

# Effective Advocacy

- Building Stronger Main Streets
- Caleb Ratzlaff

# What is Advocacy?

- Can create anxiety (especially in election years)
- Good faith vs bad faith
- Goal: stronger communities

# Everyday Advocacy

- Your choices shape your community
- Business location reflects values
- Who benefits? Who is left out?

# Two Models of Advocacy

- Grassroots neighbourhood engagement
- Issue-specific advocacy
- BIAs combine both

# Discussion

- What advocacy have you done?
- Petitions, letters, organizing?
- What issues exist in your BIA?

# Grassroots Neighbourhood Engagement

- Asset-based approach
- Build on what's working not what's wrong
- Fitzgerald example

# Community Building

- Welcome businesses
- Events & social connections
- Monthly meetings with councillor

# Issue-Based Advocacy

- Active transportation
- Urban forestry
- Focused and persistent

# Advocacy Tools and Tips

- Relationships
- Grassroots Support
- Shaping the narrative
- Delegate/showing up
- MPP vs. City Council
- Media Relations

# Relationships

- Cities run on relationships
- Trust with councillors & staff
- Balance business vs community

# Do & Don't (Relationships)

- Do: meet regularly, share early
- Do: be honest about trade-offs
- Don't: blindside publicly
- Don't: make it personal

# Grassroots Support

- Petitions, email campaigns, delegations
- Build and use mailing lists
- Mobilization takes effort

# Shaping the Narrative

- Shape the story
- Help explain why it matters
- Use simple, human language

# Do & Don't (Narrative)

- Do: focus on shared values
- Do: keep it simple
- Don't: use jargon
- Don't: overcomplicate

# Delegating / Showing Up

- Attend council & committees
- Participation is rare = influence
- Consistency matters

# Do & Don't (Delegating)

- Do: be concise & coordinated
- Do: bring real examples
- Don't: ramble or repeat
- Don't: attack personally

# Working with Your MPP

- Focus on provincial issues
- Meet with BIA ED
- Less direct impact than City

# Media Engagement

- Use the news cycle
- Simplify your message
- Think like a reporter

# Final Thought