Pedestrian and Bicyclist Data

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Overview

• Why is bicycling & walking data important?

• What data do we need?

• National / international activities
Why is bicycling and walking data important?

• Same reasons as for other modes
  - Support policy decisions/changes
  - Plan for cost-effective investments
  - Design safe facilities and infrastructure
  - Measure performance and progress toward goals

• “What gets measured, gets done”
• “If you’re not counted, you don’t count”
Portland Examples

Increasing Bicycle Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Bridge Bicycle Traffic</th>
<th>Bikeway Miles</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>2,850</td>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>3,555</td>
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<td>4,520</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>5,225</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>16,711</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Roger Geller, City of Portland
Bicycle Traffic at City Count Locations
Bridge & Non-Bridge Traffic

Traffic on four bridges
Traffic at 43 locations, citywide

Source: Roger Geller, City of Portland
Combined Bicycle Traffic over Four Main Portland Bicycle Bridges Juxtaposed with Bicycle Crashes

Source: Roger Geller, City of Portland
What data do we need?

- Maintain focus on users and uses of data!
  - Who needs information (based on your data)?
  - What decisions are they making?

- Avoid collecting data only because:
  - “that’s what our program plan lists...”
  - “that’s what my boss said to do...”
  - “that’s what others are doing...”
What data do we need to measure livable communities?

- “More transportation choices”
  - Quality and safety of facilities
- “Reliable access” to opportunities
  - Accessibility (but what mode?)
- “…healthy, safe, walkable neighborhoods”
  - Pedestrian & bicyclist safety, facilities
- Where do bike/pedestrian counts fit?
Output vs. Outcome Measures

• Providing access to safe facilities is only part of the overall goal
• Ultimately the goal/outcome should be:
  - More people choosing bicycling and walking as a travel mode
  - Improved safety for bicycling and walking
• Therefore, counts and travel surveys measure outcome
National Activities

- Alta/ITE National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project
- ABW Benchmarking Report
- FHWA Update of Traffic Monitoring Guide
  - Supporting state-of-practice review
- NCHRP 8-78: Demand Forecasting Methods
- NCHRP 7-19: Count Collection Methods/Equipment
- TRB Ped/Bike Data Subcommittee
- And probably lots more!!
Key Challenges

• Consistency among state/local agencies to permit national aggregation

• Validity at the state/local level
  - Sampling approaches to avoid bias

• Process automation
  - Yet another collateral duty for constrained data collection personnel??
Intl. Scan Tour - Monitoring

• Bike “barometers”: counters in highly visible locations
Queen Louise Bridge, Copenhagen: 36,000 ADBT
Concluding Thoughts

- Biking/walking data important for same reasons as other modes
- Focus on users and users
  - Who?
  - What decisions?
- Output: Access to facilities and destinations
- Outcome: Safety and facility usage
Questions?

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