

# Power Mapping 101



**LWVUS Advocacy**

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# Speakers



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# Housekeeping

- This meeting is being recorded and will be shared after the call.
- For this call, we encourage active participation. Use the “Raise Hand” feature to speak aloud or put text responses to questions in the chat.
- If you are not speaking, please mute yourself to minimize distractions.
- If you have any questions or thoughts throughout the call, please drop them in the chat.
- Please introduce yourself in the chat if you haven’t already!

# Agenda

- Understanding power
- How to map power
- Power mapping with a DEI lens
- Power mapping to Unite and Rise 8.5
- Power building with LWV Ohio
- Practice scenario
- Reflect and share



# What is Power?

- Power = ability to act and influence others
- Power is not fixed
- Can be grown, shifted, or shared
- Building power means building capacity for change



# Where does power live?

- Not just in institutions
- Power lives in relationships and networks
- Influence comes from trust, access, and organizing
- Equity matters, access is not distributed equally

# What is power mapping?

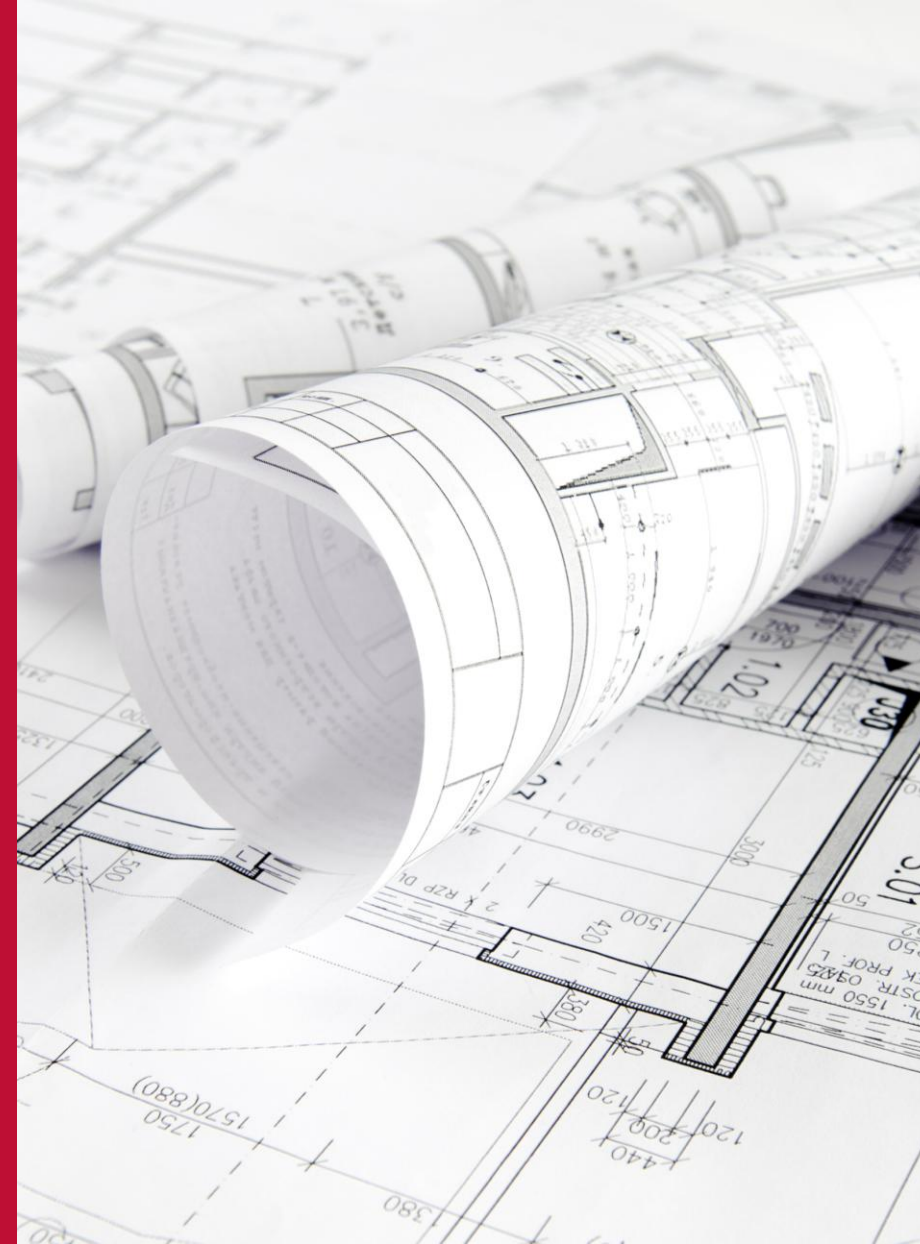
A visual tool used for pinpointing who has more or less power in a specific situation. Helps us to identify influential individuals and entities, either on your side or against, and determine the best strategies to motivate them to take desired actions.

