

# A TOWN'S RIVER ACCESS ORDINANCE: Navigating Advocacy + Lobbying for 501(c)(3)s



Fair Shake®  
Environmental Legal Services



**Advocacy:** No restrictions to 501(c)(3) activities.

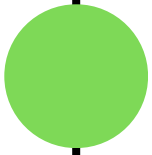


**Lobbying:** 501(c)(3)s are limited in how much you can do. Proceed strategically.

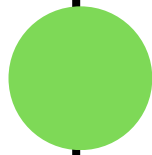


**In Between:** The specifics of the situation may dictate if this is advocacy or lobbying. Connect with your Fair Shake attorney or Bolder Advocacy for guidance.

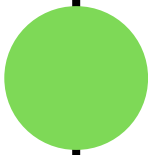
501(c)(3)s can legally lobby on the issues they care about BUT may need to limit, track, and report the amount of money and staff time spent on lobbying activities. Reach out to Fair Shake for resources or more details.



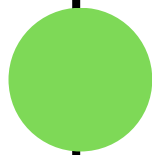
Host **Community Visioning + Listening Sessions** and hear that public access to the river is issue #1!



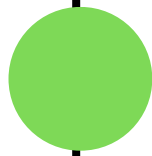
**Learn About Potential Solutions** by looking at ordinances and ideas from other communities that help increase public access to the river.



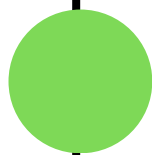
**Make Complaints** to state Environmental Protection about concerns with a current facility.



Have **Relationship-Building Meetings with City Council** to tell them about the public's river access wish and hear about their priorities and perceived challenges.



Host **Talks** and **Community Meetings** that include education about current laws on river access and possible solutions from other communities.



**Email City Council** with education about impacts of current laws and possible solutions from other communities *WITHOUT\** an ask for them to do anything specific.



*\*NOTE: This could change to lobbying if you ask others to take action or include contact information for Council.*

This document is for educational purposes only and is not legal advice. Please consult with Fair Shake at [www.fairshake-els.org](http://www.fairshake-els.org) with specific questions.



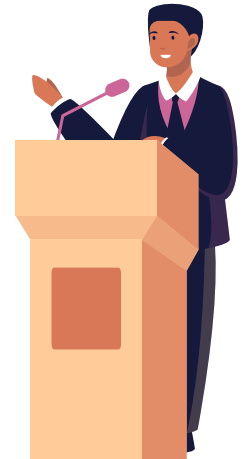


Meet with City Council to ask them to **Enforce Existing Laws Better** *WITHOUT\** ask on solutions or ordinance template.

Work with Fair Shake to **Find or Draft a River Access Ordinance Template.**

**Meet with City Council**, provide education on impacts of river access, and **ASK** them to work on and pass ordinance template.

**Attend Council Meeting** and, during public comments, **ASK** Council to work and pass ordinance template.



**Write an Op-Ed or Release a Public Statement** with information about the positive health and economic impacts of improved river access.

**Host Community Meetings** and Invite All City Council Members with education explaining positive impacts of river access and what the ordinance template includes *WITHOUT\** asking attendees to take action or sharing contact information shared for Council Members.

**Post on Social Media** with education about the ordinance template *WITHOUT\** asking viewers to take action or including contact information shared for Council members.

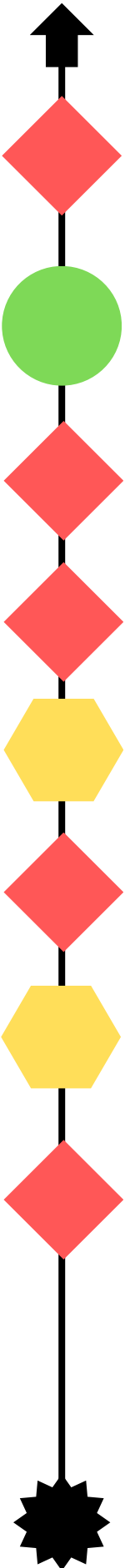
### Lobbying?

#### Follow Time Limits, Document + Report:

- Prep time.
- Cost of printing materials or hand-outs.
- Drive to and from meeting,
- Debrief time.

See [Bolder Advocacy's Keeping Track: A Guide to Recordkeeping for Advocates Charities.](#)

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**Provide (Unsolicited) Guidance to City Council** members on how to edit the ordinance template into a draft ordinance they will vote on.

City Council invites your organization to serve on a committee to **provide expertise on the ordinance**.

**Meet with City Council** members with the ASK to pass fully drafted ordinance.

**Host a press conference** stating your support of the fully drafted ordinance.

**Talk to the press** about why you care about this ordinance.

**Host Community Meeting** with the ASK to community members to call Council and ask them to pass the ordinance.

**Host Community Meeting with education** on the impacts of river access and a ‘comment-writing party’ with information and resources to help residents write and share their own comments.

**Attend City Council meeting and make public comments** in support of the ordinance on the day they are voting on the ordinance.

**ORDINANCE PASSED!**  
Celebrate the new  
**PUBLIC ACCESS RIVERFRONT!**



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