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.

For information regarding Michigan Bills and Laws and for Legislators’ schedules and contact information, please visit https://www.legislature.mi.gov/