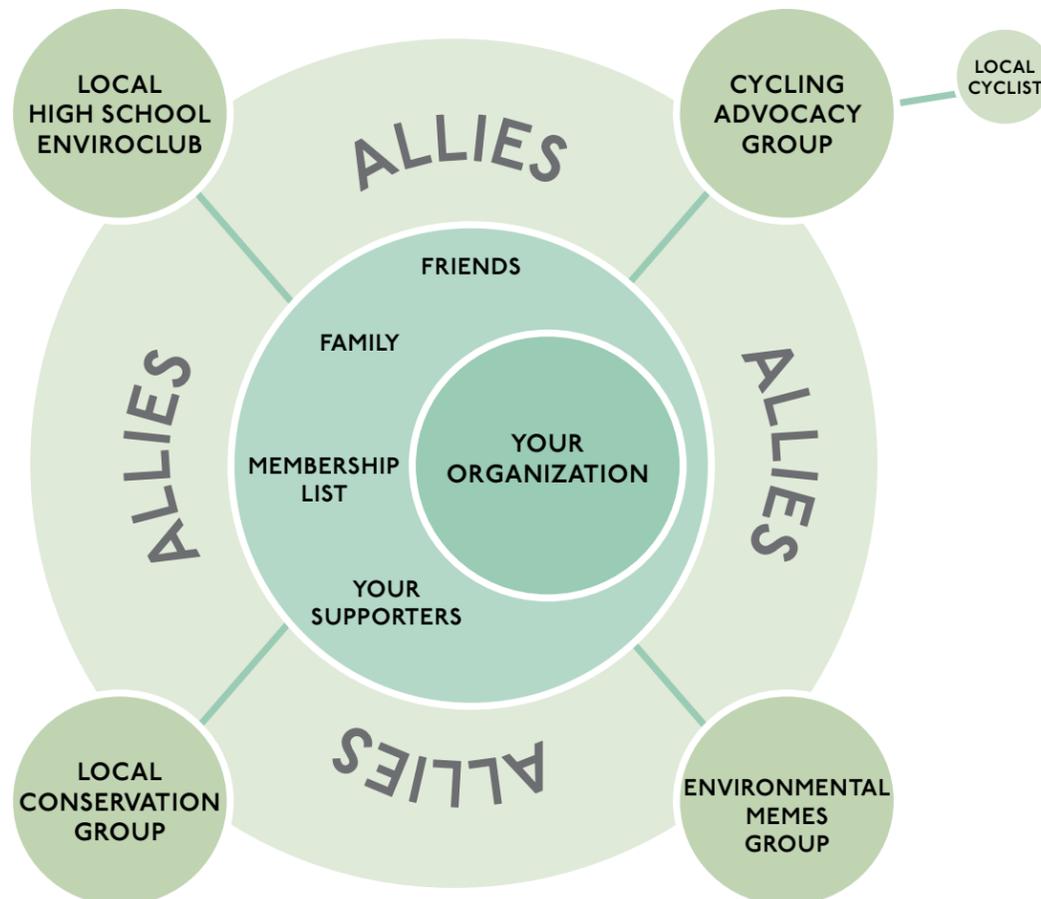
- Create a social media page or a specific website and populate it with interesting events, articles, or project updates. This allows councillors, stakeholders, your supporters, and the general public to keep tabs on your work and what you stand for. Keeping a strong digital presence also allows you to maintain a record of the development of your project/pitch.
- Pay attention to how you welcome and involve new supporters. For example, select a member of your team to specifically welcome and onboard new people who turn up at an event or reach out to them for a one-on-one chat after. This creates a sense of community from the get-go which ultimately helps people stay involved in the long run.
- Organise regular events with those engaged in your project/pitch. These can either be formal meetings or fun get-togethers (e.g. book/cinema clubs, walks, picnics). The goal is to stay in each other's circles and to develop stronger communication between yourselves.
- Reach out to your supporters or key stakeholders through email, social media, text, or phone with relevant information and updates. This is particularly important at the slow points of your campaign. Also remember consistency is key. If you can, set a specific day of the week/month to keep folks informed. It can be as simple as a quick social media update or as extensive as a monthly newsletter. Whatever you choose based on the team's capacity and stage of project/pitch, make sure you remain on people's radar.

