MAJOR IN BICYCLING

A guide to making your campus bike friendly
Introduction

Welcome to the Transportation Alternatives’ College Bicycle Advocacy Toolkit! This manual presents the concrete steps you can take to improve biking on campus and in your community. By organizing on campus and engaging in local politics, you can leverage the strength of your university to bring more bike lanes and bike parking to campus, educate other students on bike safety, and improve access to biking for your entire neighborhood. Bicycling has the potential to connect you to New York City government, policy and neighborhood life.

This toolkit is broken down into two sections: Organizing On-Campus covers the steps you can take at your University to make biking better for students and your neighbors immediately off-campus. Organizing Off-Campus delves into the structure of City government and pathways of advocacy you can use to push elected and appointed officials to implement bike-friendly infrastructure in your neighborhood.

There is no silver bullet for making your campus and neighborhood more bike-friendly. Most effective advocacy efforts involve mobilizing a diverse coalition of people, both off and on campus. Consider Transportation Alternatives a resource throughout your campaign to bring better biking to campus: Feel free to reach out any time with questions about your campaign at bikes@transalt.org.
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About Transportation Alternatives

Transportation Alternatives (T.A.) is a New York City-based non-profit advocacy organization. T.A. advocates for bicycling, walking and public transit as the best transportation solutions for New York City. T.A. developed this toolkit so university students, faculty and staff can effectively advocate for better biking in New York. As a member of a university community in NYC, you are in a unique position to shape bicycling and biking infrastructure in the Big Apple. Universities are powerful institutions in New York, and they are accountable to you. By drumming up support for more bike lanes, better bike parking and safer streets, you can leverage the strength of your university to make lasting change for your entire community.

Know Your Audience

Neighborhood residents, community groups and even your own administration may have reasons to disregard and, in some cases, actively oppose bicycle improvements. You should be prepared to respond considerately and rationally and to tailor your strategy or bicycling advocacy to each group you address.

To you and me, the benefits of a bike-friendly city seem fairly obvious. Nonetheless, a citywide transition to a bicycle-friendly culture requires New Yorkers to rethink traditional forms of transportation and reimagine the design of very iconic streets. For some folks, this adjustment will not be as easy to accept. In all of your advocacy efforts, be aware of your audience and try to meet their mindset. Emphasize the positive advantages of a bicycling culture that extend to all New Yorkers—including those who don’t necessarily bicycle. Change is never easy, so be strategic about how you ask people to shift their habits and opinions and understand that it will naturally take some time.
Some Common Concerns about Urban Biking:

- Pedestrians may view cyclists as a danger or inconvenience, particularly when one experience with a reckless cyclist negatively colors the perception of all cyclists.
- Store owners may claim bicycle lanes have a negative economic impact on business.
- Some communities may perceive bicycle infrastructure to be an imposition that does not reflect their specific needs or community goals.
- Drivers may not want to exchange parking spaces for bicycle lanes or to give up a lane of car traffic to install a safe bicycle lane.

The Data Show Otherwise - Pros of Urban Biking:

- Safer streets: Bicycle lanes make streets and sidewalks safer for everyone. They are associated with decreased rates of injury and death among pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers—reducing crashes on streets with protected bicycle infrastructure by 40%.
- Improved air quality
- Increased foot traffic to local businesses: Bike lanes and bike parking bring more customers to businesses' doorsteps.
- Reduced street noise
- Quicker commutes: Bikes provide New Yorkers with the most efficient way to get from point A to point B.
ORGANIZING ON CAMPUS

Know Your University

It’s helpful to begin your advocacy by taking stock of your campus’ existing bike infrastructure. Here are some things to consider before you craft your campaign:

- **Take a walk around campus.** Note bicycle lanes, bicycle racks, and other storage facilities that might exist on campus. These fundamental infrastructure pieces are good indicators of the current degree of your campus’ bicycle friendliness, and will give you a sense of what some achievable goals might be.

- **Look up your school’s bicycle storage and parking policies.** Can students leave bicycles outside overnight? In their dorm rooms? Are there indoor or outdoor lots for long term parking?

