

A large, light gray watermark of the Idaho Transportation Department logo is centered in the background. It features a circular seal with the word 'IDAHO' at the top and 'TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT' around the bottom. Inside the seal is a stylized 'ID' and a map of Idaho. Two stars are positioned on the left and right sides of the seal.

# **Idaho Transportation Department**

## **Toolbox for Bicyclists and Pedestrian Counts**

**Idaho Transportation Department**  
**Prepared by: RBCI and Idaho Smart Growth**

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**August 2013**

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Throughout Idaho, people want a variety of options for traveling to and from work, school and other everyday destinations. These transportation options include biking and walking. Biking and walking are enjoyable, affordable and easy activities that provide many health benefits. For all these reasons and more, addressing the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians is an important part of our transportation system.

Successfully planning our transportation system relies on gathering information about different modes of travel, land uses, safety conditions and other issues. Collecting accurate and consistent data about how many people walk and bicycle is vital to creating and improving infrastructure for these modes of travel. Data collection also helps measure the positive benefits of investments in bicycle and pedestrian transportation infrastructure.

*The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) supported the development of this toolbox to facilitate the collections of consistent and accurate data on bicyclists and pedestrians.*

It is important to collect data and information in a consistent manner. Developing a statewide database on bicyclists and pedestrians – with information collected by communities throughout Idaho – will be valuable only if the methodologies are consistent.

### Toolbox Purpose

The purpose of this toolbox is to help communities collect consistent and reliable bicycle and pedestrian user data. It provides guidance on:

- Why your community should conduct bicycle and pedestrian counts
- How to identify key stakeholders who you want to participate and how to engage them
- Determining who will use the data you collect during your count
- What kind of data to collect
- How to determine what methodology is best for your count
- When and where to conduct a count
- How to organize and train volunteers
- How to communicate, educate and conduct public outreach
- How to capture data
- How to evaluate efforts

## HOW TO USE THIS TOOLBOX

This is a step-by-step guide that will help your community or group conduct a successful bicycle and pedestrian count.

This toolbox is meant to be read beginning to end – each chapter builds upon information learned in the previous section. Companion worksheets have been provided for you to complete after each section.

Reading this guide chronologically will allow you fully understand the process of planning and conducting a successful count.



## STEP 1:

### Why Conduct Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts?

Historically transportation network design and investment decisions have been determined by data about vehicles. Collecting data about other users and modes will provide information to promote a safe, efficient network for all users. Whether your community wants to develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan or evaluate your current transportation network, collecting reliable and accurate data about the users of your system is an important early step.

Reasons to conduct bicycle and pedestrian counts vary. Counts have been, and continue to be important to:

Establish baseline data to better understand the use and demand of your transportation system.

- Consistent, annual counts help communities know where people currently walk and bicycle. Collecting this data helps communities evaluate planning efforts, project design, investment decisions, and prioritize funding.

Identify gaps in bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities and critical improvements for safety, connectivity and efficiencies.

- Collecting user data along with other system assessment tools can help identify where improvements are needed for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Help assess the success of investments in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

- Conducting a count prior to building an infrastructure project and then again after it has been in place for at least a year, will evaluate the success of the redesign. This can be helpful in the planning and design of future projects.

Each community has their own reasons for wanting to collect data on bicyclists and pedestrians. In addition to the objectives described above, your community may have additional goals. This toolbox will help you identify these goals and discover how to best conduct a count to meet these goals.

The first step in conducting a bicycle/pedestrian count is to answer the following questions:

- What information do you want to learn from your counts?
- What is your purpose for collecting this data?
- What type of data do you need for this purpose?

The answers to these questions will help you identify the purpose for your bicycle and pedestrian counts.

#### Helpful Advice

*Before beginning your count, be clear about why you want to collect data and how it will be used. Knowing this help will guide decisions about methodology, locations, what data to collect and when to collect it.*

## WORKSHEET: Why Collect Data on Bicyclists and Pedestrians?

**What information do you want to learn from your count?**

**What type of data do you need for this purpose?**

**How will this data be used?**

**Who might use this data?**



## STEP 2:

### Who Will Use the Data?

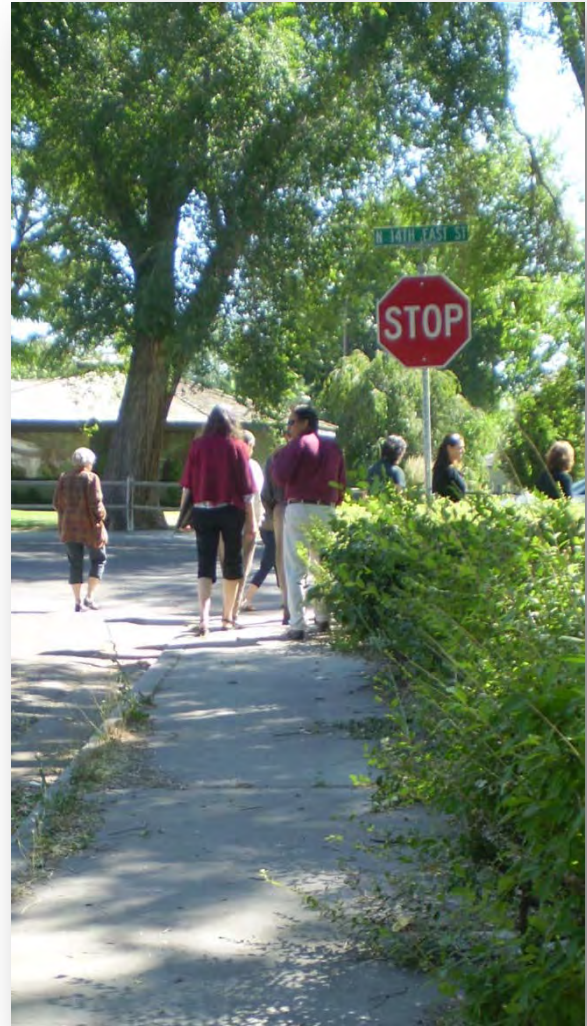
The second step in conducting a bicycle and pedestrian count is to identify organizations that could benefit from the collection of this data. Government entities with some jurisdiction over transportation in your area will ultimately use the data from your count so it is important to ask their guidance on methodology, locations, what data to collect and when to collect it.

