

Chapter 6 EVALUATION

Although there are many outcomes associated with bicycle and pedestrian programs, the ultimate measure of success is to safely increase the level of bicycling and walking.

--- The National Bicycling and Walking Study

With the increase of resources being devoted to bicycle facilities, it becomes more important to be able to track the progress of this plan's implementation. Chapter 2 contains a review of the recommendations of the previous edition of the Regional Bicycle Plan with an accounting of progress made.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES OF PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

During the interval until this plan is next updated, certain measures will be undertaken to better track the progress of the recommendations and fulfillment of the plan's objectives. The following activities will be tracked:

Cycling Activity

Much of the cycling activity documented in Chapter 2 was gathered from national surveys and presented with the assumption that the national characteristics are representative of the Cincinnati area. The following resources will be used to estimate bicycle trips for the purpose of comparison with the national goal of doubling the number of trips.

Principal national sources include the five-year National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) and the Decennial Census of Population. The National Household Travel Survey results of 2001 are reported in Chapter 2. The survey is taken every five years, so results of the next survey are not yet available. This survey is of greater value than the Census Journey to Work as it is taken during the summer and also reports mode of travel for all trip purposes. A review of the NHTS resources has found that national proportion of bicycle travel, defined by trip purpose, have declined somewhat between the 1995 and 2001 surveys.

The 2000 Decennial Census was taken on April 1, 2000. Results documenting mode of travel to work, including bicycle travel, are also reported in Chapter 2. The value of these data is limited as the reference week for reporting is the last week of March when weather conditions may not be suitable for cycling. Nevertheless, comparable local data down to census tract level are available for comparison over four censuses (1970 – 2000) to track trends for this source. The 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package special tabulation was released in 2004 from which both origin and destination data for bicycle work trips can be determined for OKI's transportation analysis zones. The 2010 Census will discontinue the sample survey, replacing it with the ongoing American Community Survey which was initiated in 2005 and will require several years of surveys to gather sufficient results for valid small area data.

The Internet has facilitated the exchange of information both by encouraging creation of sites for sharing data, and by making it easier to locate and access the information. These resources will be monitored for participation characteristics that can be applied to this area and for reports of local cycling activity.

Usage of the Little Miami Scenic Trail was estimated at 150,000 to 175,000 in OKI's 1997 Trail Users Study. As this trail is extended, and other trails are built, OKI will work with the implementing units of government to monitor usage. Counts taken by OKI staff in 2006 and 2007 at the Loveland trailhead provided estimates of around 2,000 users per good weather, weekend day.

On-road bicycle usage has been difficult to monitor as traffic counting work does not count or distinguish bicycles. OKI has been taking manual counts for certain road segments or intersections expected to be traveled by cyclists as reported in Chapter 2. This will be considered for roads where facility improvements are planned in order to estimate their impact.

Miles of Facilities

Given the preference for separate trails and designated on-road facilities by cyclists in the region, additional lengths of such facilities can be used as a measure of progress towards plan implementation. The current inventory of facilities is based on local reports of existing bikeways followed up by field checks. Trail facilities are now tracked through a regional geographic information system by Global Positioning System survey. This plan also recommends attribute data describing type of bicycle accommodation for inclusion with the street segment records for the OKI highway network.

Motor Vehicle Collisions

Local success toward the national goal for a 10 percent reduction in the number of bicyclists killed or injured can be tracked with county level crash statistics kept by the state highway safety agencies. Historic data from these sources are presented in Chapter 2. The frequency of fatalities for the region is (fortunately) too low to reliably measure change. Injury crashes are more frequent and incidents of bicyclist injuries, as a percent of all injury crashes, will be tracked for change, either up or down. Comparing the annual average of bicycle/motor vehicle crashes for the 1990s as documented in the 2001 plan with those in Figure 2.2 of this report finds a significant drop from 353 to 232 injury crashes per year.

Facility Funding Applications

Project applications to OKI and the state transportation departments for the categorical Transportation Enhancement (TE) grants are easily tracked. The TE expenditures indicate progress toward plan implementation in two ways: the funded projects for bicycle improvements likely represent specific project recommendations being implemented. Second, the share of the respective TE allocations funding bicycle facilities, as opposed to Historic/Archaeological, Scenic/Environmental and Pedestrian projects, is also a measure of plan implementation.

More difficult to track, but more meaningful, are the bicycle facilities integrally funded and built with conventional highway funds (National Highway System, Surface

Transportation Program, Hazard Elimination or Bridge Replacement) as part of ongoing highway reconstruction, maintenance or new construction projects. Besides the benefits from the projects themselves, there is the more significant achievement of incorporating bicycle improvements into the process of managing the surface transportation system.

ASSESSING PROGRESS

The SAFETEA-LU metropolitan area planning regulations call for a review and update of the regional transportation plan on a four year cycle. This process will provide the opportunity to assemble information for the performance measures described above and evaluate the past years' activities in terms of the listed recommendations in Chapter 4 and their respective goals and objectives. A major revision of the Regional Bicycle Plan, such as this, is not scheduled on a regular basis.

Many of the objectives, and even some of their recommendations, are continuing activities to be implemented as needs and opportunities arise. As such, they are never entirely completed. Others, such as roadsharing education for both bicyclists and motorists, are beyond OKI's program responsibilities. Progress on these will depend on the success of work with other appropriate agencies

MAKING CORRECTIONS TO BETTER MEET GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The evaluation of the regional bicycle program accomplished through the progress assessment, described above, should provide some indication of which goals and objectives have progressed and which have not. Adjustments in the transportation plan recommendations, and the corresponding overall work programs for subsequent years, should be sufficient to refocus on priority accomplishments.



B-BOPP to Work Week – 2000 Fountain Square Rally
(Bike – Bus Or carPool and Pedestrian)