# Why do we power map?

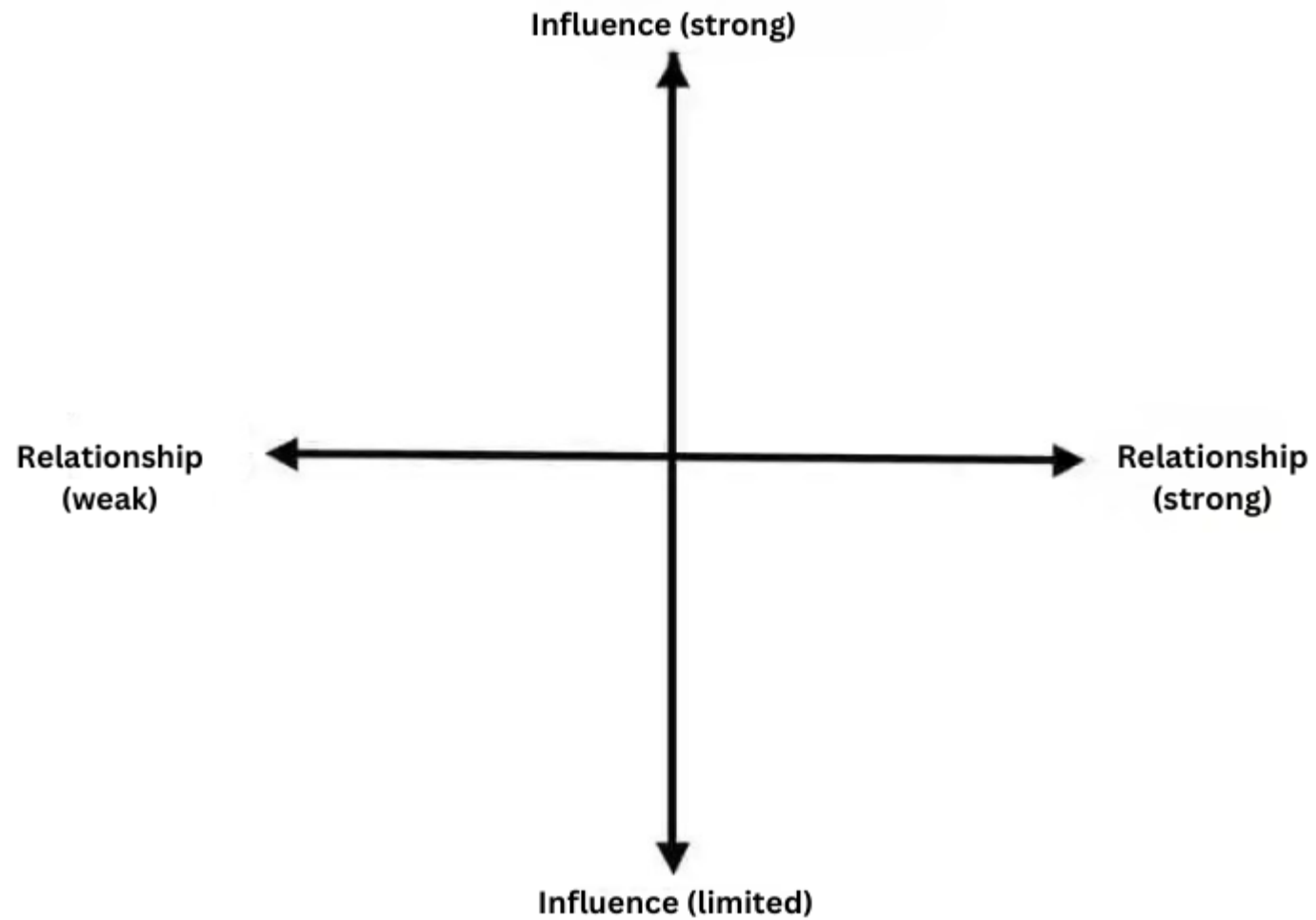
- Clarifies relationships vs. decision-making roles
- Identifies individuals, organizations, influencers, and targets
- Positions us and our coalitions within the power spectrum
- Aligns strategies with intended outcomes
- Pushes us beyond old habits into intentional action