Entities with some level of jurisdiction over and responsibility for roadways, pathways and trails in your area might include:

- Highway districts
- City public works departments
- City and county parks departments
- City planning departments
- Transit providers
- Idaho Transportation Department
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)

It is equally important to involve community groups interested in biking and walking, such as:

- Bicycle and pedestrian groups
- Schools
- Seniors
- Low income
- People with disabilities
- Public health districts
- Business organizations
- Youth groups
- Economic development entities
- Other civic organizations



If you are unsure who to involve, use the resource contacts in the last section of this guide for assistance.

Meet with the organizations you believe should have an interest in this data. Consulting with those who will use your data ensures that your methodology is acceptable. Include these jurisdictions in discussions about what data to collect and how and where to collect it – this helps ensure the data will be useful to them.

## WORKSHEET: Who Will Use the Data?

Fill out the table with target organizations from each category of potential data users.

<p><b>Local, State, and Regional Agencies</b> with jurisdiction over roadways, pathways &amp; trails, transit, sidewalks, i.e. MPOs, highway districts, city public works, parks and recreation and county, ITD district planner &amp; engineer or federal agencies</p>	<p><b>User Groups</b> i.e. bicycle and pedestrian groups, transit providers, schools, senior citizens, low income families, people with disabilities</p> <p><b>Community Sectors</b> i.e. public health districts, business and civic organizations</p>
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## STEP 3:

### Determine What Data to Collect.

At this point – by completing steps one and two – you have determined your purpose and identified who needs to be involved with your count. The third step in conducting a bicycle and pedestrian count is to decide what type of data to collect.

Data collection is determined by what you want to know. Refer to the worksheets you completed so far and review your answers to confirm why you are collecting data. Additional questions to ask yourself at this point include:

- Do you want to know the overall use of your system?
- Do you want to be able to assess crash data and improve safety?
- Are you trying to determine where and how you can best serve biking and walking in your transportation network?
- Do you want to know who bicycles and walks in your community so you can develop education and encouragement programs?

A key purpose of all counts should be to gather data about how many cyclists and/or pedestrians are traveling through your area of interest.

Other data you may want to consider gathering during your count includes:

- Directional data.
- Assessing the current use of existing infrastructure such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, routes and pathways.
- Identifying improper use of infrastructure (e.g. riding the wrong way, riding on the sidewalk, etc.).
- Origin and destination.
- Type of trip.
- Trip frequency.
- Demographic data such as gender or age.
- Helmet use.

#### Helpful Advice

*Determine what kind of data needs to be collected by asking yourself, “What do I want to know about the use of my communities system.”*

## WORKSHEET: Questions to Determine What Kind of Data to Collect

Make sure your answers comply with your responses on Worksheet 1.

- |  | Yes                      | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Do you want to know the overall use of your system?<br>Why?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>  |                          |                          |
| 2. Do you want to be able to assess crash data and improve safety?<br>Why?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>  |                          |                          |
| 3. Are you trying to determine where and how best to serve bicyclists and pedestrians in your transportation system?<br>Why? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>  |                          |                          |
| 4. Do you want to know who bicycles and walks in your community?<br>Why?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>  |                          |                          |

## STEP 4:

### Which Methodology is Best for Counting?

The fourth step in conducting a bicycle/pedestrian count is to determine which methodology should be used to collect data. It is important to ensure your method for collecting data is compatible with how the data will be used.

Below is an outline of various counting methodologies you can implement. Remember to keep in mind both monetary and staffing resources when selecting your counting methodology. Methodologies include:

- Observation counts
- Mechanical counters
- Laser counters
- Video cameras
- Surveys
- GPS locators

Below is more information about each of the methodologies listed above. Read carefully through each of the following descriptions before determining what will be best for your count.

#### Observation counts

Observation counts uses people located at a specific location for a designated period of time to count and record what they see at that location. Paid personnel or volunteers can be used to conduct these counts. Observation counts can be expensive if using paid personnel, but with trained volunteers this method provides an affordable way to collect information. This method is the primary focus of this guide as it allows for collecting objective data with a relatively high accuracy at the least expense. It is best used for information that can be readily observed and easily recorded. Types of data that can be collected well with this method include:

- Volumes.
- User type.
- Direction (which then can help with infrastructure assessment to some degree).
- Helmet use.
- Improper behavior.

#### Mechanical counters

The use of mechanical counters involves laying tubes across a road, pathway or trail to count the volume of users that cross over. It is important to keep in mind this methodology is limited in collecting useful, accurate user data, as it provides no information about what actually travels over the counter (e.g., bicycle, pedestrian or animal). Not all counters have the capacity to count something as light as a bicycle, and their accuracy is lower than some other methods. An advantage of this methodology is that it is relatively low-cost and convenient.

## Laser Counters

The use of laser counters is similar to mechanical counters, except laser beams are set across a path to count volumes. This methodology is less accurate for many of the same reasons as mechanical counters and is used primarily to determine volumes. This methodology has the advantage of being able to detect pedestrians, and if they are placed above the ground, they can be set to avoid detecting some animals. However, if the laser is set too high you may miss smaller/lower humans (i.e. children and/or other low bicycles).

## Video cameras

Video counts use video cameras to record the number of bicycles and/or pedestrians that pass through an area. Counts that use video cameras are usually the most accurate and thorough methods for collecting information. Video cameras capture detailed information on behavior and patterns, as well as volume and directional data. Video cameras can provide 24/7 information with a greater level of accuracy and detail as compared to laser or mechanical counts. The primary deterrent to using this method is expense. ITD has several cameras that communities can arrange to use. However, the cost of retrieving, reporting and quantifying the data can be quite expensive. If communities are interested, it is recommended they consider using this methodology in addition to other less costly methods. Video cameras can be helpful in very specific applications where more detailed information would be of value.