*As a general note, it is better to do few things very well versus trying to do everything half-heartedly. If you're not passionate about a project or campaign, don't do it. For those that you are passionate about, ensure that you have a stable leadership and volunteer base before starting. This will facilitate continuity and ensure easier follow-up in the long run.*

## LEVERAGING SUPPORT TO BUILD MOMENTUM AND MOVEMENTS

**Municipal governments are elected, which means that they care about public pressure. It's up to us as constituents to generate some.** Your voice alone can make a huge difference but what if there were 10 of you? Or 100? Or 1000? Once you **figure out your ask**, get others to support it. If your project needs to ultimately pass through Council, you want to make sure that everything you do to amplify your voice is aimed at your councillors and mayor.

**There are three groups of supporters you will want to mobilize so you can amplify your voice:** other people within your group, your supporters, and your allies (and *their* supporters).



### 1. People within your team

While the first group might seem obvious, they are often forgotten. So make sure that everyone who comes to your meetings, volunteers with you, or helps you do your work has been directly asked to take action - even if there are only three of you.

### 2. Direct supporters

The second group is direct supporters. Chances are that you can brainstorm a list of people who have expressed interest in your work on social media, attended a rally, or signed a petition (see [our petition template](#) below). Even if this is the first action you have ever taken, you still have people you can ask: reach out to your friends and your family, or put a post up on social media.

#### Actions to build your direct supporters base:

- › Ask other organisations in your area who are not focused on environmental issues to share your recruitment information. This diversifies your stream of supporters.
- › Build a list of supporters by getting members of your community to sign a petition or sign up for an email list.
- › Set up a table at a farmer's market or in your school hallway, or talk to people at different community events/rallies - anywhere you can! Talk with people about your organization/project/pitch and ask people to follow your group's social media pages.

### 3. Allies

The final group to consider in amplifying your voice are your allies. Start with a brainstorming session: what other organizations are there in your community that might agree with you, or what kinds of people might be impacted by this decision? Think creatively: if you're working on a campaign to increase public transportation in your area, the local environmental group will most likely be on your side, but what about a local cycling group? Is there a local seniors association where you can contact seniors who take the bus?

*“From my experience, councils respond to the diversity of voices as well as the volume. Show that this has wide support from a wide group of constituents. Both the personal stories and the professional/informed backup is necessary. Youth voices are compelling. Make sure that responses are city-wide but also targeted to their own councillors.”*

COUNCILLOR COMMITTEE MEMBER

Amplifying your voice can also mean mobilizing support from other organisations who are willing to collaborate with you on your project. Collaborating or gathering support from other groups helps build your credibility, your resources, and your ability to get funding. Environmental issues intersect with so many other fields - from public health to food security to urban planning - so there are many opportunities to work alongside various organisations. Plus, generating support from a wide scope of organisations helps show local government that you are not acting alone but rather with widespread community support. It also helps these groups think about how they can incorporate climate justice into their own work.



### Building a wide network of allies and supporters: an example

Looking to support a new multi-use path to expand the city's active transportation network, a local cycling group in British Columbia took it upon themselves to build a strong and wide network of supporters of the project.

They not only met with councillors who were identified as possible supporters but also reached out to a large array of other community organisations that would have a stake in the issue. This included connecting with local running/walking/cycling clubs, the downtown business association, the affected school district board, parent advisory councils, accessibility groups, the student union at college and a seniors group.

Their curiosity and creativeness in finding allies among several diverse groups paid off. As the councillor for the area put it, the “evidence of broad range of support resulted in greater acceptance of the proposal in council [as it was] not seen as simply a cycling initiative, but one that benefitted a wide spectrum of people in the community.”



## ONBOARDING NEW GROUPS, AND IDENTIFYING WHO IS WORTH YOUR TIME

Onboarding, or the process of integrating new groups/people into your project, isn't always easy. **The youth committee members have highlighted a few tips that can help you gather the support of stakeholders:**



- › **Lead with a positive campaign.** The goal of a positive campaign is to rally others around your cause by making your project "politically impossible" to oppose. To do so, always frame your project in a positive light (highlight who and how it can benefit) and be proactive with your solutions (provide people with an infinite range of alternatives). A positive campaign can also mean putting pressure on leaders to improve their current best practices.
- › **Listen to what they care about.** Once you understand their motivations, try to frame the issue or your project in a way that can speak to them. You might not share the same vocabulary (e.g. some people might not understand anti-oppressive or intersectional language, but they might understand the economics of investing in marginalised communities). Listening is also beneficial because you can learn which issues you can reach a compromise on.

