

ADVOCACY CIVICS 101 –

WHO TO CALL WHEN YOU WANT SOMETHING DONE (2013 VERSION)

Question: You are riding down the street and fall into a pothole. Who do you call to fix it?

Answer: It depends on where you are riding. There are 18 incorporated cities in the county, plus the county unincorporated areas and Caltrans who cover road maintenance issues. Step 1 is to figure out where you are. Google Earth has a pretty decent way to download city boundaries so you can look up exactly where you are. Old school Thomas Guide maps are pretty great since they show each city as a different color and makes it easier to see where you are. Once you figure that out, here's who to call/email/post to the website:

Oceanside: (760) 435-4500 www.ci.oceanside.ca.us

Carlsbad: (760) 434-2980 transportation@calrsbadca.gov

Encinitas: (760) 633-2850 www.ci.encinitas.ca.us

Solana Beach: (858) 720-2470 www.ci.solana-beach.ca.us

Del Mar: (858) 755-3294 www.delmar.ca.us grouppulbicworks@delmar.ca.us

San Diego: (858) 527-7500 street_service@sandiego.gov

National City: (619) 336-4580 www.ci.national-city.ca.us publicworks@nationalcityca.gov

Chula Vista: (619) 460-2867 or (619) 397-6000 www.chulavistaca.gov

Imperial Beach: (619)423-8300 publicworks@imperialbeachca.gov

Coronado: (619) 522-7380 www.coronado.ca.us

La Mesa: no phone www.cityoflamesa.com/RequestTracker.aspx

Lemon Grove: (619) 825-3810 www.ci.lemon-grove.ca.us

El Cajon: (619) 441-1658 www.ci.el-cajon.ca.us

Santee: (619) 258-4100 www.ci.santee.ca.us

Poway: (858) 668-4700 www.poway.org

Escondido: (760) 839-4579 www.escondido.org

San Marcos: (760) 752-7550 www.ci.san-marcos.ca.us

Vista: (760) 639-6177 www.cityofvista.com

If the street is not in any of those municipalities, it is in the unincorporated county – (877) 684-8000

www.sdcounty.ca.gov

It is also possible you are on a Caltrans facility: (619) 688-6699 www.dot.ca.gov/dist11

Helpful hint: Be polite and start at the staff level first. In maintenance situations it is the staff's job to track and fix maintenance issues. They will likely fix your issue if you give them the chance and it is within their power. For big issues, they might not be able to help, at least not right away. If they can't, ask them what you should do to get the situation fixed. Getting staff working for you is a great advocacy strategy. If staff can't help you within a reasonable amount of time, then it's time to call the elected officials in the city to see if you can make something happen through their offices. Resist the temptation to get your elected officials involved right from the beginning – give city staff a chance to fix the issue before escalating it further up.

Question: Let's say you want a bike facility on your street. Who do you call?

Answer: Again, it depends. It might be talking to the city the street is in (see above list of websites). Usually you will want to contact the planning department to see if there is already a plan to include a bike facility where you want one. Here is a quick diagram to see who is responsible for what:

Federal Government – provides funding, creates federal standards for bikeways

State of California – provides funding, creates state standards for bikeways

Regional SANDAG – regional planning, regional funding

County, cities, Caltrans – maintenance, construction of new projects, planning for local infrastructure

Local planning groups – advisory groups who advise cities on planning issues around new buildings (parking, showers and lockers, street improvements, etc.)



So if you want a new bike lane on a street in San Diego, you probably want to start at the local planning group level (<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/> for a list of planning groups). If the planning group doesn't have the power to do it, move up to city planning and transportation. If they can't do it, time to call the council office to get your elected official involved.

Helpful hint: Learn what is included in your community plan! If there are projects that you support this is a good way to flex your advocacy muscles. Once something is in a plan, the next piece of the advocacy puzzle is to get the city/county/agency to actually DO it. A topic for another advocacy training class!