### Helpful Advice

*Remember to keep in mind both monetary and staffing resources when selecting your counting methodology.*

## Surveys

Surveying uses interviews and surveys to collect origin, destination, frequency and trip type data. Surveys are the preferred way to collect demographic data since this method can be difficult to accurately observe. Surveys are also used to gather more subjective data such as perceptions and opinions about safety or infrastructure which often create barriers for people to choose to walk or bicycle. This data helps identify these barriers whether 'real' or perceived and provides guidance on what type of action(s) or solution(s) is needed to overcome them. Surveys are sometimes combined with observational counts with trained volunteers. Combined survey/observational counts are difficult in higher volume locations and accuracy may be reduced, unless you have multiple volunteers for each location (one to count and another to survey). Surveys can be conducted online, through the mail or at stations, but cannot replace in-person counts. Online and mail surveys are only considered useful for gathering additional information.

## GPS locaters

Incorporating GPS locaters is not a count methodology, but this has been used successfully in some communities to assess trip frequency, origins, destinations and preferred routes. To use this method well, it needs to be part of a larger assessment effort, and designed and organized by someone with some research experience. Network assessments are an important part of addressing user needs and there are many methods and tools available to assist with assessing your network.

## WORKSHEET: Choosing Collection Methodology

What do you want to learn?

- ☐ Volume ☐
- ☐ User type ☐
- ☐ Direction ☐
- ☐ Helmet use ☐
- ☐ Improper behavior ☐
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Why is the data you selected above important to your organization and community?

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Can you collect all the data you have selected through a count or will you also need a survey or network assessment for some of this data? Which data and how will you collect this?

What tool/s best suit your needs?

- ☐ Observation counts
- ☐ Mechanical counters ☐
- ☐ Laser counters ☐
- ☐ Video cameras ☐
- ☐ Surveys ☐
- ☐ Walking Assessment ☐
- ☐ GPS locators
- ☐ Other

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What resources are readily available for you to use?

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## STEP 5:

### Where and When to Conduct a Count?

The next step is to select the locations, dates, days and times of when you want to conduct your count. When conducting annual counts, it is important that the before and after counts occur in the same locations and at the same time of year, day and time of the week in order to provide a valid comparison. It is also recommended to wait several months to a year after project completion before collecting new data.

The National Documentation Project is a nationwide effort that provides a consistent model of data collection and ongoing data for use by planners, governments, and bicycle and pedestrian professionals. The National Documentation Project has established the second week of September as the official count period, with optional counts during the second week of January or May and the first week of July. For days of the week, communities are asked to count on a mid-week day (Tuesday through Thursday). These days have been chosen to provide consistency with data nationwide. However, it has been recognized that these times do not necessarily work for all communities or for all purposes. You can use these recommended dates if they fulfill your needs. If not, select the best dates and times for your purpose.

### Locations

Your location selection should be determined by the reason(s) you are counting. Once you know what data you want to collect and how you will collect it, selecting locations should be relatively easy, but some additional elements may come into play. If you want to learn how users access transit, you will want locations at transit stops. To learn more about access to off-road trails and pathways, you will need to be located where you can observe trail access.

Select your locations based on what data you want and need. If you have more locations than you think you can cover, prioritize your locations. Start counting at as many locations as possible and then add other locations when your capacity increases. This will provide year-to-year consistency.



How many locations you need depends on many variables. For volume it is best to collect enough locations for the data to provide an accurate “picture” of overall use. The number is not as important as selecting locations that will provide the data you are looking for. For example, if you want to assess trailhead access, then ideally you would try and count all possible trailhead access points. If you want learn the number of commuters, then you will want to select locations with good connectivity throughout the network and/or facilities such as lanes and sidewalks.



To get good data on current use and volumes, select recognized high use routes, key connection points such as bridges and other primary corridors, locations with infrastructure in place and major destinations. The primary emphasis here is whether you are looking for all users or a particular type (i.e. commute trips, recreation use or both). The best volume collection includes times and days that will collect all types of users at a variety of locations.

Locations to consider for access include:

- Near off-road pathways and/trails.
- Transit stops.
- School routes.

Locations to consider for safety include:

- Locations with high crash data.
- Routes to schools.
- Problem intersections/crossings.
- Areas with inadequate infrastructure.



Locations to consider for network assessment include:

- Locations with existing infrastructure such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, routes and pathways.
- Locations with gaps.
- Where you think current use is high.
- Parallel locations when considering route options.
- Access locations using key destinations, pathways and intersections.

## Time of Year

The time of year for your count should be selected based on the type of data you want to collect. The primary information to use in establishing the best time of year for your count is the type of user and/or use you want to gather information on. For instance, if your community typically has snow on the ground until late May, you should consider counting in July or September. For a high-volume tourist community looking to assess the use by visitors versus residents, you will need to count twice a year – once at a low visitation period and once at a high visitation.

To assess volumes and/or commuter travel, conduct your count during:

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

To assess recreational use, conduct your count during:

- Peak tourist season (if applicable).
- Peak walking and cycling periods.
- Conducive weather conditions.

## Days of the Week

The day(s) of your count should be selected for best results in collecting the data that you want to have. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are not statistically significantly different. However Mondays and Fridays can have a wide variation and thus, are not recommended. The National Documentation Project is focused on commuter travel, so these counts occur mid-week (Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday). If you are looking for recreation use, you should count on one weekday and on a Saturday. Some communities select the week and times of day, then allow volunteers to count either Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, depending upon which day works best for them.

## Time of Day

Two-hour periods are standard practice and considered adequate for analysis. Consistency is key. Select the time and require it be used throughout the count. The times should be selected for best results, depending upon the data you have identified that you want to collect. Most communities choose to do an early morning mid-week count to capture commuter and school traffic. Counts during the evening would capture commuters and some recreational use. A Saturday will capture primarily recreational and commercial trips. Local peak periods vary considerably so this would be a point of discussion.

Standard peak periods include:

- Weekday: 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. – This time period captures most work commuters, as well as school trips.
- Weekday: 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. – This time period does not capture school trips.

