TMACOG Bicycle Counting Program

TMACOG is launching a Bicycle Counting Program in 2017 to measure bicycling in the region. Count data will help identify trends that can aid in planning and design of the bikeway network and improve safety and accessibility to destinations. Bicycle count data can be used by key stakeholders to support network improvements in connectivity between on- and off-street bicycle facilities and between bicycle and other transportation modes. Such data may also support evaluation of different facility designs across several factors including travel demand and crash rates.

To collect data at strategic locations on roads throughout the region TMACOG staff will install counters specifically designed to measure bicycle traffic. Initial counts will serve as baseline data. Subsequent data collection will help to understand the performance and progress of the non-motorized network over time.

TMACOG members are encouraged to become active in the bicycle counting program by conducting counts in their communities.

To request a count, contact Marc VonDeylen at vondeylen@tmacog.org with the following information:

Requesting Organization: _____

Ideal Date Range (48 hours): Beginning on_____

Contact Name: _____

Email: _____ **Phone:**_____

Desired Count Location (street name, cross streets, site description, GPS coord., etc.):

_____

Why is this count being sought?

_____

How will data be used? *(check all that apply)*

☐ Safety Assessment   ☐ Engineering   ☐ Obtain Funding   ☐ Planning

☐ Confirm Use of Facility   ☐ Policy   ☐ Other (Specify)_____

TMACOG Bicycle Counting FAQs

Q: What will the counts tell us?
A: The counts provide primarily traffic volume data. Over time, the counts will tell us how bicycle traffic volumes change as new segments are built and new connections are made. We will learn which routes are travelled most and when people are using the routes. We will also be able to report of rate of speed.

Q: What won't the counts tell us?
A: This type of counting program will not tell us **who** is riding (gender, race, age, income, education, health status, or other demographics). We will not learn important details about helmet use or whether riders have access to a car. We won't the reasons **why** the bicycle mode is being used (errands, commuting to work or school, combining with transit, recreation, exercise, etc.). We will not know trip characteristics such as origin-destination, or distance travelled. Gathering data with such important details typically requires a much more manually intensive methodology such as an intercept study.

Q: What kind of counters are being installed?
A: There are various counting methods available. TMACOG will use an automated counting approach as opposed to a manual approach. Initially, we will deploy pneumatic tube devices like those we already use to count vehicles. These will be stretched across roadways on mixed traffic settings. An advantage to this method is that data is collected on time of day, direction, and speed. Results can be readily incorporated into our motorized vehicles counting system. Infrared counters may be added to TMACOG's program in the future to enable counting of off-street facilities such as side paths.

Q: Will the counters also count pedestrians?
A: Not at this time. TMACOG continues to explore the feasibility of purchasing and deploying automated devices that can distinguish between bicyclists and pedestrians.

Q: Where will the counters be installed?
A: TMACOG is currently collaborating with its members to develop an inventory of potential count locations. We will work with communities on "before/after" approaches to do counts prior to the development of facilities, such as bike lanes or signed routes, and after the facilities are installed. TMACOG will work with parks districts, bicycle advocacy groups, and other stakeholders to select appropriate sites for counting. Other resources for identifying locations are TMACOG's 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan, local community's bike plans, and ODOT's proposed US and State Bicycle Routes. We will also prioritize locations near schools, especially those involved in Safe Routes to School programming. Locations thought to be connectors to the multi-use trail network, and access points to key destinations such as parks, retail, and employment areas are also of greater interest.

Q: Will we be mapping count locations and posting them online?
A: Visit the TMACOG pedestrian and bikeways planning page for a link once counts become available.

Q: Will the data generated be compatible with other state and national programs such as the [National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project](#)?
A: The state of Ohio does not currently have a standardized counting program. TMACOG's data is generated with a different methodology than is currently being used for information reported at the national level.

Q: Are there other counting initiatives in the region?
A: Toledo-Lucas County Metroparks collects trail counts via trail counters installed at locations on the trail network it manages. We are not aware of any other counting programs in the TMACOG region.