# How do we power map?

- Start with a clear goal or issue
- Identify who has influence on that goal
- Map your important relationships and where you have gaps
- Use the map to figure out who to contact, who to mobilize, and who to partner with



## Power Mapping Matrix



*Using this tool, you are encouraged to choose an issue you are advocating for or against and plot out the people, organizations, and other entities in accordance to their influence and your organization's relationship to them.*

# Why a DEI lens matters in power mapping

- Who is most affected by the issue?
- Are they part of the decision-making process?
- Who is missing from our networks?
- DEI lens turns good intent into real strategy



# Unite & Rise 8.5

# Creating your own power map for Unite and Rise 8.5

- Unite and Rise 8.5 showcases the many ways voters can drive change through advocacy, mobilization, civic education, and engagement.
- This is an opportunity to take a high-level look at where power lies in your state and ways you can make a measurable impact.
- We encourage you to choose a component of the Unite and Rise 8.5 work happening in your state and map out who has power and influence around it.

# Jen Miller, Executive Director of LWV Ohio

# Creating an Effective Campaign Plan

**An effective campaign plan**

**(1) builds power strategically**

**(2) demonstrates that power**

**(3) reduces the influence of opponents**

# Understanding the formal decision makers

- Who has the ultimate authority to fix the problem?
- Who else has authority over some aspect of the process like setting the budget, overseeing workers, or securing technology?
- Who has influence over those in power?
- How can we leverage existing relationships?
- What relationships must we build?

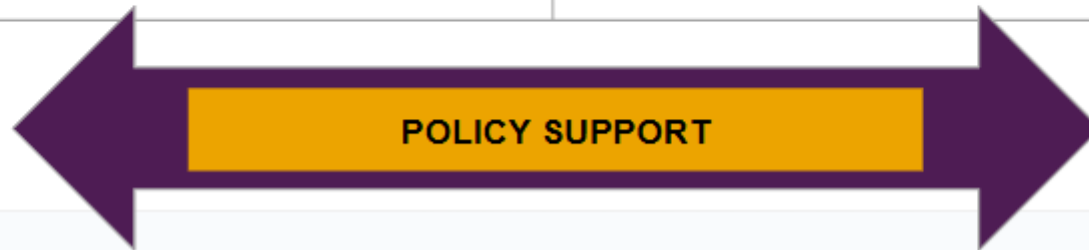


**High Influence Opposition:**  
These are your most feared opponents. Try to track their actions and find ways to neutralize them.

**High Influence Supporters:**  
Leverage these relationships! They are on your side and have influence with decision maker(s).

**Low Influence Opposition:**  
Do not focus much energy here, but monitor for changes.

**Low Influence Supporters:**  
Not much direct influence, but they can still be valuable partners, especially for rallies, testimony, media outreach, & grassroots strategies.



# Steps of Power Mapping in Practice

- **Define the Goal:** What's our ask? What policy change do we want?
- **Identify the Target:** Who has the power to decide?
- **Brainstorm Stakeholders:** Who has interest in the policy and/or influence on the target?
- **Research & Map Stakeholders:** Determine levels of power & support.
- **Analyze Map:** Who are our best allies? Where do we need to build or strengthen relationships? Who do we need to neutralize?

# Practice Scenario

A city park and a school in Cowville are on a street with no sidewalks. Cars park on both sides. Most residents cannot afford to put in sidewalks. Cars often speed, weaving in and out of parked cars and putting students walking to school, pedestrians at the park, and their pets at risk of being hit.

After pressure from the LWV of Cowville, area pediatricians, faith leaders, environmental groups, and the general public, the Mayor proposed a “Pedestrian Safety Plan,” which would adequately address the problem on this and other similar streets.

At least of 3 of the 5 City Council members are supportive, but the Council President will not bring the Pedestrian Safety Plan appropriations to a formal vote.