### Helpful Advice

*Select your locations based on what data you want and need. Prioritize by your locations by counting at as many locations as possible, and then add other locations when your capacity increases. This will provide year-to-year consistency*

Alternate times include:

- 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. – This time period captures school but misses commute trips in most communities.
- 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. – In some areas this time period can capture school trips and commuters.
- 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. – Some communities consider this time period as their primary commute time.
- 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – This time period captures noon hour commercial-related trips and some recreation trips.

Saturday times are relative to each community. Choose sometime between mid-morning and mid-afternoon, such as:

- 12:00 to 2 p.m. – This time period is the nationally recommended time for Saturday.

- 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- 11:00 a.m.to 1:00 p.m.
- 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

**NOTE:** To read learn more about the National Documentation Project's date, day and time recommendations download their Data Collection Instructions at <http://bikepeddocumentation.org/downloads/>.

## WORKSHEET: Time of Year, Day of the Week, and Time of Day

When is school in session in your community?

What is the typical commute time in your area?

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Are you collecting tourist information if so when is your peak tourist season?

When are the peak recreational walking and cycling times in your community?

Using the answers provided above, what time of year will you conduct your first count? Will you need to count during another time of year to capture the data you identified in Steps 1 and 3?

Spring ☐ Fall ☐

Summer ☐ Winter ☐

What days of the week will you conduct your count?

Monday ☐ Thursday ☐

Tuesday ☐ Friday ☐

Wednesday ☐ Saturday ☐

What time of day will you conduct your count?

*Two-hour periods are standard practice and considered adequate for analysis.*

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

Location – Street/Trail Name/s

Priority

[illegible]

## STEP 6:

### How to Organize the Count and Train Your Counters

Once you have worked through the previous sections, it's time to plan the actual data collection and begin recruiting volunteers. This section will provide guidance on how to organize your team, train your counters and invite volunteers to participate and assist.

#### Project Lead

It is very important to identify someone to lead the project from beginning to end, as there is much need for coordination and follow-through for the outcome to be of value. This person does not necessarily need to do everything, but needs to know who has been assigned each task and keep track of all the pieces.

#### Helpful Advice

*The success of your count relies on the ability of your volunteers to accurately document data. All counters should receive training, especially the first time they count.*

#### Counter/Volunteer Recruitment

Community advocacy and bicycle groups will often help provide volunteers. It is also valuable if the agencies involved can provide a staff member or two to help with the count.

Recruit counters from as many of the stakeholder groups as possible. The number of counters you need depends upon the number and type of locations. Determine whether one individual is enough to count at each location or if you will need two individuals at any of them. If you are using any youth as counters they should not be alone – pair them together or with another counter.

#### Training

The success of your count relies significantly on the ability of your volunteers to accurately document data. All counters should receive training, especially the first time they count. A meeting should be organized prior to the count and all counters should be required to attend. If necessary, hold two meetings to ensure everyone gets trained, or meet with those individuals one-on-one. Volunteers should be re-briefed in the field and it's important to keep in mind that some volunteers will have never participated in any type of data collection previously and may be unsure.

The National Documentation Project has some excellent training materials for you to download and use directly, or as a model. Whatever material you use, it is imperative that you train your volunteers on how to properly count. Some communities have set up online training. Training can also occur the morning of the count(s). If you want to create a fun atmosphere for volunteers you can establish a pick up point for forms and other equipment and provide some drinks and/or snacks.

Trainings should ensure all volunteers know:

- How to count bicyclists and pedestrians.
- How to properly fill out the count forms.
- What not to count.
- How to use any necessary equipment.
- How to respond to questions from the public about their activities.
- The time the count begins and ends (remind them they must remain there for the full time).
- Where to turn in their completed count forms or how to report their data.



The training should also cover what they should bring with them, including:

- Forms for recording the information.
- Vest or other bright gear for safety (optional).
- A clipboard for writing.
- Writing instruments – preferably a pencil.
- A water bottle or other drink.
- A snack, if they want one.
- Any other equipment they will need.
- A chair, if they request one.

**Helpful Advice**

*The Project Lead should try to visit each volunteer while in the field to see if they have any questions or need anything.*

If any of materials are being provided they should be available at the training for volunteers to pick up.



## WORKSHEET: Coordination and Training

### Project Lead

Who will lead the project from beginning to end? \_\_\_\_\_

### Recruitment

Start with your list of stakeholders in Step 2 worksheet to recruit counters. Use the counter worksheet in this section to keep track of your list of counters and assign locations.

If this does not provide you with all you need, where else can you recruit?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

When will you train your counters?

_____
_____

Where will you train your counters?

_____
_____

Training should encompass instruction on how to conduct accurate counting methods.

- How to count bicyclists and pedestrians
- How to properly fill out the count forms
- What not to count
- How to use any necessary equipment
- How to respond to questions from the public about their activities
- The time the count begins and ends
- Where to turn in completed count forms or how to report their data

Provide counters a list of what they will need for the counts and supply it to them as well.  
(Counting forms, bright traffic vests, clipboard, pencils, water/snacks, a chair, etc.)

## WORKSHEET: Training Checklist

☐

How to count bicyclists and pedestrians and others

☐

What not to count

☐

How to complete the count forms

☐

How to respond to questions from the public about their activities

☐

Time the count begins and ends

☐

Where to turn in their completed count forms

☐

How to use any equipment

## SECTION 7:

### How to Communicate, Educate and Conduct Outreach

To develop a successful public outreach plan, you must first:

- Determine who you want to communicate with and when
- Know your different audiences and target organizations
- Understand which information should be communicated to each audience
- Identify what you want to accomplish with each group
- Strategize how to best reach each audience

This section provides recommendations and suggestions for how to organize public outreach efforts for your count at four key milestones:

1. Foundational Work
2. Before the Count
3. During the Count
4. After the Count

This section will provide you with guidance on how to conduct successfully involve the public in your count.