- **Find a free NYC bicycle map.** Visit your local bicycle shop or online at [http://www.nycbikemaps.com/free-nyc-bike-map](http://www.nycbikemaps.com/free-nyc-bike-map), and check out the lanes leading to and from campus. Is there a network that links your school to surrounding neighborhoods?

- **Does your school website already offer any information for current or prospective bicyclists?** Are there currently any active initiatives to promote bicycling on campus?
What does a bicycle friendly campus look like?

A bicycle friendly campus relies on a few key structural elements and an organized student body. Bicycle storage, secure outdoor parking, and designated street space for bicyclists are essential to a bicycle friendly campus. On an urban campus, these facilities depend on both your municipal government and the university itself, so it is important to develop a voice in each forum that can represent the current and prospective biking community. Here are some basics to start thinking about:

Is your campus bicycle friendly?

- How much bicycle parking is available on your campus? Indoor? Outdoor? Dorm storage?
- Are the primary bicycle parking areas safe to come and go from at night?
Once you’ve figured out what you want to change about campus’ bike network, map out existing campus resources and start to identify your best bets for support. The most likely candidates are environmental and sustainability initiatives like a University-sanctioned advisory committee or an activist student club, but support could take a number of forms. Identify the student and faculty sustainability leaders on campus and ask what they’re doing about bicycling:

- Are they concerned with “greening” transportation on campus?
- What resources are already in place for student involvement?
- Does the University have any data on bicycle use or the percent of students and faculty who commute by bike?
Student Groups

Link up with an existing team of students or faculty to gain momentum and knowledge of how things work on your campus. Students who are already organized are more likely to support a new cause than people who are not yet involved.

Once you track down existing groups and clubs, find out when they meet, and show up. Even if the group isn’t directly concerned with transportation or bicycling, they may be willing to take it on or point you to another group who will. Bring a copy of this toolkit and talk about your goals for bicycling on and around your campus. Propose starting a bike advocacy committee within an existing group. Ask club leaders if they have experience working with the school administration and whether there are any faculty members that have been particularly helpful in beginning and sustaining student-initiated projects.

University Administration

University administrators will typically (though not always) have the final word in decisions that effect your campus infrastructure. It’s a good idea to court administrators as allies when you begin an advocacy effort; you can sometimes avoid a lengthy campaign by simply asking administrators to do what you want.
Unfortunately, most administrators have to balance multiple competing priorities, and will often be unresponsive to your demands at first. To change bicycling on campus, you’ll likely need to demonstrate broad support for your cause. Know that you can win over your Administration, but change takes focus and persistence.

Sustainability Initiatives

Universities are concerned with their environmental footprints, and are increasingly likely to support initiatives that can be considered environmentally-friendly. Capitalize on this: making a campus more bicycle-friendly translates into a greener campus for everyone.

Check to see if your university has a sustainability office, initiative or plan, and if it includes any effort to encourage green transportation policy. If it does, you can use the plan as leverage to ask for better bike infrastructure on campus. If it doesn’t, one of your campaign’s goals can be to get bicycle facilities included as a measurable objective in the university’s sustainability plan.

Faculty

Faculty are critical allies in any student-led advocacy effort. They can help you navigate your campus administration, connect you with campus resources and endorse your campaign. Faculty also have access to administrators, and a strong voice in campus politics. You can drop in to their office hours or e-mail them to set up a meeting. In the meeting, lay out the goal of your campaign and ask them if they’d be willing to support your cause or point you to faculty who would. Ask them to sign-on to a letter of support (or coalition letter) for your campaign. A simple letter with your demands (and the reasoning behind them) with dozens of faculty signatures will show administrators you have diverse support behind you.
If you can’t find an existing student group to take up bicycle advocacy, lead your own recruitment drive to build a base of student activists around you. Even if you do start your campaign within an existing group, recruiting more students to your cause will help build momentum and convince administrators to pay attention to you.

Petition

Grab a clipboard, and create a simple petition for other students to sign (This could be as simple as “We request that safe bike parking be installed outside of all dorms. Increasing biking facilities on campus would forward the university’s commitment to making our college more sustainable and facilitate healthier modes of transportation for students and community members.”) Stand at busy parts of campus and ask passing students to sign on, writing their name, e-mail, phone number, dorm and whether they’d like to volunteer. Between seven and 9 pm that night, call the people who said they’d like to volunteer, explain
what you’d like to accomplish on campus, and ask them to come help you petition the next time (be direct and confident when you ask – you’d be surprised how eager most students are to get involved on campus and meet other people). Expect half the people you call to answer, half of those people to say yes to petitioning, and half of those people to actually show up. This is called the “rule of halves” and it’s a good principle to remember as you think about planning all your events.

