BIKE UTAH
ADVOCACY TOOLKIT
A GUIDE TO INFLUENCING DECISIONS TO IMPROVE BICYCLING THROUGHOUT THE STATE
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Introduction
Introduction

This document is not meant to be exhaustive but rather a resource that lists many of the tools available for advocates. Further research may be necessary for you to feel confident in taking advantage of these tools.
Vision
Vision

Having a clear vision is fundamental to your success as an advocate. This will allow you to better articulate what you want your policy makers to do and will provide a message for other advocates to rally around.

Many policy makers and city staff do not have a nuanced perspective on the different forms of bicycle facilities, trails, etc. and their appropriate use. It is your job to educate them on what you and your fellow citizens want built in your community. If your goal is to get practical bicycle facilities built such as protected bike lanes, or neighborhood byways, it is important that you explain this difference and its value over painted bike lanes. Most policy makers and even staff will not understand these differences.

Conversely, your community may want gravel paths for bikepacking. Most parks departments only know about traditional mountain bike trails. Help them to see what is possible.
Vision

Active Transportation vs. Recreation

One of the greatest obstacles to getting appropriate facilities built is helping all stakeholders understand the difference between facilities and how they are used. Much of what is being built in Utah has either been painted bike lanes or multi-use paths. Each has its place, but between those two extremes exist a world of possibilities that allow for current users to be safer and new riders to feel comfortable to start riding. Much of the confusion is centered around the conflation of active transportation and recreation.

Active transportation facilities are generally concerned with getting people from point a to point b as safely and quickly as possible for practical purposes, (e.g. work, shopping). Recreational facilities are made for exercise or pleasure, (e.g. meandering multi-use paths, painted bike lanes on a popular training route).
Vision

Whether you want recreation or active transportation focused facilities, you will benefit from helping stakeholders understand their differences. Without providing focus and clarity we tend to create “transportation futons”; they do everything but none of it well.
Vision

Branding

Many communities are concerned with active transportation and recreational bike facilities as a way to attract businesses or tourism. For this to be successful across the state, each community needs to determine a distinct vision that will set them apart from other communities. In other words, branding on parity will not be successful but too often this is what we see.

There are numerous types of cycling that have been untapped to their fullest potential in Utah that could make your community a unique global attraction much like Moab has become over the past few decades. During your visioning process, it is important that you have these discussions where you can determine what your overall goals are.
Engagement
Engagement

A successful advocate engages with a variety of stakeholders as needed. It will be important to identify and appropriately engage with them. The following subsections will provide you with a list of basic tools you can use to achieve this.
Engagement

Stakeholder Identification

Below is a stakeholder map which can be used as a framework in working to identify where you should focus your efforts. As stakeholder interest and influence increases, they will become a greater priority in your efforts.
Failure to appropriately consider stakeholders can be devastating to bicycle advocacy efforts. Generally, the following stakeholders/stakeholder groups should be considered for engagement. This may vary depending on the nature of your project.

- **Public Officials:** Mayor, City Manager, Planning Commissioner, City Council Member
- **Municipal Departments:** Planning, Engineering Public Works, Parks, Public Safety
- **Regionwide:** UDOT Region Representative, Municipal Planning Organization (MPO), Rural Planning Organization (RPO), or Association of Governments representative (AOG).
- **Citizens:** Champions, Urbanists, Recreationalists, NIMBYs
Engagement

Engagement Tools

The following tools are recommended tools you may use to augment your advocacy and planning efforts. These tools will give a voice to many of your stakeholders and improve your projects overall.

- Mapping Exercise: Print off or provide online access to a map of your area of concern. Identify, with stakeholders, areas where new facilities or routes should exist. This will allow for discussion and the development of a consistent vision for you and those you work with.
- Online Surveys
- Open Houses
- Pop-up meetings
- Pop-up projects
- Bicycle Audits
- Intercept Surveys
Planning

The following overview of key components for a quality bike plan is made up of content produced through a collaborative effort between Bike Utah and transportation and planning organizations throughout the state. This content was created primarily for active transportation plans, but many, if not all the elements are fundamental to creating recreational or soft surface focused plans.
Planning

Partner Engagement

Involving internal and external partners in the planning process as well as identifying and empowering community champions, creates an opportunity for comprehensive input and buy-in. Their unique perspectives will generate support for the plan as many of these partners will be critical to successful implementation.

- Include at least one of the following public officials: Mayor, City Manager, Planning Commissioner, City Council Member.
- Include all of the following municipal departments: Planning, Engineering, Public Works/Streets, Parks.
- Identify, engage, and empower “champions”, those community members or staff who can and are willing to expend time, energy, and political will in order to implement the pieces of the plan.