#### Foundational Work

Before you begin communicating with the public, it is important to create a solid foundation of information. This will identify whom you want to communicate with and how to reach each target group. This section will help you prepare the materials you will need to begin pursuing support and advocacy of elected officials, other various leaders, bicycle and pedestrian groups, and the community at large. Foundational work will help you to:

1. Remember your purpose for conducting a count. Refer to purposes you identified when completing worksheet 1.
2. Identify whom you want to reach out to, the messages you want to communicate, and how to effectively do this. Refer to the people you identified when completing the worksheet 2.
3. Brainstorm how you want to communicate with those who are involved in your count. Refer to worksheet 2 for help with this exercise.
4. Build a contact list of those involved in your count. (*Sample contact list in outreach resource section*)

## Communication Before the Count

Before conducting your count you may decide it useful to raise general awareness for the modes of bicycle and pedestrian travel in your community (e.g. utilizing social media websites, making posters and flyers, gaining the support of elected officials, etc.). The people you will want to communicate with include local elected officials, highway districts, bicycle and pedestrian groups, local media and other transportation organizations. Inform those who are interested about your count and let them know how they can be involved.

Possible outreach activities to consider before your count:

- Develop a fact sheet
- Send direct written communication, i.e. letter or email
- Make phone calls and one-on-one visits
- Reach out to local media
- Use social media and email blasts
- Develop a website

**Fact sheets** - Fact sheets help communicate your purpose with clear, concise information. The fact sheet could include background information about why you are conducting the count, what you hope to accomplish and how to stay informed. (*Sample fact sheet in outreach resource section*)

**Direct written communication** - Writing and sending a letter or email to all stakeholders on your contact list will help you notify community members about your count. The letter should include the dates and times of the count, the purpose of the count and what you plan to do with the data being collected. You can send different letters to different organizations, depending on what you need from each recipient. (*Sample Letter to City Council Member Outreach in resource section*)

**Phone calls and one-on-one visits** - Calling your targeted stakeholders is an opportunity to build and deepen relationships. Personal calls give you the opportunity to explain why you are doing the count and what you hope to accomplish. You can also describe what the organization can do to make the count successful. During the call, you can ask if the stakeholder has time to meet with you before and/or after the count. During a personal visit you could answer their questions and provide more information about the value that counts can bring to local communities.

**Media Outreach** - Media representatives are vital partners for raising awareness and knowledge about the count. Developing and distributing a news release provides members of the media useful, accurate and interesting information

### Helpful Advice

*Tapping into existing social networks can help you reach a broader audience. You can also ask organizations that have high web traffic if they would post a notice about the count on their homepage to help recruit volunteers.*

about your count. Writing and placing an op-ed in your local newspaper can generate awareness of the count and communicate what you hope to accomplish through the count, op-ed should be signed by a respected community leader. Fact sheets, news releases, photographs, op-eds and background information can be placed into a folder to create a media kit. Media kits can be distributed before the count. They can also be used after the count to share outcomes. Send to the media electronically, or posted on your organization's webpage. (*Sample Media Release in outreach resource section*)

**Emails, Social Media and Websites** - Twitter and Facebook can be wonderful tools to promote your count and help recruit counters. Send notification emails for the count to your stakeholder list. A websites can also serve as a central location for people to find information about your count. Your website could include information about the purpose of the count, a sign-up form for volunteers, background information about bicycle and pedestrian use/facilities in your community.

**Community Events** – Educate your community and sign up volunteers for your count at local events. This can also be an opportunity to notify residents about the count, distribute your fact sheets and raise awareness about the need for bicycle/pedestrian improvements.

## Communication During the Count

During the count it will be important to coordinate with participants to ensure everyone is aware of their duties. Inform your enforcement agency and the community about your count so they will know counters are legitimate and not loiterers.

Outlined below is a list of outreach activities you may want to consider for your count. A detailed description of each activity is in the previous section on how to communicate.

- Notify neighboring residents, businesses and schools about the count
- Reach out to local media
- Use social media

**Knock on neighbors' doors** - Visit or call neighboring businesses, schools and residents to inform them that a count is about to occur. Ensuring that everyone is aware of what is occurring will prevent misinformation and reduce interruptions to your volunteers. If any of your team or volunteers will be on private property, be sure to get permission or access from the landowner.

**Media release** - Send a news release to local media the morning of your count. The news release should include the locations and times that your volunteers will be counting. Identify a person or two on your team who would be a good spokesman for interviews if media shows up to cover your count.

**Social media and email blast** – Update social media during the count (i.e., tweets and Facebook status updates).



## Communication After the Count

After conducting your count, it is important to thank all your volunteers, partners and community members for their help and participation. Informing them of your results and letting them know how you plan to use the information that was collected will establish strong relationships and continued support for bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Present the data to decision makers and all any stakeholders that were marginally involved. Share the data with all those involved and ask if they also would like a presentation made to their organization. This is one of your opportunities to build the effort and help it be thorough and useful.

Outlined below is a list of public outreach activities to consider following the count:

- Send thank you notes to partners and volunteers
- Update your website with the outcomes of the count
- Presentations to targeted audience, i.e. decision-makers
- Create a fact sheet that summarizes the outcomes of the count
- Return to the targeted organizations you contacted before the count
- Develop and distribute a b newsletter about bicycle and pedestrian issues

**Thank you letter** – Sending thank you notes to all volunteers and partners is a terrific way to nurture and deepen relationships. It is important to personally thank all those who helped you and recognize the time and effort that they committed to the counting process. Expressing your appreciation and building relationships will help you more easily recruit volunteers and partners for future counts. Also send a thank you note to organizations that have donated resources. (*Sample Thank-You Letters in outreach resource section*)

**Website** – Update your website or webpage with the outcomes of your count. You will also want to add a thank you to all the volunteers and partners who helped with the count and provide an outline of the planned next steps.

**Fact sheet of outcomes** – After analyzing the data from your count, develop an at-a-glance fact sheet of the outcomes. The at-a-glance outcomes fact sheet should summarize the most important results of your count and those outcomes that relate most closely to your goals. This fact sheet can be enclosed in your thank you notes and the letters or emails you send to your targeted organizations.

