Basic Steps in an Advocacy Effort

PROBLEM DEFINITION
- Analyze your issue:
  - Problem vs. Issue:
    - A “problem” is something people feel strongly about (e.g. Housing, Racism, Poverty, Health Care, etc.).
    - An “issue” is something concrete, with clear and achievable action steps.
  - Identify your interests/goals—what do you want to happen/change?

INFORMATION GATHERING
- Do some research:
  - Learn more about the issue/problem; what’s been tried before; who else has similar concerns/challenges.
    - Online research—Google it!
    - Find people with expertise and knowledge: individuals, organizations, public agencies, etc.
  - Identify the scale of the issue: one street, a whole neighborhood, an area of the city, city-wide, county/regional/state wide/federal.
  - Figure out who has the power to make a decision on your issue.
  - Investigate formal decision making processes related to your issue.
  - Get copies of relevant documents: regulations, background reports, laws/ordinances.

JOIN WITH OTHERS
- Find Allies:
  - One person usually is not as effective as a group of people.
  - Identify potential allies and opponents and understand their interests.
  - Join forces with an existing group: neighborhood association”; other “community based group.”
  - Create your own group.
  - Seek out additional groups that may share your interest and concerns.
  - Thank people who help!

COMMUNICATION
- Get the word out:
  - Set up a way to communicate with people who are helping: e.g. e-mail list, Facebook, Twitter, Google Group, etc.
  - Develop a clear, easy to understand message (PROBLEM, SOLUTION, CALL TO ACTION).
  - Create a website or Facebook page—some place on-line where people can learn about your issue and how to help.
  - Develop a media strategy.
    - Identify a spokesperson—stay on message!
    - Get a current list of media contacts: community newspapers; Oregonian, Tribune, Willamette Week, Mercury reporters, KBOO, other radio stations.
- Identify media that serve the scope of your issue (e.g. neighborhood, citywide).
- Send out information through other organization email lists/social media.
- Contact TV stations to cover your media events/“political theater.”
- Make presentations to other community groups.

**LOBBYING**
- Visit/communicate with elected officials or other people who have power or influence over your issue (city, county, Metro, state, federal).
  - Understand decision-making process (e.g. “how a bill becomes law”).
  - Develop a strategy.
  - Target decision-makers with influence on your issue.

**RESOURCES/FUNDRAISING**
- Gather the resources you need to get the job done:
  - Identify the resources you will need (cash, in-kind contributions of materials or services)
  - Develop a plan for raising resources:
    - Direct appeal for funds/services; flyers, website, Facebook and other social media, fundraising events.

**Some Useful Resources**

**Portland’s Community and Neighborhood Engagement System:**
- **Office of Neighborhood Involvement:** 503-823-4519; [http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/25967](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/25967)
  - ONI Information and Referral Line: 503-823-4000
  - Neighborhood Program, Paul Leistner: 503-823-5284, paul.leistner@portlandoregon.gov
  - Diversity and Civic Leadership Program, Jeri Jimenez: 503-823-5827, jeri.jimenez@portlandoregon.gov
  - Disability Program, Nickole Cheron: 503-823-2036; Joanne.Johnson@portlandoregon.gov
  - Youth Program, Andrea Marquez: 503-823-5860, andrea.marquez@portlandoregon.gov
  - New Portlanders Program, Polo Catalani: 503-823-4426, polo.catalani@portlandoregon.gov; Linda Castillo: 503-823-3170, linda.castillo@portlandoregon.gov
- **Neighborhood Coalitions:**
  - North Portland Neighborhood Services: (503) 823-4524; [http://nnpnscnmmunity.org/](http://nnpnscnmmunity.org/)
- **Neighborhood Associations:**
- **Diversity and Civic Leadership Program Partners:**
- Unite Oregon: (503) 287-4117; http://www.uniteoregon.org/
- Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO): 503-234-1541; http://www.irco.org/
- Latino Network: 503.283.6881; http://www.latnet.org/
- Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA): (503) 288-8177; http://nayapdx.org/
- Urban League: 503.280.2600; http://ulpdx.org/

**Portland City Government**
- City/County Information and Referral: 503-823-4000.
- City of Portland website: http://www.portlandoregon.gov/25783
- City Elected Officials: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/25999
- City Council bureau assignments: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/article/224450
- City/County Pocket Guide: http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=52554
- City Boards and Commissions: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/37423
- City Ombudsman: http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=26647

**Multnomah County**
- Multnomah County Government: https://multco.us/

**Oregon State Government**
- Find your legislator: https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/FindYourLegislator/leg-districts.html