- › **Generate pressure from all sides.** Once you gather allies or supporters for your project/pitch, encourage them to use the means they have to put pressure on reticent councillors or stakeholders. Hearing support for your project from different groups or people puts pressure on opponents to consider it seriously.
- › **Spend more time trying to get support from people who don't have strong opinions on the issue.** A common mistake in advocacy is spending too much time preaching to the choir or trying to change the minds of those deeply opposed. Try instead to convince those who are somewhere in the middle.

Generating support for your project means that you'll be working alongside various groups and people. **You'll undoubtedly run into some pushback from people who might prove reluctant to cooperate or who want to change your proposals.** Understanding why they oppose your project is always a good place to start. However, you may also be wondering how much time and energy you should spend on trying to convince those who initially seem opposed to your project, and how much you should compromise on your project when working with others.

“Recognize that there will always be someone who doesn't see eye to eye or understand the urgency of this moment. Particularly when advancing a progressive or innovative policy issue, there has never been complete or universal buy-in or support for such ideas throughout history, but rather a driven and dedicated group who worked to realize a vision that some simply couldn't see. This doesn't make their lack of cooperation any easier or justified, but can help to put things into context.”

YOUTH COMMITTEE MEMBER

**This is a case-by-case decision, but here are some questions which can help you draw your own conclusions:**

#### On collaborating with stakeholders/team members:

- › Does their resistance come from a lack of understanding or awareness about the issue or your approach, or is it a clear misalignment in values or priorities?
- › Will having them on your side benefit your project/be worth the effort to onboard them?
- › Do the groups in question hold a lot of sway in the community? Can this be proven or is their bark bigger than their bite? How strong is the community behind you, and are they willing to fight for your project?
- › Do you need additional team members? Do you need people with more complimentary skills, connections, and resources?

#### On compromising:

- › Will you compromise the basic tenets of your project if you concede on certain elements? Where do you have room for compromise? What counter-offers can you provide?
- › Is it necessary for them to be completely on board with everything for them to get behind the project and be useful allies?

#### On timing and approach:

- › Is this the right approach or are there more effective means to take action?
- › Is this the right time? Can you come back better prepared/supported in the future or will pushing for it now just delay it?
- › Do we gain political capital (e.g. strengthen relationships, earn goodwill, legitimacy) by holding back? This can be hard to tell, but sometimes a “wait and see” approach means that you can come back later with more allies.
- › Does a partial action hurt your cause in the long-term? For example, will a smaller change than what you want create such an uproar that future change will be even more difficult?

END OF  
SECTION 2





SECTION 3 :  
**TAKING IT  
TO COUNCIL**

FROM MEETING WITH COUCIL TO GETTING CLEAR COMMITMENTS



“ Show up! Honestly, so few young people show up. If you want to see change, you have to hold people accountable! ”  
COUNCILLOR COMMITTEE MEMBER

|  |    |
|--|----|
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## DEMYSTIFYING ACCESS TO COUNCIL

There are several means through which action can be taken, from protesting to being a member of your local environmental club; however, this module focuses on how you can take action through the municipal council system. The first step to create change from within is understanding how structures currently work.

**The following table dives into the agenda-setting phase. It is the first step in getting Council to hear and consider your idea, but there are several other steps after this one.** See our [decision-making process](#) graph for an overview of them.

### When Council comes to you:

Often, municipal governments will reach out to the general population for their feedback on studies or proposals by running public consultations, circulating surveys, or by scheduling open houses/hearings (both online and in person).

Showing up when public consultation is already happening is usually more impactful than showing up out of the blue when your issue isn't on the agenda. **That being said, don't ever believe it when people tell you've missed your chance to have your say or that it isn't the right time to talk about your issue.** Councils change their minds all the time at the last minute, and even if they aren't willing to update their whole Official Community Plan, they can usually pass a bylaw or a new policy with the same result!

### When you go to Council:

You can also reach out to Council to present or discuss your concerns/ideas to put an issue on their radar. However, as noted above, it tends to be more impactful to align with an existing plan or project that Council has approved (e.g. Official Community Plan).

Check your city or town website for council meeting schedules and agendas to find out when Council might be discussing the issue. In larger cities, the date of agenda items should not be read literally. For example if 25 items are on the agenda, do not expect the meeting to actually cover anything past the first 5 presentations and debates. Often, you will have to make an educated guess about how many meetings your item will be postponed until.

If you can, attend a meeting ahead of time to understand how they work. Check the agenda and ask advice from a friendly staff member or councillor about which meeting would be worth attending. Seeing another group make a presentation is a good learning opportunity. Feel free to ask your staff/councillor contact questions about the process after the meeting.