**Direct written communication** – Write and send a letter or email to all those in your stakeholder database to report the outcomes of your count. The letter should include when your count was held, how many people participated and what how the data will be used.

**Phone calls and one-on-one visits** – One of the most important public outreach activities will be to report the outcomes of the count to your targeted organizations. Call your targeted

organizations to tell them you would like to set up a meeting to share the results of the count with them. During each personal visit, present the most important outcomes of the count and explain how the data will be used to meet your goals. Explain to each organization what you specifically need from them to help you reach your goals. During the personal visits, be prepared to answer questions and explain the planned next steps.

**Newsletter** – Develop and distribute a biannual newsletter about bicycle and pedestrian issues. The newsletter can be sent to all volunteers, partners and contacts from your stakeholder database. A newsletter is a tool that could be used to consistently update your community about the progress that has been made on reaching your goals, future counts, special issues and next steps.

WORKSHEET: Determine Your Messages and Methods (Sample)

Individual/Group You Want to Involve CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

Reasons for Contacting: Awareness of counting efforts  
Understand counting methodology and outcomes  
Build support for the expansion/improving cycle/pedestrian infrastructure (i.e., trail system)

BEFORE		DURING		AFTER	
What	How	What	How	What	How
To make them aware of the count and explain the importance of data collection.	Personal written letter with fact sheet enclosed.  One-on-one meeting.	To inform them when/where the counts are starting.	Reminder email with attached news release.	To thank them for their help and support in your efforts and to give them a briefing of the information collected.	Thank-you note.  Summary of information collected.

**WORKSHEET: Determine Your Messages and Methods (fill out form for your community)**

Individual/Group You Want to Involve \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for Contacting: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

BEFORE		DURING		AFTER	
What	How	What	How	What	How

## SECTION 8:

### Resources

### Contact Information

#### Idaho Transportation Department Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator:

Ted Vanegas, [TED.VANEGAS@ITD.IDAHO.GOV](mailto:TED.VANEGAS@ITD.IDAHO.GOV), (208) 332-7823

District 1 North ID:	Damon L. Allen, P.E. <a href="mailto:Damon.Allen@itd.idaho.gov">Damon.Allen@itd.idaho.gov</a>
District 2 North Central ID:	VACANT
District 3 SW ID:	Dave Jones, P.E. <a href="mailto:Dave.Jones@itd.idaho.gov">Dave.Jones@itd.idaho.gov</a>
District 4 South Central ID:	Devin Rigby, P.E. <a href="mailto:Devin.Rigby@itd.idaho.gov">Devin.Rigby@itd.idaho.gov</a>
District 5 SE ID:	Ed Bala, P.E. <a href="mailto:Ed.Bala@itd.idaho.gov">Ed.Bala@itd.idaho.gov</a>
District 6 Eastern ID:	Blake Rindlisbacher, P.E. <a href="mailto:Blake.Rindlisbacher@itd.idaho.gov">Blake.Rindlisbacher@itd.idaho.gov</a>

#### MPO's

Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization:	Glen Miles (208) 930-4164
Lewis-Clark Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization:	Shannon Grow (208) 298-1345
COMPASS:	Toni Tisdale (208) 855-2558
Bannock Transportation Planning Organization:	Mori Byington (208) 233-9322
Bonneville Metropolitan Planning Organization:	(208) 612-8530

### Information about Data Collection

Idaho Smart Growth

<http://www.idahosmartgrowth.org>

(208) 333-8066

#### National Documentation Project

- <http://bikepeddocumentation.org>
- [http://nymtc.org/project/NYMTC\\_Bicycle\\_Data\\_Collection\\_Program/Nassau/N011/2004/Graphs\\_N04-011.pdf](http://nymtc.org/project/NYMTC_Bicycle_Data_Collection_Program/Nassau/N011/2004/Graphs_N04-011.pdf)
- [http://www.crcog.org/transportation/bicycle/bp\\_count.html](http://www.crcog.org/transportation/bicycle/bp_count.html)
- <http://www.crcog.org/publications/BicycleDocs/draftBikePedcountreport.pdf>

## Sample Websites

**Learn more about other bicycle/pedestrian counts by visiting the websites below:**

**Bike Walk Nampa**

Nampa, Idaho

<http://www.bikewalknampa.org/>

**Bicycle Transportation Alliance Oregon**

Portland, Oregon

<http://btaoregon.org/>

**West Seattle Bike Connections**

Seattle, Washington

<http://westseattlebikeconnections.org/>

**Salt Cycle**

Salt Lake City, Utah

<http://www.saltcycle.org/>



## Notification Letter Template

(Date)

(Councilmember XXXXX)  
(City Name)  
(Address)  
(City, State, Zip Code)

Dear Councilmember XXXXXX,

Encouraging a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly city is a movement that is quickly gaining momentum throughout our region.

This month, (Name of Your Organization) will station volunteers at various locations throughout the city to count bicycle and pedestrian activity.

This event will be an opportunity to gather valuable data for estimating existing and future bicycle and pedestrian usage. Our ultimate goal is to increase the overall awareness and of bicycling and walking in our community and also promote alternative modes of transportation.

I am writing you to ensure that the City of (Your City Name) is aware of the upcoming bicycle and pedestrian counting activities. We would also like to ask for your support of funding future improvements and expansions of our community's cycle/pedestrian infrastructure.

Thank you for your strong leadership in our community. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

We look forward to hopefully working with you on this important effort.

Sincerely,

(Count Leader's Name)  
(Title)  
(Organization)  
(Phone number)  
(Email)

## Media Release Template

# MEDIA RELEASE

(Date)

(Name of Your Media Contact)

(Name of Your Organization)

(Phone Number)

(Email)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bicycling and Walking Counts Will Take Place Next Week

(City/County Area) – (Your Organization) will hold a bicycle and pedestrian count on (Date of Count) at (Time of Count). The count will take place at (Count Location(s))

(Your Organization) is focused on counting the numbers of bicyclist and pedestrians that travel through these areas and gaining specific information such as direction, age, gender, etc.