Remember the “rule of halves” when recruiting people to petition

- If you call 8 people...
  - 4 will answer the phone
  - 2 will say yes to petitioning
  - 1 will show up to petition

Get to Know Your Fellow Advocates

Use the time you spend petitioning with other students to get to know them, paying special attention to what motivates them to work on bicycle advocacy. Invite them to your next meeting, where you can introduce all your new bike advocate friends and start to hash out a plan to make your campus more bike-friendly. After every meeting, do something fun – get pizza or drinks or check out another event on campus. Making all of your meetings and events fun and social will keep people coming back and ensure that your group continues to grow.
Distribute Responsibilities

As your group forms and you get to know everyone, delegate responsibility for different realms of your campaign to different people. For example, one person can be responsible for reaching out to faculty, while another can lead petioning. Giving other students leadership in your campaign will empower them to work hard, build group unity and amplify the impact of your efforts.

After a few weeks of a well-run recruitment drive, you’ll have found a dedicated group of students committed to bicycle advocacy and collected a stack of petitions from everyone you signed up along the way. If you’re willing to do the painstaking work of data entry, you can put all your contacts in a spreadsheet, and e-mail everyone about your upcoming events, meetings and rallies. Bringing a stack of petitions to a meeting with an administrator or community board will also help show that you’ve got broad student support behind you.
PLAN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Chances are you already know what you want to change about biking on campus. Whether you advocate for more and better bike parking, more bike lanes or better-paved bike paths, developing a concrete set of goals – and a strategy for how you’ll reach them – is essential to running a successful campaign.

Set Goals

First, set a goal and make it concrete. The important thing here is to make your demands actionable. Think of concrete steps to improve biking on campus. Instead of “we want to make biking better on campus,” say “We want bike racks outside of every dorm” or “we want bike lanes on all major streets on campus.”

Develop a Strategy

Once you’ve established a concrete goal, you’ll need to develop a strategy to achieve it. A strategy is a theory – an idea of what you think will make decision makers enact the changes you want to see on campus.

Determine Your Target

The first step in developing a strategy is to choose a target - the person or group who has the power to make the change you want. Let’s say you want more bike racks on campus. Who decides whether bike racks get installed? Facilities staff? Campus administrators? Your local community board? Choose the person or group with the most influence over your goal and focus your efforts on convincing them.

Think about who your target is accountable to. Do facilities staff care about student concerns? If they do, then a good strategy would be to demonstrate broad support for your plan among students to
facilities staff. If the decision maker isn’t accountable to students, though, you’ll need to think about pushing other powerful people on campus to influence your target. If facilities staff have to answer to the administration, for example, your strategy might be to show the administration broad student support for your plan, and ask them to push facilities to install racks.

Think about what your target’s priorities are, too. Are they concerned about getting re-elected? Do they want your college to look “green” to parents or alumni or the public? Figure out what makes your target tick, and, if possible, develop your strategy to play to your target’s ambitions (or publicize them not doing what they say they stand for).

Choose Your Tactics

Now that you have a goal, a target and a strategy for your campaign, think about the tactics you’ll use to get your message to the decision makers. Tactics include petitions, letters to the editor of local or campus papers, events like rallies or press conferences, phone calls to your target or meeting directly with the decision makers. The tactics you choose should reinforce your strategy. If your strategy is to show administrators broad student support for bike parking on campus, tactics like petitions, phone calls or rallies would effectively demonstrate such support. Meeting directly with your target, on the other hand, probably wouldn’t show them that tons of students care about your issue (Although it’s still worth doing if you get the chance.) Be fun and creative with your tactics, too – make giant props for rallies, throw parties to get petitions signed or anything else that will get your message across while making your work fun and engaging.
Make a Calendar

Finally, put your goal on a calendar, and work backwards to plan out your campaign. Add in secondary goals (a certain number of petitions, students in your group or participants at a rally), and again work backwards from each of them to figure out the work you’ll need to do to make them happen. While planning takes some time, it will make you infinitely more efficient, help you anticipate potential obstacles and let you know when you’ll need other students to help you out.