- UDOT region representative
- MPO, RPO, or AOG representative
- Patrol; police department; public lands
Planning

- Recommended: Transit agency; neighboring cities; health department; school district; Department of Public Safety/Utah Highway Patrol; police department; public lands agencies; major employers and work sites
Planning

Public Engagement

At least two distinct methods of engagement and data collection from the list below must be utilized during all phases of the process in order to gather input from diverse community members:

• Open houses or charrettes
• Online survey
• Opportunities to comment on plans or maps online or in-person
• Intercept surveys
• Pop-up meetings and attending existing events
• Walk and bicycle audit
• Stakeholder interviews or events at major work sites
Planning

Existing or Current Conditions

Creating a clear image of what the community is now enables a meaningful comparison with what the community wants to be in the future. The analysis should use words, photos, maps, and data to describe:

- Existing on and off-street bicycling and walking network and facility types
- Identification of network barriers and gaps
- Demographics
- Crash and safety data
- Integration with local and regional plans, including other active transportation plans
- Connections to transit and community destinations (e.g. parks, schools)
- Recommended: Existing counts (if available)
- Recommended: Geological, hydraulic, or other physical characteristics and constraints
Planning

Recommendations

This task involves recommending new infrastructure, supportive programs, and policies in order to promote better accommodation of people walking and bicycling.

A. Projects. These most crucial recommendations should encourage active transportation use, regardless of age or ability, by design. Each recommended facility must include (at least):
   - Route and facility type identification
   - GIS schema consistent with state and regional standards
   - Recommended projects connected to regionally-significant existing or planned routes

B. Programs. Education, encouragement, evaluation, enforcement, and equity programs support the effectiveness of infrastructure (engineering) projects (The 5 Es).
   - Programming associated with existing recommended facilities with an emphasis on the 5 Es listed above.
Planning

• Local context-specific Safe Routes to School programming
• Maintenance plan (i.e. snow removal, restriping, weed removal)
• Recommended: Wayfinding plan compliant with national and local standards

C. Policies. Policies, departmental procedures, design standards and guidelines that promote active transportation usage and safety should be recommended.
• Walking and bicycling friendly design standards and land use policies
• Recommended: Complete Streets Policy or Ordinance
Creating an implementation strategy is a critical step in the active transportation planning process so that momentum and public support do not stall when the plan is finished. It should be detailed, yet easy to use. The plan should include:

- Prioritized and/or phased list of actions and recommendations
- Funding opportunities
- Capital and maintenance cost estimates and budget
- Recommended: Annual work plan calendar
- Recommended: Agencies or persons responsible for realization of recommendations
Performance measures are effective ways to evaluate progress and the effectiveness of the implementation of recommendations. Measures should at least include:

- Walking and bicycling mode share (% of trips done by walking and bicycling)
- Regular bicycling and walking counts and reporting at several high profile locations
- Health indicators; crash and safety figures
Measuring Success or Potential
Measuring Success or Potential

Whether you are applying for a grant or asking your city council to fund a project, those you engage with will be more likely to support your efforts if you can show data that tells a compelling story. This section will provide you with an overview of tools to consider when collecting data. Combining the following data sources with personal stories of cyclists will be more convincing than using one or the other.
Measuring Success or Potential

Before and After

Before and after is one of the main tools used to measure success upon completing a project. Before and After studies, as they relate to evaluating the success or impact of a change to the street or a trail system, consider the impact of a specific “treatment”. Treatments can include narrowing or widening a road, adding protected bicycle infrastructure, placing signs throughout a trail system, etc.

As the name implies, you measure your variable of interest prior to implementing your treatment and after implementation. The difference between the two measurements is the theoretical impact of your project. What you measure depends on what you are interested in finding out, (e.g. cyclist fatalities, number of cyclists using a facility).
Measuring Success or Potential

The weakness of before and after is the assumption it makes that all changes can be attributed to the specific treatment. Transportation systems are complex and have many contributing factors that cannot be accounted for with before and after. There are more robust research methods for measuring impact but before and after is commonly used among transportation engineers and should be sufficient for your efforts.
Measuring Success or Potential

Strava Data

Strava is an online fitness application that athletes use to track their exercise. Many cyclists use this app which can give insights into where cyclists are generally riding. This app is most impactful for gaining insights related to recreational riders but UDOT and other entities are working on models that help determine a more accurate picture of how many people are using the routes highlighted by Strava data. Other active transportation data sources are available as well that will allow for a more complete picture of cycling in your community.

Please contact Bike Utah or UDOT if you are interested in learning more about Strava data or other data resources and how you can use them in your efforts.
Measuring Success or Potential

Bicycle Counts

Bicycle counts are a fundamental part of telling a story with data for bicycle advocates. To perform bicycle counts, you simply observe the bicycle facility you are interested in and count how many cyclists ride through. This will likely be a part of any before and after study you perform.

It is recommended that you observe the facility at “peak times” or when most cyclists are on the road, e.g. when people are going to and from work, as this is standard practice for counting automobiles and will give a more accurate representation of the highest level of use of a facility. However, it may be beneficial to consider other times depending on the facility and the story you are looking to craft.
Implementation

Implementation, or the funding and construction of the riding facility in question, is likely what you are most interested in. Each of the preceding sections were leading to implementation. It is crucial that each of those steps be followed prior to getting to this point to increase the chances of being successful.

The best-case scenario would be that funding sources had been identified for major projects in the planning process, but this is not always the case. There are numerous funding sources that may be appropriate for your project. These may include:

- Grants
- Fees
- Existing funds within an entities budget
- Donations
Implementation

The 1,000 miles program will be a great resource in identifying these funding sources and working with you to obtain them for your project. Please contact Chris Wiltsie at Chris@bikeutah.org for more information.

Upon obtaining funding for the project it is important that you continue to stay engaged to make sure that the project is completed according to the planning process or if changes are necessary, that they are in line with the overall values and goals of the project and your community.