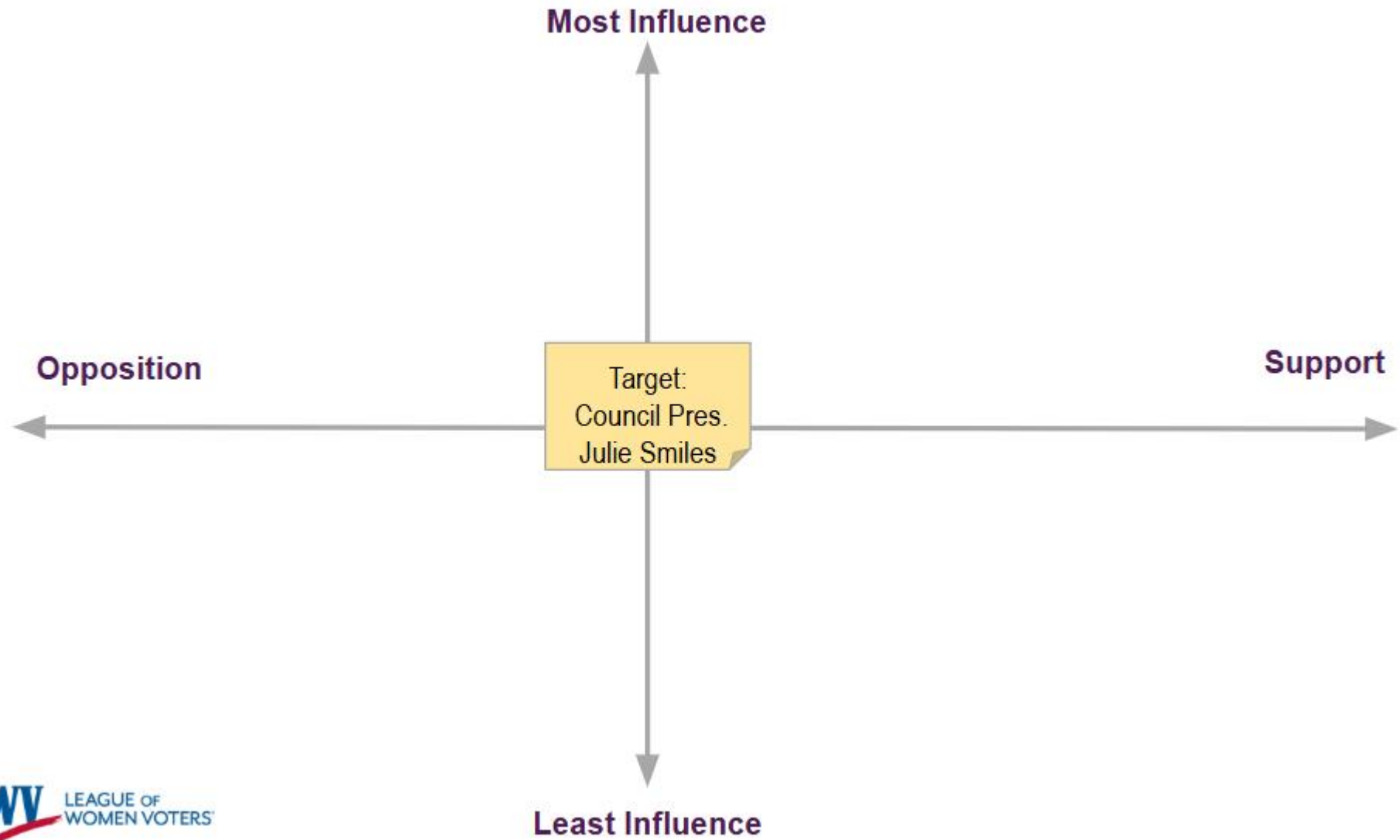
# Let's Get Started!

- Define the Goal
- Identify the targets



# City Council President Julie Smiles

- Julie Smiles, a dentist, became Council President of Cowville, with the support of the local medical association, the area's major employer (a dog food manufacturer) Cowville Canines, and construction trades. She campaigned on reducing taxes and making the community better for families. Her chief of staff used to work for a public health nonprofit. Constituents report that the local NPR station is always playing in her office lobby.
- She grew up in a neighboring town of Bowlington (which has a strong local League) and graduated from Teether University, which is 60 miles away and has a strong urban planning program. She attends Happy Valley Church, used to volunteer for a local animal rescue, and is active in Rotary. She drops her kids off at the elementary school - they do not walk. One of her closest friends occasionally volunteers for PTA. Her dad is a retired first responder. Her spouse likes the outdoors and does construction. There is widespread speculation that she will run for State Rep. Her opponent would likely be the Mayor.



# Now What?

- **Practice Applied Empathy:** A deliberate practice of trying to understand another and to actively use that understanding.
- **Research the target(s) & key stakeholders:** Check out media, campaign statements, online profiles. What motivates them? What worries them? Even little things like where they went to school or their favorite dessert can help develop a relationship with them.
- **Research our connections to them:** Ask League members and coalition partners who they know or what they may have in common with the target(s) or key stakeholders.



# Reflections and questions