Information gathered from the bicycle/pedestrian count will be used to:

- Influence future road construction and planning.
- Implement new measures to increase bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- Explore alternative transportation means.

(Your Organization) is currently accepting volunteers to aid in the counting process. If you are interested, please contact (Project Leader's Name) at (Phone Number) or (Email) to apply.

###

## Thank-You Letter Template

Dear XXX,

Thank you so much for generously donating your time to (Your Organization) in regards to the bicycle and pedestrian counts that took place on (Count Date). Your time and effort towards the volunteering and counting process is greatly appreciated.

We thank you once again for your time and effort, and commend you on your dedication to our city!

Best Regards,

(Count Leader's Name)  
(Title)  
(Organization)  
(Phone number)  
(Email)

---

Dear XXX and XXX,

Thank you so much for your generous donation for (Your Organization)'s bicycle and pedestrian count. The support is greatly appreciated.

We thank you once again for your time and effort, and commend you on your dedication to our city!

Best Regards,

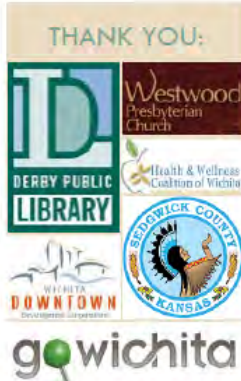
(Count Leader's Name)  
(Title)  
(Organization)  
(Phone number)  
(Email)

---

## Sample Fact Sheet

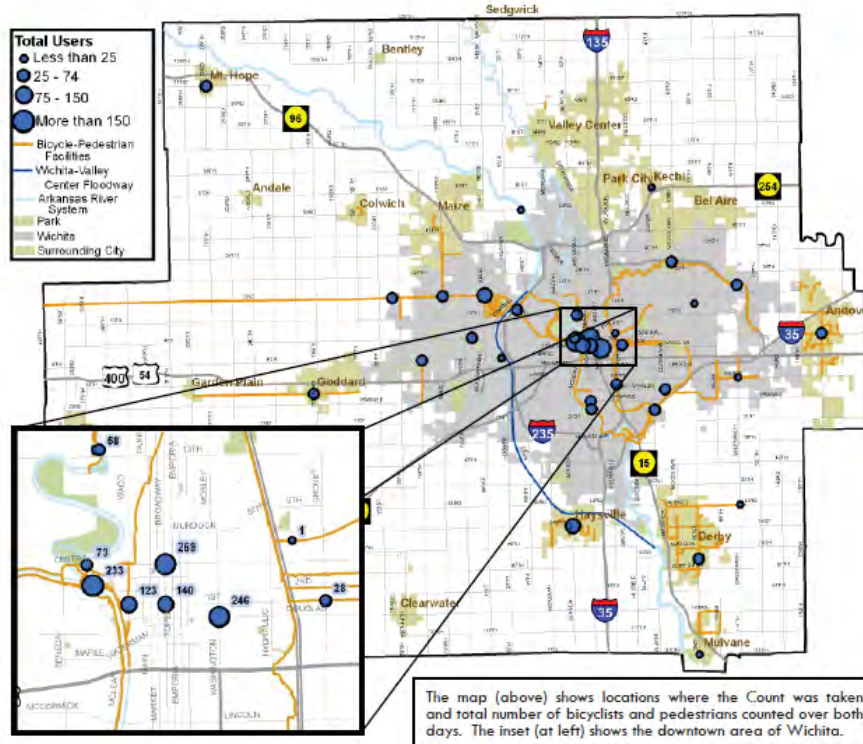
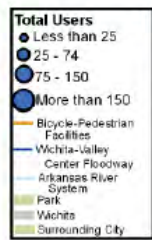
WICHITA AREA  
METROPOLITAN  
PLANNING  
ORGANIZATION

# 2012 Bicycle – Pedestrian Count



Arthritis Foundation  
Boy Scouts of America  
City of Andover  
City of Derby  
City of Haysville  
City of Wichita  
Wichita Downtown Development Corporation  
Interfaith Ministries  
Kansas Ultrarunners Society  
Life Ventures  
Oz Bike Club  
Run Wichita  
Sedgewick County  
Association of Cities  
Sedgewick County Medical Corps  
Vioneering Wichita  
Walk Kansas  
Wichita Bike-Walk Alliance  
Wichita Independent Neighborhoods  
Wichita State University  
Young Professionals of Wichita

... and our more than 60 volunteers!



WAMPO counted the number of bicyclists and pedestrians in the greater Wichita area in September. At each of the 35 sites (shown above), volunteers manually counted the number of bicyclists and pedestrians over the course of two hours on two different days - one weekday and one weekend day. The project goal was to collect data that was representative of actual levels of biking and pedestrian activity in the region.

How many bicyclists and pedestrians were counted? 2,300 over both days.

### What is a pedestrian?

For our purposes we included walkers, runners, people in wheelchairs, other assistive devices, and kids in strollers.

### Why did WAMPO want to know this kind of information?

WAMPO and many of our planning partners need this kind of information to better understand the trends and locations of existing bicycle and pedestrian activity to best plan for future system improvements. There is currently no data source that tracks the number of bicyclists and pedestrians in the greater Wichita region, so we collected our own data.

### TOP 10 COUNT SITES:

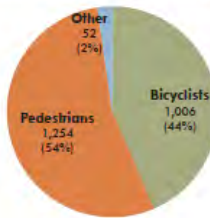
- |                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Broadway & Central            | 6. 1st Street & Waco                |
| 2. Douglas & Washington          | 7. Grand & Main, Haysville          |
| 3. Arkansas River Multi-Use Path | 8. I-135 Canal Route Multi-Use Path |
| 4. Broadway & 1st Street         | 9. Central & Nims                   |
| 5. 21st Street & Ridge           | 10. K-96 Multiuse Path              |



## Sample Fact Sheet (cont.)

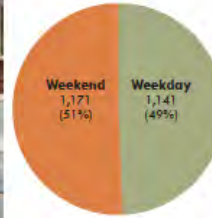
### Bicyclists vs. pedestrians?