## How to get a chance to present to Council

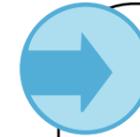
It's usually best to book a time to present to your Council so that you have adequate time. Each Council will have different procedures, but usually their website explains how you can get on the agenda. If not, phone city hall and ask how to get time at an upcoming meeting.

Things to check before presenting:

- › How much time will you have?
- › How many of you may speak?
- › Do you need to send in material ahead of time?
- › Can you use a PowerPoint presentation or something similar? Is there an internet connection?
- › Will you be asked questions after your presentation?
- › When will they make a decision on whether you can present?

Additionally, check your city or town website for:

- › How to book a time to present to Council
- › Council meeting schedules
- › Past council meeting recordings
- › Past council minutes



## When is direct action/protest most effective?

This module focused on taking action within the municipal government administrative system, however, there are several types of actions one can take. Generally, early on when you are building relationships and getting staff and councillors on your side, you'll want to show some patience. However, when all else has failed and you need to get the Council to really pay attention or when you know local media will take notice, direct action is a useful tool to keep in your toolbox. Getting regular media attention also keeps the issue front of mind for the general public and relevant stakeholders.



## MAKING A SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL

### The importance of a clear ask and proactive solutions: an example

“ More than 500 elementary kids petitioned the council to ban single-use plastics. They presented the problem and asked for us to solve it (ban single-use plastics). That was enough. I would say generally, the most important aspect is to clearly define the problem and be as specific as possible about potential solutions. ”

COUNCILLOR COMMITTEE MEMBER

So you made it to the agenda and will be presenting to Council. This section shares some information on how to avoid having your ideas be “sent back to staff for review,” a place where many good ideas have lingered, been forgotten, and quietly died, even when they were initiated by a councillor.

First and foremost, **very clearly articulate what you are asking for.** Think and clearly communicate what exactly you want Council to do; approve or change a policy? Spend money on something? Conduct a study? Lobby for change? Once you have that magic ask, then move into making it really easy for your Council to say “Yes!” with some of the resources below.

### Tips to get Council to say yes:



#### 1. Turn the spotlight on the strengths of your project/pitch:

- › Show (if possible) how it fits with existing programs/plans so it looks like you are making their plans even better as opposed to adding more work
- › Include a clear timeline:
  - Break it down into several manageable phases. Each milestone should have a due date, or at least an estimated proposed timeline if defined dates are not possible
  - Know when you will follow up with those involved and how (email, phone, in person, etc.)
- › Include concrete indicators of success or key performance metrics. This may include having multiple measures of success/development. Each measure should be manageable

#### 2. Prepare helpful documents:

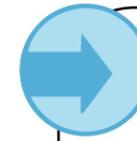
- › Prepare a 1-2 page briefing note explaining the issue, your ask, the benefits/costs, and a draft of the resolution for them to vote on
  - Ask a councillor or an ally who is familiar with the policy making process for help, if possible
  - Email ahead of time and bring copies to leave behind
  - See [Sample resolutions and briefing notes for council to adopt your action](#)

### 3. Prepare an impactful presentation:

- › Keep well within the time limits
- › Alternate two voices, if allowed, to add interest
- › A professional looking PowerPoint with colourful images, quick video clips, etc. can make a big difference

### 4. General tips:

- › Ask yourself what you can bring: What support or resources could help you push your project through?
- › **Be prepared for pushback from Council.** Know how to respond to their most common questions
- › Prepare a well rehearsed and organised presentation to Council
- › Gather visible but respectful support in the audience - numbers count, signs can help
- › Talk to councillors ahead of time to get localised knowledge of how Council works and to soft launch your proposal. They can help you by:
  - Gauging support
  - Giving advice on how to frame your ask
  - Discussing how to build support
  - Highlighting potential obstacles and how to overcome them



### Insider's Tip:

Have an ally on Council or a staff member who can let you know when it's most important that you and your allies show up. You can also keep an eye on council agendas (usually posted online) to see when your issue is on the agenda - and don't forget to watch your opponents to see when they're mobilizing! Be ready with your counter arguments and to mobilize your supporters.

A supportive councillor can also speak in favour of your idea when you present, especially if you provide them with information ahead of time. Some are even willing to be provided with a softball question to ask you - a question that will highlight the best feature of your proposal. Don't be shy to reach out to councillors personally if you have found them to be allies for similar causes to yours.

