FACILITATION GUIDE:

CYCLIST AND PEDESTRIAN COUNTS

QUANTITATIVELY UNDERSTAND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION USE AND TRAVEL PATTERNS

Activity Type: Understand

Participant Audience: Organizational Partners, Researchers

Objectives

Cyclist and pedestrian counts are a good way to understand how many people travel on a given route, and what times and locations are busiest. This information is particularly useful when collected over time to establish trends in people's mode choices in a given neighbourhood. This data also helps provide rationale for improving cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure in certain areas. In addition to the number of cyclists, you can observe additional information, such as gender and helmet use, that may indicate the level of safety and comfort of the cycling infrastructure in the area. The method uses a counting methodology established by the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project, which includes an excel workbook to easily extrapolate data recorded in shorter observation periods to generate average daily pedestrians and cyclists.

Using the Tool

Materials needed

1. Instructions. This tool borrows from a cyclist and pedestrian counting methodology established by the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project. Their instructions are provided in the count form available for download on their website.
2. Safety vest
3. Location map
4. Count/Survey forms
5. Clipboard
6. Pens or pencils
7. Watch or phone to record 15 minute intervals
8. Volunteer counters
9. Optional: hat, sunscreen, jacket, snacks, water, business cards, handouts with project information.

Facilitation Process

1. Review the instructions with volunteer counters before going to the count or survey sites. Select a few key sites in the neighbourhood to conduct counts. Once you've reached the site please ensure your safety. Be aware of your surroundings.
2. Arrive at the site 15 minutes before the count period. Once you've arrived:
   - Find a safe location to conduct the survey or counts.
   - Record the background information at the top of the count/survey form. After the counts are complete, collect count forms from all volunteer counters.
3. Enter the count data into the Data Entry Spreadsheet available from the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project website, www.bikepeddocumentation.org. Use the extrapolation workbook provided on their website to extrapolate your count data to average daily or weekly pedestrians or cyclists.

Tip: If you have enough volunteers, you can pair counters and allow one person to approach pedestrians and cyclists with other survey opportunities, such as the Street and Travel Survey. If conducting a survey, be sure to approach the bicyclists or pedestrians in a friendly engaging manner.

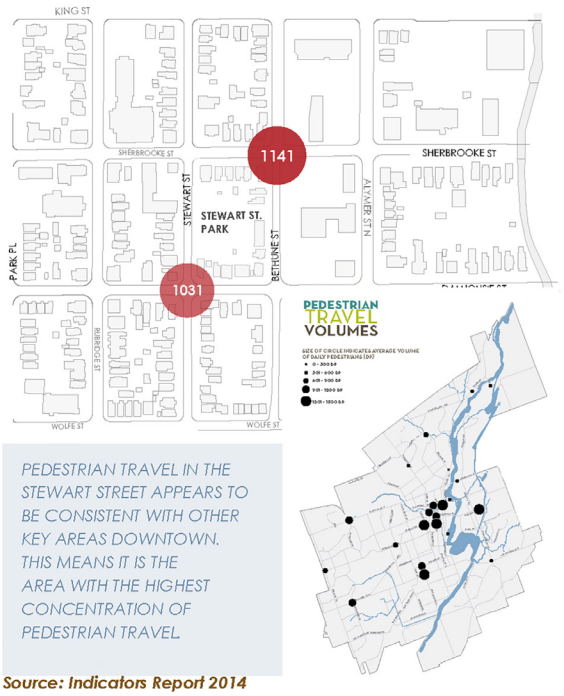
Tip: Observe each location for two 2-hour intervals on the same day. This should give you enough data to extrapolate. The recording sheet will help you split these two-hour observation periods into 15 minute intervals.

Sample Materials

1. Pedestrian and cycling count done in a neighbourhood in Peterborough (via TCAT and GreenUP)

Getting around on foot

As we can see from the graphs on the previous page, walking is an important means of travel within the neighbourhood. Here we compare local counts at key intersections to the trends across the city.

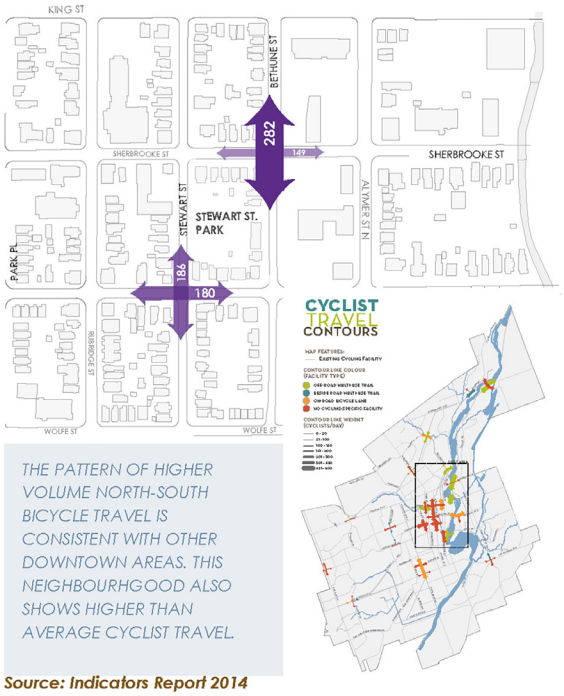


PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL IN THE STEWART STREET APPEARS TO BE CONSISTENT WITH OTHER KEY AREAS DOWNTOWN. THIS MEANS IT IS THE AREA WITH THE HIGHEST CONCENTRATION OF PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL.

Source: Indicators Report 2014

Biking in the neighbourhood

Bethune Street is a popular travel route for cyclists, counts at the intersection of Bethune and Sherbrooke show that the largest share of cyclists are travelling North-South on Bethune.



THE PATTERN OF HIGHER VOLUME NORTH-SOUTH BICYCLE TRAVEL IS CONSISTENT WITH OTHER DOWNTOWN AREAS. THIS NEIGHBOURHGOOD ALSO SHOWS HIGHER THAN AVERAGE CYCLIST TRAVEL.

Source: Indicators Report 2014

Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal
Sustainable Calgary
the centre for active transportation

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