Pedestrians slightly outnumbered bicyclists. (The "Other" category included rollerbladers and rollerskaters.)



### Weekend vs. weekday?

The number of people counted (weekend vs. weekday) was virtually the same for both days.



### Methodology is Important

WAMPO followed the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project methodology (NBPD) (<http://bikepeddocumentation.org/>) developed by the Institute for Transportation Engineers. It is designed to provide a consistent, nation-wide approach to estimate the level of bicycle and pedestrian activity in a community.

It specifies the dates and times to count, the criteria to use to select the sites, the number of locations to count, the number of counts per location, and the types of counts. It also includes guidance on volunteer training and is used by communities across the nation.

### What factors were considered when selecting which sites to count?

The NBPD specifies the following factors when choosing which sites to count. Ideal count locations are those that:

- are bicycle and pedestrian crash sites
- have been designated as planned facilities
- have had counts done in prior years
- are gaps and pinch points in the system
- are representative locations (urban, suburban, and rural locations)
- are corridors or areas for bicycle and pedestrian activity

WAMPO mapped these factors, identified candidate sites, scored and ranked each site based on the number of criteria factors it met, and selected the sites that met the most factors. The top scoring candidate sites were reviewed by local traffic engineers, planners, and the project advisory committee to come up with the final list of sites to count.

### Volunteers Made it Happen

Thanks to the willingness of over 60 people, our first regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Count was a success! People from a variety of service organizations, health groups, walking, running, and biking clubs volunteered. As part of their service, they attended a mandatory training that reviewed what to count and what not to count. Overall, the volunteers were excited and responsible, and they provided great feedback on ways we could improve the Count next year.

### LEARN MORE

For more information on the WAMPO Bicycle-Pedestrian Count, please see: <http://www.wampoks.org/bikepedplanning>. For information on the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project, please see: <http://bikepeddocumentation.org/>.

The Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO) hereby gives public notice that it is the policy of the agency to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12896 on Environmental Justice, Executive Order 13166 on Limited English Proficiency, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which WAMPO receives federal financial assistance. Any persons who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with WAMPO. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with WAMPO's Title VI Coordinator within one hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form, please see our web site at [www.wampoks.org](http://www.wampoks.org) or call 316.352.4862.

### VOLUNTEERS HAD A LOT TO SAY ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE:

"It was much fun... The time went fast, the weather could not have been better and we had a great time."

"Look forward to receiving results!"

"Congratulations to you on a well organized event. Overall the count from my perspective went very well. I had no difficulties whatsoever. Training and instructions provided in the packet were all clear."

"Both sessions were quiet and uneventful."

"I think we would of had a better count if we would have started, like, at say 7:00am to 11:00am for Saturday count for all the people who walk when it is cooler. That's a thought for next year maybe."

WICHITA AREA  
METROPOLITAN  
PLANNING  
ORGANIZATION

455 N. MAIN | 10TH FLOOR | WICHITA, KS 67202 | 316.352.4860 | [WWW.WAMPOKS.ORG](http://WWW.WAMPOKS.ORG)

W|A|M|P|O

## Template for Building a Stakeholder Database

Name	Organization	Email	Phone	Address



Were there specific organizations that provided counters?			
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>EXPLANATION</b>
Where you able to collect all the data you wanted?			
What changes do you want to make to your training based on counter evaluations?			
Where you happy with the forms that we provided?			
Did you attempt to collect other data besides the number of pedestrians and bicycles?			
Do you intend to repeat the count annually?			
Do you intend to conduct a second count at another time of year?			
What challenges are you having with data collection and who might assist you with addressing these?			



## WORKSHEET: Counter/Volunteer Evaluation Worksheet

Counter Name			
Count Location			
Information about counts	Date(s)	Day(s)	Time(s)
Information about counts	Date(s)	Day(s)	Time(s)
Information about counts	Date(s)	Day(s)	Time(s)
Is there anything in particular you want us to know about the count?			
Where there any unexpected issues you ran into?			
Training	YES	NO	Suggestions for improvements
Did the training adequately prepare for your count?			
Is there anything that would have made it easier for you to do the count?			
Do you feel that you could do this again without training?			
Were the forms clear and easy to use after the training?			
Did someone visit you during the count?			
Other			

Please tell us how helpful the training was for your count.	Very helpful	Adequate	Not Adequate	Suggestions
PowerPoint				
Data Collection Form				
Sign up Process				
Survey				
Count visit by project leader				
Other				

	SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVEMENT
Training PowerPoint	
Data Collection Form	
Other	

A leg: \_\_\_\_\_

B leg: \_\_\_\_\_

C leg: \_\_\_\_\_

D leg: \_\_\_\_\_

## Data Entry & Mapping Instructions

### Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Data

There are two tools: (1) Data Entry Excel Form and (2) Data Mapping GIS Tool. The training video can be found online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxBtHDaRbE>

#### **Data Entry**

**Step 1:** Make a copy of the Excel file for each intersection. Name the files using the two cross streets, such as WhiteSt\_&\_MountainView.xls. (The data mapping GIS tool is only compatible with Excel Workbook 97-2003\*.xls).

**Step 2:** Open a file for a particular intersection. If the Macro security warning displays, then click "Enable Content."

**Step 3:** Fill out the orange information. Use an integer for the location ID. You can use Google Maps to obtain the Latitude and Longitude of the intersection. Right click on the intersection and click "What's here?" The Latitude and Longitude will be displayed in the Google search box.

**Step 4:** Click on the blue data entry button to enter data.

**Step 5:** Enter the date a mm/dd/yyyy. Click the button for the particular 15 minute time period.

**Step 6:** Enter the observed counts for every movement.

**Step 7:** Hit "Submit Data."

**Step 8:** Repeat for every observed time period.

#### **Data Mapping**

**Step 1:** In ArcGIS, connect to the folder where the tool is located.

**Step 2:** Open the tool and supply the necessary information.

**Step 3:** Hit ok and wait for the tool to run (about 1 minute per intersection file).