RECAP: Plan Your Campaign
How to get things done!

Set a goal, and make it concrete. The important thing here is to make your demands actionable.

Come up with a strategy. A strategy is a theory – an idea of what you think will make decision makers enact the changes you want to see on campus.

Determine your target. Your target should be the person or group of people who have the power to make decisions.

Develop tactics. Tactics are actions you take in order to get your message to the decision makers. The tactics you choose should reinforce your strategy. (i.e. petitions, events like rallies or press conferences or phone calls to your target)

Plan out your campaign by putting your goals down on a calendar and working backwards from each of them to figure out the work you’ll need to do to make them happen.
ORGANIZING OFF CAMPUS

Photo by Andrew Hinderaker
What is a Complete Street?

Bike lanes are only one piece of a ‘Complete Street.’ Complete Streets serve the needs of everyone who uses them – making space for pedestrians, bicyclists and public transit alongside cars.

**PEDESTRIAN STREET LAMPS**
It’s a city, not a highway. Lighting shouldn’t just be for cars.

**DEDICATED BUS LANES**
Why should a single-passenger SUV be allowed to delay the morning commute of 60 bus riders? Dedicated lanes get buses out of traffic and make transit trips fast and predictable.

**SEPARATED BIKE LANES**
Bikes are the cleanest, healthiest, and most inexpensive mode of urban transportation. Dedicated lanes provide physical protection for cyclists and encourage bike use.

**VENDORS**
For thousands of years before the advent of the automobile, urban streets were a scene of vibrant civic and economic life. Vendors help make streets into destinations rather than places to be driven through.

**CURB EXTENSIONS**
Also known as BULB-OUTS or NECKDOWNS, these decrease pedestrians’ exposure to traffic by reducing crossing distances. By narrowing the street, they help reduce drivers’ speeds, as well.

Image Courtesy of: OpenPlans
Transportation Alternatives advocates for all these street improvements, and we encourage you to incorporate them in your campaigns for more bike-friendly communities, too!

**TRAFFIC LIGHTS WITH A LEADING PEDESTRIAN INTERVAL**
By showing a walk signal a few seconds before turning cars are given light, LPI lights allow pedestrians time to enter a crosswalk before traffic makes them impassable.

**STREET TREES AND PLANTINGS**
Not only do they provide shade and oxygen and make the street look nicer, it’s been shown that urban trees increase traffic safety and improve business.

**RAISED, TEXTURED CROSSWALKS**
Raising and texturing the sidewalks creates a natural speed bump and makes pedestrians more visible to motorists.

**BOLLARDS**
These short vertical posts protect pedestrians at dangerous intersections and prevent motorists from parking on sidewalks.

**SPEED BUMP**
Slow down or pay the price.
Certain improvements to bike infrastructure – including bike lanes and most other changes to public streets - require the approval of city government. (A proposal for a new bike lane, for example, usually must be approved by the local community board and by the Department of Transportation.) To make these changes a reality on your campus and in your community, you’ll have to venture off-campus and make your voice heard in City politics. Fortunately, certain branches of City government are set up specifically to respond to requests from constituents like you, and much of the support you’ve been building on campus will translate well to City politics. This section outlines the role of important branches of City Government and what you – as a student and a community member – can do to propose or support bike-friendly initiatives and policy.

NYC Community Boards

Community boards are forums for local residents to express their interests and influence local and city wide legislation. Each board meets once a month and serves a particular district with finite boundaries (See pg X for a map of community board districts). In between the full board meetings, subcommittees - like Parks and Recreation or Transportation - meet to discuss and vote on particular issues. You can attend any subcommittee or full board meeting as a representative of your school or as a community resident (or both), speak up for existing proposals or propose new improvements to bike infrastructure on or near your campus (ask the District Manager about the best way to get your issue on the agenda). If your community board does not have a committee explicitly dedicated to transportation issues, reach out to the district manager and find out which committee is best for your issues.

