

BPAC Statement Advising the Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure (“NDOT”) to Establish a Bicycle and Pedestrian Counter Program

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission recognizes the importance of bicycle and pedestrian counters to provide objective data to help guide decision making regarding active transportation infrastructure.

Bicycle and pedestrian counters provide quantitative evidence of both existing and latent demand for active transportation, helping to identify gaps and prioritize specific locations for improvements.

Counters can also powerfully demonstrate the effectiveness of active transportation projects by generating data to quantify changes in bicycle and pedestrian volumes with safer infrastructure in place. These data can also demonstrate the economic, health, and community benefits of this infrastructure. They also enable transparent, evidence-based communication with the public, stakeholders, and decision makers.

Given the significant investment in active transportation from the Choose How You Move program, and the numerous ongoing and upcoming sidewalk and bikeway improvement projects, this is an ideal time to deploy counters to quantify the benefits of these projects and support future investments in our transportation network.

Accurate bicycle and pedestrian counts will also help Nashville compete for grant funding and will provide clear metrics to track our progress and support future Bicycle Friendly Community applications. Peer cities such as Memphis, TN, Charlotte, NC, and Louisville, KY have all implemented bicycle and pedestrian counters to inform infrastructure planning, prioritize projects, measure effectiveness, demonstrate return on investment, and track active transportation goals.

BPAC therefore urges NDOT to establish a sustained, standardized, and permanent bicycle and pedestrian counter program with a public dataset. The program should include a mix of permanent and portable counters to support both short and long-term data collection. Specific criteria should be developed to guide counter placement locations, with considerations including locations of upcoming planned improvements to capture before-and-after data, locations with existing high pedestrian and bicycle volumes, to demonstrate proof-of-concept and evaluate trends.

As well, this will support underserved locations without access to safe active transportation infrastructure, to emphasize needs and align with Choose How You Move’s stated equity goals.

Data from this program should be freely available to the public and should be synthesized and analyzed by NDOT to provide quantitative evidence to support active transportation initiatives.

Adopted by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission on August 17, 2026, by a unanimous vote of 7 Commissioners in attendance.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Commission,

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