## ANTICIPATE PUSHBACK: ANSWERING COUNCIL'S QUESTIONS

Be well informed, anticipate pushback, and be ready with the answers. The easiest way to get your ideas shut down is to have staff and councillors point out flaws in your plan when you don't know how to respond.

**Below are some of the most common questions Council can ask and tips to keep in mind:**

### WHY SHOULD WE DO THIS? WHO WILL THIS HELP/BENEFIT?

Try to outline the potential impacts of your project from as many angles as possible (economic, social, environmental, cultural, etc.). Explain:

*"How the city or the general public will benefit over the short and long term. Show how it can make the city more competitive as a great place to live and attract young talent."*

- Councillor Committee Member

To get a rounded idea of who this can help and what its impacts are, you can base your arguments on the consequences already measured in other cities (if there was a similar project), from the results of academic studies, and on the testimonies on how your project might impact the **people/businesses/groups in your community** that you've talked to. You can also talk about your own experience as supporting evidence (although, be sure to show community support as well).

As a side note, sometimes councillors are fearful of change or are perhaps even climate denialists. Instead of spending time trying to use purely environmental arguments to convince them, highlight exactly how your project will benefit the community. This can help switch the conversation from a debate on climate change to an example of how you can build jobs in renewable energy or how it will help bring in long-term investments to retail businesses. You can additionally talk about how you feel about your uncertain future as a young person in relation to the climate crisis, but if you're in this situation, try to appeal to many different interests and arguments to cover your bases.

### DO WE HAVE JURISDICTION? WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU WANT COUNCIL TO DO?

*"How can we respond intelligently if we aren't clear about what is being asked?"*

- Councillor Committee Member

Make sure your ask fits into the capabilities and responsibilities of your municipal government. Draw inspiration from the module **What can municipalities do, and how does it relate to climate change?** Ask yourself: Is this something municipal governments can solve or lobby for? If it is not totally clear whose jurisdiction it is in, you should have a compelling argument as to why the city should move forward with it or a precedent of another municipality doing so.

## HAVE ANY OTHER COMMUNITIES DONE THIS SUCCESSFULLY? WHAT PROBLEMS DID THEY ENCOUNTER AND HOW WERE THESE DEALT WITH? HOW DID THEY FUND THIS?

*"I am less interested in numbers than in good evidence backed up by an understanding of what Council's constraints are. We can't do everything we want to do. If you can refer to other communities that have done it successfully, that gives me positive info that I can look into."*

- Councillor Committee Member

Key is having details on how other communities have already done this successfully. You can find examples of all sorts of successful local climate actions in the [Climate Caucus Councillor Handbook](#) to show that it can be done. Councils are inherently conservative because of tight budgets and busy agendas, so it is a lot easier if another town has done this before, and you can show exactly how it worked. Don't be shy: contact program managers in these other towns to get information to help sway your Council.

## HOW MUCH WILL IT COST AND WILL IT REQUIRE MUCH STAFF TIME?

This question is often hard to answer as it depends on so many variables. If other communities have conducted a similar project, it might be helpful to reach out to the staff person who was in charge to ask for a rough estimate. At the proposal phase, councillors aren't expecting a fully costed proposal.

It can also be helpful to identify funders who might support your project. A good place to start is the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' [Green Municipal Fund](#).

Also, consider illustrating the project's cost avoidance, that is, how the project will help avoid having to spend in the future. Some might believe that doing nothing costs nothing, and this can show that isn't the case. This is particularly true with adaptation/ risk reduction projects.

## AREN'T WE ALREADY DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THIS?

Do some research to see if your community is already working on this in some way so you can show how your proposal is not a duplication and, even better, will enhance work already approved. Ask planning staff for help - they are going to have to do this work anyway if Council considers your idea.

### WHO WON'T LIKE THIS, AND HOW CAN YOU LESSEN NEGATIVE IMPACTS (E.G. ON LOCAL BUSINESSES, RESIDENTS)?

Once you know who might be opposed or who could suffer adverse effects, see if you can talk with them to find anything that would mitigate, or reduce adverse outcomes for them. Sometimes listening and making small changes to your plan can make a big difference. If possible, try to do so before meeting with the Council to show that you've reached out to various community groups and found solutions for concerns.

### IS THIS CONSISTENT WITH THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN (OCP) / BYLAWS?

You will need to ask someone in the planning department to help you with this, but it is well worth checking. Many great ideas are shot down because they don't fit with the OCP. Finding ways that your project fits in with your community's approved plan is helpful in building a case. Exceptions are made to the plan all the time, but you need to be prepared to explain how it fits or why the plan should change. Planning staff know this document inside out and can help.

