



MEMORANDUM

Date: April 5, 2012

To: Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

From: Rochelle Wheeler, Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator

Subject: **2012 Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Count Program Report
(with 2011 Count Data)**

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) review and comment on the attached *Draft Manual Pedestrian and Bicycle Count Report for Alameda County (2002-2011)*.

Summary

The Alameda CTC has been conducting annual bicycle and pedestrian counts since 2008 at locations throughout the county. The 2011 counts took place in September and October at 63 locations. The data from 2011, plus the countywide trends since 2002, is presented in the *Draft Manual Pedestrian and Bicycle Count Report for Alameda County (Attachment A)*. BPAC and other committee and Board input on the 2011 Report have been incorporated into this year's report, as feasible. BPAC is requested to provide feedback on the data and the report.

Background

Since 2002, the Alameda CTC, along with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and SafeTREC at U.C. Berkeley, has collected manual bicycle and pedestrian counts throughout Alameda County. Counts have been collected at a total of 99 different sites, however only selected sites have been counted multiple times, and during the same time periods. Over the past several years, the Alameda CTC has had the goal of counting bicycles and pedestrians around the county at the same locations every year, in an effort to see countywide trends in walking and bicycling. Counts have been conducted annually since 2008. In 2010 and 2011, a set of 50 locations counted by the Alameda CTC, and an additional 13 Alameda County sites were counted by MTC as part of regional annual count effort. These 63 sites are listed in the Counts Report.

The *Draft Manual Pedestrian and Bicycle Count Report for Alameda County: 2002 to 2011* (Attachment A) was developed by building on the first version of the Counts Report developed last year, adding the 2011 collected data, and incorporating comments received on the first report. Overall, the data continues to show a trend of increasing walking and bicycling in the county.

Input on 2011 Counts Report

Last fall, the first Counts Report with historical count data was brought to the BPAC, as well as to the Alameda County Transportation Advisory Committee (ACTAC), the Planning Policy and Legislation Committee (PPLC) and the full Alameda CTC Board for input. Many comments were received, which staff have attempted to address in the current Counts Report, to the extent feasible. The comments on the count program and Counts Report, with staff responses in italics, are summarized below:

September 8, 2011, BPAC Meeting Input

- Knowing the proportions of counts to the cities' populations would give more representative information. *Staff said the number of intersections currently counted is proportional to the planning area population.*
- Is there a way to use newer technologies to make it more effective and efficient to count bicycles and pedestrians than a manual count? *Bob Schneider (U.C. Berkeley) stated that movable camera technology is currently being developed that will probably become available for purchase in a couple of years. The technology has the ability to automatically differentiate and count pedestrian and bicyclists in an intersection.* Preston Jordan stated that a new traffic signal in Albany (at Jackson and Buchanan) can detect and count pedestrians, bicycles and cars with image processing software.
- Are these numbers absolute, or are they proportionate to the increase in population for these areas? Change in population over time should be accounted for in the report. *Staff will add this to 2012 report.*
- Information such as helmet use by gender may be useful for insight and future planning purposes. *Staff will add this, as feasible, to the 2012, or a future year, report.*
- The "school period" is disappointing because it does not actually reflect kids coming from school. A name change for this time period may be appropriate. *Staff stated that future "school period" counts will include more school locations.*

October 4, 2011, ACTAC Meeting Input

- Include collision, population and overall auto traffic count data trends over the same time periods, to see how these trends compare with the bike/ped count trends. Add BART access data to the report to show changes in modes used to get to transit. *Staff will incorporate these items into the 2012, or future year, report as feasible.*

October 10, 2011, PPLC Meeting Input

- Annual Count program:
 - Many questions on the goals and purposes of the count program. *Staff clarified this in this Board memo and will further review with the committees the goals*

going forward, including possible changes to the count locations to better reflect the revised goals.

- General sentiment that it is very difficult to accurately reflect biking and walking throughout the county with the counts. *Staff will bring back to the committees options for expanding the count program, including consideration of increasing the number of total counts, which will increase the accuracy of the counts, and identifying additional, and improving existing, count locations.*
- Concerns that total number of bicyclists and pedestrians counted will influence funding decisions. *The goal of the count program is to measure overall countywide trends, and trends within planning areas (where there is sufficient data), and not to make funding decisions. This will be clarified in the 2012 summary report.*
- Count summary report:
 - This report shows that more people are walking and biking – this is an important mode.
 - Add in information on collisions. *Staff will make this change to the 2012 report.*

Input Requested

The BPAC is requested to review the Counts Report and provide any feedback on its contents, including:

- Should the analysis be modified in any ways or should additional approaches to analyzing the data be used?
- How well have the comments received on the 2011 report been incorporated?
- Are there better ways to illustrate the data in the charts?
- Is any of the data unclear?

Next Steps

The Alameda CTC intends to continue to conduct counts at a minimum of 50 locations each year, and to develop an updated report annually, adding the new data to the existing data to be able to view trends over time. The agency will continue to coordinate with MTC, and will also build on efforts to coordinate with local count programs.

Attachments

- A. Draft Manual Pedestrian and Bicycle Count Report for Alameda County (2002 to 2011) – **To be distributed prior to the meeting**

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