At each meeting there is a public hearing after agenda issues have been discussed and before the committee votes. Since there is often relatively low resident involvement in community board activities,
your participation can have a truly meaningful impact! Agencies like the Department of Transportation consult community boards before pursuing many of their new developments and can alter project plans in response to community board feedback.

As with all advocacy, a large, diverse group of people supporting you at the meeting will show the committee that you represent the public when you speak up on behalf of bicyclists.

Find Your Community Board!
Go to http://gis.nyc.gov/doitt/nycitymap/ and enter your address on the right. Then click “Neighborhood Information” to see your community board.

Use Transportation Alternatives
Transportation Alternatives keeps track of all the important board meetings around the city, and regularly updates active volunteers on what’s coming up. Join our e-mail network and receive notifications about meetings and votes in your neighborhood.
New York City Council

The New York City Council writes and approves legislation, monitors and advises city agencies, makes land-use decisions and approves the City budget. The five boroughs are divided into 51 districts, each represented by a single council member (See Pg X for a map of Council districts). The council members each have an office at City Hall in Manhattan and a District Office in the neighborhood they represent. Each council member serves on a number of committees that review and enact legislation. They also provide a variety of services to constituents and serve as a liaison between the community boards in their districts. District Offices are designed to be accessible to constituents (you!) and to keep track of community relations. As a representative of your district, your council member, like your community board, must represent the interests of large constituency groups - like a university with an active student voice, for example.

You can call your council member’s office to set up a meeting, or walk in to their district office at any time. Get to know your council member’s stance on issues that interest you and let him or her know whether you agree. Ask them how you can best make your opinion known and who your allies are among their vocal constituents.

There is often relatively low resident involvement in community boards, so your participation can really make a difference!
There have been significant improvements in New York City’s bicycling infrastructure over the past decade. The growing network of over 250 new miles of bicycle lanes in the past few years, more public bicycle parking and legislation requiring commercial buildings and parking garages to accommodate bicycles all represent an official embrace of bicycling as an alternative type of public transportation.

Still community boards, council members and community organizations vary in the degree of support they are willing to offer to bicyclists. Luckily, these institutions and government bodies also happen to be designed to incorporate and advocate for your views. If you make your thoughts and goals clear and demonstrate a broad base of support, these entities are beholden to take action on your behalf.

Your voice will be most effective if you make sure your thoughts and goals are couched in an understanding of current plans for the development of bicycling, both citywide and in your neighborhood. Take a look at the transportation goals and progress report for PlanNYC - New York City’s long-term sustainability plan - and the bicycle information page on the Department of Transportation’s website to get a feel for the current and future plans for bicycling and to download the most current NYC Bike Map. Visit Transportation Alternatives’ website to learn about ongoing campaigns and to read past reports and original research.

Transportation Alternatives: http://www.transalt.org/
Getting Involved with Transportation Alternatives

Getting involved with Transportation Alternatives (T.A.) is undoubtedly the best way to become an informed advocate. You can sign up to become a T.A. member or join our e-mail network to stay up-to-date on actions and news.

Join T.A. at the Reduced Student Rate!
By joining T.A. at our discounted student membership rate, you can expand your education even more. T.A. members receive Reclaim, our quarterly magazine, filled with real-time information on how our mission and our goals are playing out around New York City. Membership also has financial benefits – card-carrying members of T.A. receive discounts at over 100+ NYC-area bicycle shops and businesses, and discounts on T.A. bicycle tours and special events. Join T.A. as a student member today, at transalt.org/support.

Volunteer!
Transportation Alternatives’ Student Volunteer Committee brings together like-minded university advocates from all over the city. If you’re interested in attending a meeting, e-mail volunteer@transalt.org for the most up-to-date information. T.A. also orchestrates volunteers to help out with office tasks, staff events like our bicycle tours, contribute to letter writing and generally help advance T.A.’s mission. Check transalt.org/volunteer for a complete list of opportunities.
Propose a Bicycle Rack or Indoor Bike Parking!