### We talked to a few councillors about the main elements that distinguish a good and bad project/pitch presentation at Council.

#### Do:

- › Come prepared: Cover all your bases and leave no major questions unanswered
- › Align with OCP, bylaws, or other existing efforts
- › Bring examples of other communities who have done this successfully
- › Get broad **community support**

#### Do not:

- › Appear to break new ground: Sometimes it is harder to pass a new program that isn't linked to existing plans/projects
- › Bring unjustifiably high costs for the city budget

*Note: You and your allies know your Council best. If you are informed and suspect that breaking new ground or doing something unconventional might appeal to your Council (e.g. because they will be the first municipality to do something), go ahead and explore that pathway.*

Elected officials want you to leave happy, so they often tell you what a great job you are doing, express all sorts of gratitude for you coming in, and then make vague promises to “look into that.” How do you pin them down?

- › Ask them exactly what they will do as a next step and when they will do this
- › Ask who they plan to talk to
- › Ask at which meeting your proposal will be reviewed, and if they are unsure, when they can confirm that
- › Let them know you will be calling to check on progress in, for example, two weeks, and then do it!
- › Be persistent by establishing follow-up contacts. Call staff directly to ask for status updates on your project. Have internal allies who can also lead part of the follow-ups on your behalf too

If your proposal gets accepted, that isn't the end of the story. Follow up and check to ensure your ask:

- › Got the appropriate funding
- › Was included in the right plans
- › Is actually being implemented

This is where all of the work on identifying supporters and building relationships will really pay off.

END OF  
SECTION 3





## SECTION 4 :

# KNOWING YOUR WORTH

## TIPS ON SELF-CARE AND YOUTH REPRESENTATION



This manual would not have been possible without the contributions of our Youth Committee. Unsurprisingly, some of the most valuable and important information that came out of conversations was not on the technicalities of municipal structures, but on what we wish we had known when we started this work. This section aimed to aggregate some of the tips and notes folks shared, mostly centered around taking care of yourself and knowing your worth.

How to hang in for the long haul : self-care and balance

60

Recognizing tokenism

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## HOW TO HANG IN FOR THE LONG HAUL: SELF-CARE AND BALANCE

In the field of climate advocacy, it is normal to alternate between feeling hopeful and pessimistic about the future. Always having to push for action gets tiring and it can be a long, slow process. While passion is good, it shouldn't be all-consuming. Take time to reset. You're in this for the long haul and taking breaks can help you improve the outcome of your initiative. Take care of yourself by:

- › Resting. It's okay to delegate tasks. If you sacrifice your rest, you risk jeopardizing your initiative.
- › Finding peer support by being part of a movement in a community that shares your values.
- › Leaving groups who you feel aren't right for you.
- › Asking for help from other organizations, a climate friendly councillor, friends and family.
- › Checking in with others if you're having a meeting together. Maybe do a round table at the start of the meeting to ask how everyone is feeling and why. Establishing this practice normalizes sharing where everyone is at, and can make taking steps to help each other out easier.
- › Incorporating your hobbies into your activism work. Creating positive change shouldn't just feel like a chore but something you get excited to work towards.



### Developing self-care practices: an example

Founded in early 2020, the [Peel Climate Café](#) is a monthly gathering space for youth wanting to discuss and share stories about their personal experience or concerns related to the climate crisis.

Keerat Dhami, the project's founder, notes that this project was born out of the lack of spaces to address how climate change affects one's own psyche. Each 90-minute session, often featuring a guest or expert, is centered around a theme which fosters a conversation among attendees.

When asked what the most important benefit from these meetings were, Dhami esteemed that "attendees are relieved to find other attendees to tell a tale or two, profess postulations, communicate concerns, crack jokes, and give advice to one another—similar to a circle of friends at any café."

The [Peel Community Climate Council](#) shows us that in the face of uncertainty from the climate crisis, we can still have conversations about hope and how to live well.

Youth are often included in the consultancy or decision-making process to hold a symbolic and superficial role in the name of incorporating “different voices”. This is tokenism.



### **How do you recognize tokenism? Here are some questions you can ask yourself**

*“Indicators of tokenism happening are largely similar to bad dates (trust in how relationships are built).”*

- Youth Committee Member

#### **From the get-go:**

- › Are you getting odd vibes (either in their invitation email or in person) that someone is too excited without having met you?
- › Does the wording of the initial invitation highlight the understanding of youth's strengths and abilities to contribute to the initiative, or does it use generic and unclear language?
- › Do you think they know who you are and what you can offer as a youth leader, or do you feel like you're filling a quota for youth at the table?

