

Tell Your City's Story

Make the Most of Your Meeting

Time with your legislator during the legislative session is brief. Once you have a meeting with your legislator, it's important you make the most of it. Here are some tips:

- **Be concise.** Plan what you want to say in advance.
- Stories are best illustrated in terms of **impacts to constituents**, not as impacts on government.
- Legislators do not always have time to read big packets. **Keep your materials short.**
- Offer to provide **more detail to staff.**
- Don't try to cover too much, **3-5 issues at most.**
- **Ask for clear commitments** to work on your issues.

Act Strategically

Communicate what your city needs early and often. Frame your city's issues in a way legislators can understand and remember. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Don't just send an email – **meet in person or call them!** Speak with your legislator or the chief of staff.
- **Stories stick.** Frame your city's "ask" with a local story. Too many charts and graphs can make brains spin.
- **Respect staff and use time wisely.** Staff are busy! They appreciate clarity and brevity.
- **Ask for frequent meetings** or calls with your city, or a group of cities. These can also be brief.
- Talk about specific bills or budget priorities and **tell stories about real impacts on your constituents.**
- **Speak up** even if you think it may not be necessary. If legislators don't hear from you on something deemed important, they may assume you don't care.