Your university can purchase and install bike racks and indoor bike parking on campus property, or request free bike parking from the City. The Department of Transportation’s CityRacks program allows you or your school to request a free bicycle rack for any city-owned property with inadequate bike parking and sufficient space. Due to the program’s popularity, the DOT prioritizes bulk requests for bike racks through institutions like universities, Business Improvement Districts or community organizations. You can ask your university to submit CityRacks applications to the local community board for locations throughout campus. You can also collect several applications from local businesses and submit them to your community board at once. In either case, the community board will then submit a bulk request to the Department of Transportation. The more applications you can submit at once, the better.

The CityRacks application can be found online: http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/bicyclists/bikerack.shtml

T.A. maintains a list of companies specializing in indoor bike parking: transalt.org/campaigns/bike/parking/indoor/companies
Propose a Street Rack!

A street rack provides secure, on-street bike parking by converting car parking or unused curbside space into bike parking. Street racks are typically installed directly onto the street or placed on an extended sidewalk.

Street Racks boost local retail sales by improving parking for the increasing number of New Yorkers choosing bikes to get around town. They’re great for pedestrians too! On-street bike parking can de-clutter the sidewalk, freeing up space for pedestrians. When installed at a corner location, street racks can also increase visibility for those waiting to cross the street.

It’s best for a local business to request a street rack, because they’ll be responsible for maintaining the repurposed street. Once you’ve identified a supportive business, you can work with them to gain community board support, lobby your administration on their behalf to support your effort or contact the Department of Transportation directly. As with all advocacy, it’s best to enlist as many partners as possible to rally behind you. Contact bike@transalt.org for a Street Rack application.
Propose a Bike Friendly Business!

T.A.’s NYC Bike Friendly Business program recognizes businesses that support safe cycling in the Big Apple. Bike Friendly Business owners know that more bike lanes equal more bicyclists, and that more bicyclists equal more customers. Indeed, streets that prioritize biking and walking have been proven to boost retail sales by 10-25 percent.

In return, all 300 Bike Friendly Business are publicized on T.A.’s website, transalt.org/business, and New York’s new online bicycling resource, bikenyc.org.

Business owners are listened to – by the media, elected officials, and other powerful New Yorkers – so winning them over as allies can give your campaign a big boost. Once you’ve signed up a Bike Friendly Business, you can ask the business owner to take action for your campaign (like signing a petition, speaking up at a community board, or talking to the press about why bikes mean business). Contact bike@transalt.org to receive Bike Friendly Business materials.
Propose a Bicycle Lane!

Bike lanes are the backbone of an effective bike network. As bike share rolls out across NYC, it’s more important than ever to implement a thorough network of bike lanes, Greenways and protected bike paths. To start advocating for a bike lane in your neighborhood, get a free bicycle map at your local bicycle shop, or order one by calling 311.

The dotted lines on the bike map represent lanes that were laid out in 1997 as part of the city’s Bicycle Master Plan, which the Department of Transportation has used as a guide to install over 700 miles of bicycle lanes throughout NYC. You can review these dotted lines to find prospective bicycle lanes in your area and push your community board for their completion. This approach will usually be easier because the routes have already been approved by the city. You can also push your community board to install bike lanes that aren’t part of the original bike master plan. In either case, these simple tips will help increase your chances of winning the lane:

**Recruit partners**
Ask your school administrators to write a letter requesting the lane, sign up bike friendly businesses along the bike lane, or reach out to community groups to sign a petition requesting the lane.

**Make your case**
Highlight how the proposed lane will complete part of the bike network, make the campus more attractive to prospective students or make the street safer (see the “Understanding Diverse perspectives” section on Page TKTK for more arguments for bike lanes)

**Get the media involved**
The media can serve to amplify your message, and get your cause on your target’s radar. Contact your student newspaper or other outlets and ask them to write a story on your advocacy efforts. Contact T.A. at bike@transalt.org for more information about engaging the media.

Bring Bike Share to Your Neighborhood

Beginning in the summer of 2012, New York will roll out 10,000 public use bikes at 600 automated docking stations around Manhattan and Brooklyn - and that’s just Phase 1 of this ambitious program. Alta Bicycle Share, the country’s leading bike share vendor, will run the program in New York which will soon be the biggest bike share system in North America. By offering the option to become members for a day, week, month or year, people will be able to use the bikes with ease in a way that makes the most sense individually. An annual membership with the program will cost less than a monthly Metrocard, and members will have unlimited access to bikes for trips under 45 minutes.

