Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Peer Review Update

January 8, 2019
Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Data Collection

**Purpose:** to assess existing count data and potential gaps to better inform bicycle and pedestrian travel in the region.

**Why does count data matter?**
- Provide volume data for planning and modeling
- Strengthens funding requests
Peer Review

Purpose:
- Understand **how count data is used**
- How state, regional and local agencies **partner**
- Identify what **count technologies** they use

Initial Findings:
- We found **15 out of 17 agencies** conduct both bicycle and pedestrian count programs (volume counts).
- **Nine agencies (3 DOTs and 6 MPOs)** actively run count programs and have readily available information online.
Counter Types

Project/Context Specific

- Manual Count

Trends/travel patterns

- Short Duration (Portable)
- Permanent (Continuous)

Source: WSDOT, Collecting Network-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Data: A Guidebook for When and Where to Count, 2017
Summary of Peer Review

Purpose of Count Programs:

• To communicate the **benefits of active transportation**

• To provide information for regional **travel patterns and trends**

• To prioritize funds for bicycle and pedestrian facilities

• To **evaluate the impacts** of specific projects (including air quality) and to evaluate the regional TIP

Example:

• Estimate the demand of proposed facilities for **project evaluation and selection** purposes.
Summary of Peer Review

State/Regional/Local Partnerships

Partnering with local agencies is important to:

• Garner support for count program
• Make aware of data collection
• Gather and review past count data
• Get input on site selection

Example:

• Some state agencies partner with regional and local agencies to install, monitor count systems and provide training and outreach.
Count Technologies

- Agencies choose a variety of count technologies based on their environment and count purposes.
- Many of them use both permanent and short-duration counters.

Example:

- Three count methods: permanent, cyclical (rotate counters), and project-specific counts.
- Three different types of automated counters to monitor and evaluate active transportation projects.
Counter Installation and Site Selection

- Agencies consider a range of strategies for installation and selecting count locations.

Examples:
- Provide training and information on counter installation process.
- Prioritize bicycle corridors
- Use data collected from bike user app (CycleLane & Strava) to identify primary count locations.
- Select count locations based on household travel survey results.
Summary of Peer Review

Cost

• Counter price ranges between $2,000-7,000 (per counter) depends on models and functions.

• In addition to counters, ongoing expenses such as annual modem fees, battery replacement and other repair costs were highlighted in agencies’ budget reports.

Examples:

• Install alert system to counters to minimize any count disruptions (such as vandalism).

• Loan counters to local jurisdictions for short term counts. Some cities own counters and share data with their region.
**Funding Sources**

- Non-traditional funding sources, such as grants from public health and environmental organizations, were used to initiate count programs.

- **Partnerships** with cities, universities, or with public health organizations.

**Examples:**

- FHWA research funding prior to count program launch.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funding to initiate count programs and purchase counters.
Next Steps

1) Peer Review on Local Examples *(Spring 2019)*

2) Data Collection *(Summer 2019)*

3) Needs Assessment *(Fall 2019)*
PSRC is developing a survey to collect count data in the region. We will collect:

1. **Counter Location:**
   - Recent counter locations (2015–current), if available in any shareable formats (i.e., GIS shapefile or street address).

2. **Counter Types:**
   - Permanent (Continuous)
   - Short Duration
     - Coverage
     - Project-Specific (before & after)

3. **Counter Information:**
   - Count technologies, frequency, duration, count year and etc.

Source: WSDOT, Collecting Network-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Data: A Guidebook for When and Where to Count, 2017
Thank you

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