

# ADVOCATING FOR: TENNIS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

*Advocacy for tennis involves taking our knowledge and passion for tennis and connecting it to the needs of communities, schools, colleges, and local governments. Advocacy is the ability to demonstrate to decision-makers how tennis programs can benefit the community.*

*Taking up the cause for tennis is not a small commitment. Having tennis courts constructed in your local public park can involve wading through levels of bureaucracy and take years to complete. However, if you believe in tennis and in all the benefits the sport brings to your community and its residents, your efforts will be richly rewarded.*



## KEY ALLIES TO CONSIDER:

- Community Tennis Associations (CTAs)
- USTA Foundation NJTL Chapters
- USTA Tennis Service Representatives (TSRs)
- Local tennis clubs, facilities and certified professionals
- Local tennis retailers and sports construction specific companies

## TACTICS TO ADVOCATE FOR TENNIS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Research local policy priorities and be prepared to show how tennis-focused programming can benefit your community as a whole.
- Explore websites of your local city or county governments.
- Your community's five-year infrastructure plan plays a critical planning role.
- Familiarize yourself with local Parks and Recreation Department priorities and leadership.
- Develop relationships with School Board members who may also have tennis-related priorities.
- Gather facts and develop a narrative for convincing others that your tennis project is worthy of their consideration.
- Communicate your goals clearly and concisely to secure support effectively.
- Develop broad community support for your project.
  - Building a coalition can create networking and partnership opportunities, provide cost effectiveness and sharing of duties and resources.

## COMMUNICATING WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Developing relationships with your public officials is essential to the success of your project.

### *Tactics for Communicating with Public Officials*

- Learn the names of each elected official you seek to influence and find out on which board/council committee each elected official serves.
  - It is important to learn about each officials' interests that relate to your project.
- Ask to be considered for inclusion in your city, county, parks, and School Board public meetings agenda.
  - Before presenting, watch recordings of past meetings, and read published meeting minutes.
  - Show support with a large, visible turnout - everyone should look unified for the common goal.
- Give a written copy of your comments to the Clerk for the public record.

TENNIS INDUSTRY UNITED • FOUNDING MEMBERS



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For more information on community support opportunities from the USTA, please visit

**USTA.COM/?**

is there a community specific url?

## FUNDING YOUR PROJECT

Local leaders will look for ideas about raising needed funds. Public entities, such as city councils, county commissions or School Board may be more receptive to funding a project if there are multiple private sources committed to the support of the project.

### *Example of Funding Sources:*

- County, city, or town budget
- Local school district budget
- Bond referendums
- Cash and in-kind donations
- Corporate or business sponsorships
- Fundraising projects
- Partnering with your local Community Tennis Association
- USTA grant opportunities

## WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Media coverage is a powerful tool to build awareness for your tennis initiative. Whether print, online, broadcast or social media, you need to use the media to reach the largest audience possible to promote your goals and objectives.

### *Tactics for working with the Media:*

- Communicate why the story, issue or event is important and relevant today.
- Include human interest story opportunities.
  - Reporters are interested in hearing about how tennis has made an impact on a particular person's life, and how they are looking to give back to the community. You can also give statistics on how tennis can change the community economically.
- Connect with the media whenever you have news, for example:
  - Announcing your tennis campaign or project.
  - A new supporter joins your initiative.
  - Report on fundraising progress.
  - When you have achieved your goal or significant milestone.
  - Public ceremonies about your project.
- Social media is a very effective and low-cost way to publicize your organization, cause, event, or project. It is also a useful tool to drive traffic to your other digital platforms, such as your website, blog, membership-management system, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media platforms. Today, effective use of social media is essential for gaining attention and credibility among a broad audience.

FOUNDING MEMBERS

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