#### **At the table:**

- › Is no one showing you the ropes or no one has taken the time to onboard you to the meeting/ the group that you are invited to? For instance, has anyone filled you in on the context of the

meeting, given you previous meeting notes, or told you what the rules of engagement are (how to speak, when to show up, how to make requests for snacks, etc.)?

- › Is it clear how you will engage in the structures of power (e.g. will you have an equal vote? Do you have enough speaking time? Is it just a consultancy role? Is there a succession plan for your position?)
- › Are you the only volunteer and everyone else is being paid?
- › Do they give indications of how they will incorporate your input in the final work? Does it take several prompts from you to get them to consider this question?

#### **Here are some tips to try to mitigate tokenism:**

- › Get more youth around the table: Make sure you are not the only youth involved in the process and, if you are, let it be very clear that you want other youth representation
- › Speak up: Ask for your concerns to be put into the meeting minutes
- › Ask questions: Be sure you know what your role is and what your image/knowledge will be used for. Ask those at the table what concessions they are willing to make to increase youth accessibility/proposals
- › Identify an ally: Enlist someone to help you with the in-between meetings follow-ups

- › Show that you're an expert: If you have experience or a background on an issue, mention it. Being younger doesn't mean you're less qualified than others around the table. Demonstrate how you're making progress on the project you're working on. If your asks are not being taken seriously repeatedly, showcase the work you've done and point out that what was promised was not delivered
- › Lean into it (to an extent): You might be able to get away with breaking rules because you're not supposed to be familiar with the process. Ask "dumb" or obvious questions to hold those with power to account
- › Enlist outside help: First, give them an honest opportunity to change. However, if all other options have been exhausted, you can use social or mainstream media to highlight the problem and call for action or you can enlist the help of other external people who are in positions to help you



END OF  
SECTION 4

## APPENDIX:

# TEMPLATES TO MAKE YOUR TASK A LITTLE EASIER





## To Request A Meeting

### **Subject Line: Interested in connecting**

Hi \_\_/Dear \_\_,

My name is Jane Doe, and I'm a long time member of Vanier's bicycle coop [*who you are in context and/or reason you know the person*]. I hope you're doing well.

I am currently working on a project regarding biking infrastructure in the city, so I was hoping we can meet in person to learn more about the city's official transportation plan [*The reason you want to meet. Note: asking for a meeting early on in the email let's the person know why you're reaching out from the start.*]

I checked out your bio from the municipality's website and see you have lots of experience in urban planning and even joined the city's urban planning standing committee two years ago. [*Tidbit from the person's career or why you are reaching out to them specifically. It also shows you've done your research and have taken an interest in their career/actions.*]

To give you a bit of background, ... [*+ one or two short highlights from your project/background that would matter to this person*].

Again, it would be great to meet with you in person. Please let me know your availability over the next few weeks.

Thanks, [*person's name*]. I look forward to talking with you!

Jane



## Thank you note after meeting *to send roughly in the 24h after meeting*

### **Subject Line: Thanks again for the meeting**

Hi \_\_/Dear \_\_,

Thank you again for meeting with me [*earlier today/yesterday*] at [*location*]. I appreciate your time and our conversation. You're totally correct about how adding a crosswalk at the intersection of X and Y street would improve road safety for pedestrians. I had not considered this before but I will now! [*Add a piece of advice or part of discussion that stuck with you*]

In particular, I enjoyed discussing...[*+ summarize part of the conversation/ provide a short recap on what was talked about to have as a future reference*].

Thanks again for taking the time to meet up!

Have a great day,

Jane



*"The best meetings seem to be when everyone knows why they are meeting and what should be accomplished at the end."*  
- Youth Committee Member

## Pre-meeting:

- **Who are you meeting?** Research who you will be talking with to get a rounded idea of their background, position, resources, supporters, etc.
- **Role distribution:** If you're a group of people attending the meeting, meet beforehand amongst yourselves to determine your respective roles (e.g: main speaker, note-taker), what you specifically want to address, and what your ask is.

## General tips:

- Confirm how much time they have for the meeting at the beginning (or ask their secretary or assistant). Don't be afraid to politely interject if the person you are meeting with begins rambling off-topic too much.
- *"It is essential to know that your elected officials are not all going to be experts in climate science or climate policy. Many of them might have never had any real expertise or knowledge in the area of climate science, beyond what they have read online or heard from others."*  
- Peel Community Climate Council
- Try to keep a power balance between yourself and whoever you're meeting. It might seem silly, but even paying for your own coffee helps avoid a power imbalance.

