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Working with media to raise awareness in your community

Each of us have a personal passion for improving biking in our communities. After all, the places you bike every day are what matter most to you.

Here are some tips on how to connect with local media to build awareness about improving biking in your community.

Write a letter to the editor and/or a community forum

Most newspapers and forums have places for members of the community to submit letters online.

The key to writing relevant letters is to make them timely and focused on local issues.

- Timely: Letters should reference topics, events or issues that are currently in the news or happening in your community.
- Local: Letters should be about local issues or include a local perspective on news outside your area.

Topic examples

- As gas prices skyrocket this summer, wouldn't it be great if biking around our city was made easier? One simple step we can take is to increase the number of downtown bicycle racks.
- With many cities across the country improving biking infrastructure, our city could be doing more to encourage biking. One simple step we can take is to organize a community bike week to raise awareness about the need for more bike lanes.

Invite media to attend biking events

If you're involved in biking events in your area, invite media to attend and cover them. Most media outlets have places on their Web sites for you to submit updates to a community calendar and/or ideas for news stories.

Events media may have interest in covering

- Safety workshops
- Free or reduced price bike tune-ups
- Bike/transportation forums
- Organized rides or festivals

Make media aware of accomplishments

If you're aware of an effort that's made your community a better place by improving biking opportunities, be sure the media know about it. Ways to get coverage include:

- Writing a letter to the editor or community forum
- Submitting the effort as a story idea to your local newspaper and/or television station

Download resources you can use to promote bicycling

In the Get Involved section on peopleforbikes.org you can find a wealth of resources to enhance your advocacy message, including:

- Statistics on the benefits of bicycling
- Contact information for local bicycle advocacy groups
- Tools to share your story with friends and/or national representative

