

# National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project

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## Conducting Surveys



Alta Planning + Design  
National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project



# What is the NBPD?

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- Annual bicycle and pedestrian count and survey effort
- A cooperative effort between Alta Planning + Design and the ITE Pedestrian & Bicycle Council
- Initiated in 2002
- Not funded
- Applied v. academic research
- Free service available to all public agencies and organizations

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# Why do surveys?

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- Non-motorized modes have no such consistent, uniform data collection and analysis system
- Each agency conducts counts, surveys, and analysis its own way
- No or little national sharing of data
- Result = harder to justify funding, document benefits, understand what influences walking and bicycling
- One solution to this problem: National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project

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# How will surveys be used?

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- Establish a national database of bicycle and pedestrian survey information generated by these consistent methods and practices
- Begin analysis on the correlations bicycle and pedestrian activity and local characteristics

# Who should do surveys?

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- Cities
- Counties
- Park districts

# Cost and Time Estimates

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Task	Time
Select locations	2 hours
Recruit surveyors	2 hours
Train surveyors	1 hour per surveyor
Surveys	2 hours per location

# In the Field Survey

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- Access to a wide cross-section of community
- Training of surveyors important to avoid bias
  - Who is approached?
  - Language barriers?
  - Influence answers?

# Selecting Time of Year

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- Peak walking and bicycling periods
- School in session
- Conducive weather conditions
- Not a prime vacation time



# Selecting Days of the Week

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- Select one weekday and one weekend day to gather different levels
- Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are not statistically significantly different

# Selecting Time of Day

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- Consistency is key
- Peak periods include:
  - Weekday, 10AM -Noon
  - Weekday, 5-7 PM
  - Saturday, 9AM-Noon
- Actual local peak periods may vary considerably

# Selecting Locations

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- Historical survey location
- Bicycle facility
- High collision area
- Smart growth
- Transit
- Planned project
- Mix of land uses
- Stakeholder recommendations

# Selecting Locations

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- *Path Survey*
  - Near the major access points
- *On-Street Bikeway Survey*
  - Signalized intersections or bicycle parking areas
  - Near destinations such as work, shopping, or other areas
- *Sidewalk Surveys*
  - Near the center of the downtown
  - Near shopping mall entrance or transit stop
  - Near major access employment areas
  - High density residential development
  - Parks and schools

# Document Locations

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- Document with aerial maps



# Hiring Surveyors

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- Bicycle/Pedestrian advisory committees
- Advocacy groups (walking/cycling)
- Local college students
- Interns

# Training Surveyors

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- Surveyors should be trained for
  - Interaction with public
  - Survey process
  - Form use

# Items to Bring

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- Instructions
- Safety vest
- Location map
- Survey forms
- Clipboard
- Pen or pencil and spare
- Optional: hat, sunscreen, jacket, folding chair, snacks



# Transportation, Safety, Comfort

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Things to consider:

- How surveyors can access locations?
- Will surveyors be safe at the locations?
- Will the surveyors be comfortable?
  - i.e., heat, sun, rain, cold

# Forms

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**STANDARDIZED ON-STREET BIKEWAY SURVEY**

Directions: Refer to the Standardized Bicycle and Pedestrian Survey Methodology.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time Period: \_\_\_\_\_  
Weather Conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

"Excuse me, may I ask you a few questions? I'm with the [name of agency or organization] and we are part of a national effort to learn why people walk and bicycle where they do. This will take less than one minute and will be completely confidential. "

1. What best describes why you are out here today?

- Exercising
- Going to Work or School
- Shopping/Doing Errands

2. In the past month, about how often have you rode here?

- First time
- 0-5 times
- 6-10 times
- 10-20 times
- Daily

3. Is this pretty constant for the four seasons of the year?

- Yes

If no, what seasons do you come here?

- Summer     Winter
- Fall         Spring

4. How would you describe yourself?

- Local Resident
- Local Employee
- Local Visitor
- Visitor from outside region

5. What is your primary means of transportation today?

- Drove
- Walked or biked
- Transit
- Bicycle

6. Why are you using this route as opposed to riding somewhere else?

- Accessible/close
- Direct
- Lower traffic volumes
- Scenic qualities
- Level
- Bike lanes
- Wider lanes

7. What would you like to see improved?

- Bike lanes
- Better surface
- Shoulders
- Less traffic
- Signs/stencils
- Better maintenance
- Signal detection

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- Forms should be provided by the agency

# Data Input

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## STANDARDIZED ON-STREET BIKEWAY SURVEY

Directions: Refer to the Standardized  
Bicycle and Pedestrian Survey Methodology.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Weather Conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

**“Excuse me, may I ask you a few questions? I’m with the [name of agency or organization] and we are part of a national effort to learn why people walk and bicycle where they do. This will take less than one minute and will be completely confidential. ”**

- Name
- Location
- Date
- Time Period
- Weather

# Survey Instructions

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## Positioning

1. Surveyor should be approximately 50 feet from the person conducting counts.

# Survey Instructions

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## Engaging

2. Surveyor should approach cyclists or pedestrians in a friendly and engaging manner. Without startling them, get their attention and ask...

# Survey Instructions

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“Hello, do you have time to answer a few questions about walking and biking?”

If yes:

“My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m conducting this survey for \_\_\_\_\_ . The information will be used to better understand why people walk and bike where they do. The survey will take about 5 minutes.

“You don’t have to answer all the questions, and you can stop taking the survey at any time. I won’t ask for any personal information. Would you like to take the survey?”

# Survey Instructions

## Bicyclist Survey

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_

Weather: \_\_\_\_\_

*(sunny, cloudy, rainy, windy, hot, and/or cold)*

### 1. What is your home zip code?

Home zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. What best describes the purpose of this trip?

Exercising (a)

Work commute (b)

School (c)

Recreation (d)

Shopping/doing errands (e)

Personal business (medical, visiting friends, etc.) (f)

### 3. In the past month, about how often have you ridden a bicycle here?

First time (a)

0 – 5 times (b)

6 – 10 times (c)

11 – 20 times (d)

Daily (e)

### 4. Please check the seasons in which you bicycle.

All Year (a)

Summer (b)

Fall (c)

Winter (d)

Spring (e)

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# Survey Instructions

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## Data Entry

3. If you like, surveyors can read the questions and options to them and record responses

or

Provide a postcard directing participants to the survey website



# Survey Instructions

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## Additional Information

4. After every question has been answered, fill out the additional information at the bottom of the survey.

# Quality Control

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It is important to include quality control measures

Quality control may consist of:

- Spot field checks to verify that surveyors are at the correct location and collecting the correct information,
- Review and verification of data within a day or two of collection to identify discrepancies
- Use of surveyors who care a lot about bicycle and pedestrian issues has been shown to improve the accuracy of surveys.

# Returning Survey Forms

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- Survey forms collected by the sponsoring agency
- Data should then be entered in the data spreadsheet available at:  
[www.bikepeddocumentation.org](http://www.bikepeddocumentation.org)

# Data Input

Enter data into provided spreadsheet

<b>Sidewalk Survey Data:</b>						
Date Collected:				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
Time Period:				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
Weather:				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
1a.				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
1b.				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
1c.				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
2a.				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
2b.				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
2c.				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
2d.				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here
2e.				Enter here	Enter here	Enter here

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# Send Data to NBPD!

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[data@bikepeddocumentation.org](mailto:data@bikepeddocumentation.org)

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# Participate!

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For more information or to participate:

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[www.bikepeddocumentation.org](http://www.bikepeddocumentation.org)

[info@bikepeddocumentation.org](mailto:info@bikepeddocumentation.org)

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