## At the meeting:

- **Intro:** Thank them for their time to listen to your concerns. If they're a councillor, you can tell them where you live in their district to establish a personal connection and highlight that you're a voter or future voter.
- **Tell your story:** Use your own experience with the issue at hand to bring forward the purpose of why you're meeting them. Try to keep it short (2 mins), and use techniques from the elevator pitch method.
  - Stories are vivid and memorable. Try to end them by portraying a choice or challenge that the person you're meeting with can help resolve, or a call for action. Stories which end on a positive and hopeful note leave more room for action.
  - Bring the conversation to what climate change is doing to their region, how it will impact their position/profession, and what climate action could/will look like there.
- See [Tips and Tricks for Impactful Storytelling](#)
- **Facts:** While your story is used to set the scene and personally engage whoever you're meeting, displaying the facts of the situation can complement it as well. Be sure to only use a few relevant facts to not bog them down with too much information.
  - Use language that speaks to them. This requires doing some research into their background to understand what they are interested/knowledgeable in.
- **Ask:** Make your ask and write down their responses. Sometimes they will give you non-committal answers so don't be shy to politely ask them for clearer responses.

- › **Thank you:** Thank them for their time and for listening to your story. Leave behind a document for them to reference and with your contact information.
- › **Take a photo with them:** You can suggest sharing on social media if both parties feel comfortable.

## After the meeting:

- › **Debrief** what was talked about, what the commitments given were and what the next steps are.
  - Be sure to debrief privately in a space well away from the meeting location!
- › **Follow-up** with who you met with. Send them an email note thanking them once again and summarizing the conversation (ideally within 24 hours of meeting with them).

## Sample Petition

Petitions can be a good way to show you have a lot of support. Include:

- › What you are asking for: Repeat this at the top of each page so people know what they are signing.
- › Clearly printed names and local addresses of each person signing
- › Signatures and date signed
- › Contact details for your organization

Here is a [sample petition to a municipal government](#).



## Requesting that others support your action

Hi Bob!

Our group is asking our local council to commit to stronger climate targets on Monday. Would you be willing to write an email to Councillor Jane to tell her that you support Council in adopting these targets? [*What you're asking them to do*]

You can reach Councillor Jane at [Jane@council.ca](mailto:Jane@council.ca). [*How they do it*]

We need to show Councillor Jane that there is lots of community support for our campaign, and we know that personal stories from people like you are the most effective way to convince councillors to support us. It would mean a lot if you were able to write a quick email! [*Why this will make a difference*]

Thanks, Bob!

Mary

## Sample resolutions and briefing notes

### Climate Action

[!\[\]\(7803df19e2f64b9d8f5d703b85a358d0\_img.jpg\) City of Vancouver \(Climate Emergency Response\)](#)

### Waste and Circularity

[!\[\]\(07e03eee1bee0936ea2556896d3bb996\_img.jpg\) Local Government Commitment to Zero Waste and Circular Economy Resolution, Motions and Briefing Note](#)

### Transportation - e-mobility

[!\[\]\(bc41d2928368291aeb48d45289891271\_img.jpg\) City of Nelson BC e-bike loan program](#)

[!\[\]\(711f81de5648ddf918583603859123f4\_img.jpg\) Toronto e-cargo Plan](#)

### Building retrofits

[!\[\]\(842b9a660eb497650bab4e1dbd552bfc\_img.jpg\) City of Vancouver - Building Retrofits](#)

### Land-use and Densification

[!\[\]\(23c95a79ea2fdecb85c88c5fd848f31c\_img.jpg\) Density Bonus System in the City of North Vancouver](#)

### Environmental Protection and Ecological Planning

[!\[\]\(110cc478cf3551d7691515804cdd34ca\_img.jpg\) Councillor Motion for Ecosystem Restoration Plan to 2030 \(Vancouver\)](#)

*See additional examples, plans, case studies, and resolutions for a large variety of initiatives from small (e.g. transit fare changes) to large (eg. complete program of building retrofits) in the [Climate Caucus Councillor Handbook](#).*

### Additional Resources:

[Talking it through: Guide for local government staff on climate adaptation](#)





[www.youthclimatelab.org](http://www.youthclimatelab.org)

[www.climatecaucus.ca](http://www.climatecaucus.ca)



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