



WEEKWITHOUTDRIVING

weekwithoutdriving.org

Talking Points

The Week Without Driving is an educational campaign that invites elected officials and other decision makers to experience their community without relying on a car, gaining firsthand insight into the challenges of non-drivers. When encouraging decision makers to participate, here are some talking points.

Elected officials and Other Decision Makers:

- 1. Informed Policy Making and Insights:** Participating in Week Without Driving can reveal critical gaps and inefficiencies in the current transportation system in our community. You can use these valuable insights to make informed, evidence-based decisions regarding funding, infrastructure, and other policy improvements, ensuring a better transportation system. You can also learn to identify cost-effective solutions to transportation issues, such as improving pedestrian infrastructure and public transit options. Additionally, your firsthand experience can give you concrete examples of the benefits and challenges of not driving in our community, strengthening your communication with stakeholders and other decision makers.
- 2. Innovative Solutions and Balanced Transportation Planning:** The campaign aims at promoting a balanced transportation system that meets the needs of all members, including drivers, pedestrians, transit users, and more. Creating a transportation system that provides options for people means having safe and reliable options for everyone. Experiencing different modes of transportation during the Week can also help you understand how the networks interact, leading you to a more holistic understanding of transportation in our community. It can also inspire solutions that improve overall transportation efficiency and effectiveness.
- 3. Positive Public Relations and Enhanced Credibility:** By being willing to experience what many residents of our community live day to day, demonstrates your commitment to being a proactive and responsible leader. It also supports public trust and confidence in you as a leader as you show awareness, transparency and empathy with residents. This act of empathy can build public trust and confidence in your ability to make informed, inclusive decisions that benefit all transportation users.
- 4. Strengthened Community Engagement:** Promoting alternatives to driving aligns with many public health, climate/sustainability, housing, and safety goals. Not only does reduced car usage lead to less traffic congestion and improved air quality, but encouraging others to



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use other modes of transportation can improve community and individual health, address housing affordability and promote community safety. Your participation can demonstrate a genuine commitment to understanding and addressing issues beyond transportation. It shows that as a decision maker, you are willing to step into the shoes of your community, fostering trust and support with the community.

5. **Leadership and Development:** The Week Without Driving offers a unique opportunity for professional growth, as it provides a firsthand experience and insights that enhance your understanding of your community. It is also a chance to network with other professionals, individuals and community members who you may not know. Your participation can establish you as a forward-thinking professional who is committed to innovative and inclusive decision-making. Demonstrating your willingness to engage with and understand the experiences of all transportation users will showcase your dedication to addressing the needs of the entire community, not just a select few. This commitment can inspire confidence from stakeholders and peers, enhancing your reputation as a prominent leader in our community.

Additional Tips:

- Highlight stories from the community. Bring in real-life examples that demonstrate the everyday challenges and benefits to alternative transportation options. Use visuals that highlight some of these issues.
- Link this to broader goals that the decision maker cares about. Explain how participating aligns with their goals of economic development, public health, sustainability, etc. If they have any upcoming transportation projects or initiatives that tie in with this, explain how their participation can provide them with insights that can influence the project positively.
- Present data and research that show why your community needs a balanced transportation system. Facts and figures from your community helps build a compelling case.
- Show there is broad community support for the Week. This can be in the form of a petition, letters, testimonials from a diverse range of community members.
- Be prepared to offer support and address their concerns if they participate. Show the decision maker that they will not be alone in this experience and that you can help highlight and uplift their work by engaging local media.
- If their participation is limited by transportation options, suggest a shorter commitment, even one day can provide valuable insights without being overwhelmed.