














Schedule a Visit with Your Legislators

Offering a visit and tour of your downtown to your state and federal legislators is an invaluable way to showcase your work and needs. The MDA encourages our members to schedule a visit with state and federal officials at least once a year.

TIPS TO REMEMBER WHEN INVITING LEGISLATORS FOR A VISIT:

- 1.** Don't wait for a project to be complete before scheduling the visit. Show off any stage of the project/initiative. 
- 2.** Look at your legislators' schedules. For example, the MI House and Senate are in session in Lansing Tuesday-Thursday so a visit outside of Lansing would not be possible. [Find the schedule here.](#) 
- 3.** Invite one month from the proposed date (be flexible) and work with the legislator's scheduler and/or District Director. 
- 4.** Work with your neighboring communities. Can the visit be combined with a visit to a neighboring community? 
- 5.** If the legislator isn't available, ask a staff member to attend. Often, he/she can visit longer and report directly to the legislator. 
- 6.** Create a schedule of the tour/visit and stick to it. 
- 7.** Who from your community needs to be part of the tour to create value and impact? 
- 8.** Get local businesses involved. Perhaps one or two business owners speak to the legislator in their place of business. 
- 9.** Before the visit, send an email to the legislator stating who is scheduled to join the tour from your downtown. 
- 10.** Do your homework. In which committees does the legislator participate? What bills has he/she recently supported? 
- 11.** Take pictures and share, share, share! 
- 12.** Have simple and easy-to-read documents to share. Use reliable data but don't offer any lengthy reports. 
- 13.** Make a direct ask of the legislator and get a commitment. Start big and keep asking until you get a 'Yes'.
A. BIG: Will you support Bill 1234, which would provide funding for our XYZ Project?
B. SMALL: May I follow up with you in two weeks regarding our progress? 
- 14.** After the visit, send a handwritten thank you card to the District Office and a thank you email to staff. Make sure to include follow-up materials and any photos from the visit. 