Transportation Alternatives helped bring bike share to New York City, and we organize communities to win bike share for their neighborhoods. As a student, you are in a unique place to help bring bike share to your campus or community (if it isn’t already), because the Department of Transportation works to satisfy the demand for bike share from big institutions like universities. Your university administrators can request bike share stations for their neighborhood by writing a letter to the DOT or contacting their community board. Reach out to bike@transalt.org for more information.
Final Thoughts

Have fun! Changing your community for the better is one of the most satisfying things you can do as a New York City resident. In pursuing an advocacy project, you meet people and become invested in your community in ways you couldn’t have imagined before. Do fun and social things after every campaign event and don’t forget to celebrate your victories!

Add this experience to your resume! Nothing stands out more on a job application than an educated candidate with real-world experience. Showcase your skills with this project, then capitalize on them with a possible employer.

Don’t forget about T.A.! Keep Transportation Alternatives updated on your efforts and progress: e-mail bike@transalt.org or call us at 212-629-8080 to let us know how your project is going. T.A. staff members are always eager to hear about how local advocates are extending the reach of the organization’s mission. Staff can also give advice, commiserate over challenges and celebrate your success!
Learn More

The following is a list of bicycle-related websites at urban colleges around the continent that might help you structure your own campaign and website.

NYU:
http://www.nyu.edu/sustainability/campus.projects/bike.share/

Mcgill University, Montreal:
https://secureweb.mcgill.ca/sustainability/campus-action/transportation

University of Chicago:
http://sustainability.uchicago.edu/campus/biking.shtml

University of Toronto:
http://bikechain.utoronto.ca/

City College of San Francisco:
http://www.ccsf.edu/Info/FAQ/bike.html

Rice University, Houston:
http://www.rice.edu/bikesatrice/index.shtml
Learn by Example

Other schools around the continent have been building campus bicycle community resources. We’ve asked students at a few urban schools to talk about their experiences in bicycle advocacy by responding to a set of interview questions.

These snapshots can give you an idea of what shape bicycle advocacy efforts might take on your campus. After familiarizing yourself with the particularities of your campus & surrounding neighborhood, you can decide what kind of advocacy goals will best suit your needs and be most likely to succeed within your unique context.

Toby is the coordinator of BicycleChain, the University of Toronto’s student-run bicycle shop located off campus. BicycleChain was initially supported by the university’s sustainability office, which allowed them to use a student union-imposed levy of 25 cents per student. They paid a coordinator and gathered student and faculty volunteers, using tools from a local bicycle shop. They recently moved to an off-campus site where they operate with shop revenues and public grant money.

“Toby

"I’d like to think that the work we do at BicycleChain could increase the percentage of trips taken by bicycle. We hired 13 students this year under a government subsidy program, and see really strong support in the number of people who come through our doors."
Farid is a student employee at The Flat, McGill’s student-run bicycle-coop in Montreal. The Flat got started with funding that the Student Society set aside for green initiatives, and now operates on volunteer labor and a small budget from student fees. It is not officially supported by the university administration.

“I was pretty much recruited into the campus bicycle scene. I took a friend to the bicycle coop because I wanted to see what it was like. I was helping him true a wheel, and one of the volunteers asked me if I was interested in volunteering. That was the beginning of a new life!”

Julia and Mike are managers of the New York University Bicycle Share, which was founded in 2008 thanks to a grant from the NYU Sustainability Task Force. Julia co-wrote the grant with the intention of developing a free, student-run program that would encourage biking as a commuter tool among NYU students and faculty. The program gained momentum with increased administrative support when Mike became manager in 2009 as a student employee in the Sustainability Office. It now serves 500 registered users on campus and will expand when funding is available.

“The 2006 Transportation Alternatives film Contested Streets got me interested in the potential for bicycling to transform neighborhoods and make people happier. It presents bicycling as a way to share and participate in local space while using transit time actively.”
NYC Community Districts

This map can be found online at:
NYC City Council Districts

This interactive map can be found online at:
http://www.oasisnyc.net/map.aspx
BIKE NYC

WHERE TO GO BEFORE YOU ROLL

A PROJECT OF TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES