USING DATA FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION DECISION MAKING

Data is an important tool for developing effective walking and biking programs and projects. Data effectively:

- Defines the problem a project aims to address
- Informs and defends decisions
- Supports funding applications
- Helps monitor and evaluate plans, programs and projects

Here are useful data sources that add value to your work and provide examples of how and where data is used successfully.

Four Key Reasons Data Is So Valuable

Using these essential data sources can help make the case for active transportation that:

- Considers imminent safety threats to people walking and bicycling;
- Identifies broader community health concerns related to active transportation;
- Takes into account the current state of walkability/bikeability;
- Identifies detailed, site-specific concerns and current state of use.

These data sources are user-friendly and include various visualization tools. Many online data sources are free, while the local audits and counts will incur a cost.

Top Five Go-To Data Sources

1. TIMs at UC Berkeley: TIMS is your one-stop-shop for collision and injury data. This resource hosts SWITRS, FARS, SRTS and SHSP data and offers users access through interactive maps and data queries.
   tims.berkeley.edu

2. CDC & CHHS Open Data: These are your most important data resources for health and active transportation-related issues. These resources offer many tools for exploring data.
   chhs.data.ca.gov
   data.cdc.gov

3. Walk/ Bike Score: This online resource provides several valuable data tools to understand an environment’s conduciveness to walking or biking. It can highlight areas of opportunity and need.
   walkscore.com

4. Local Audits and Counts: Collecting data specific to your community is essential to understanding local active transportation needs. Bicycle and pedestrian counts and audits inform effective plans and programs.

5. SCAG’s Active Transportation Database: This online resource, currently being updated, includes volunteered-gathered bicycle count data on various intersections throughout the region.
   bikecounts.luskin.ucla.edu
More Data Sources

**American FactFinder**
provides access to data from the US Census Bureau including:

- American Community Survey
- American Housing Survey
- Census of Governments
- Decennial Census
- Economic Census

FactFinder can provide data at different levels including state, county, place, zip code, census tract, census block, etc. Datasets include:

- B08201 (Access to Car)
- B08006 (Commuting Mode)
- B08134 (Travel Time to Work by Mode)

**Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics**
has origin destination information for commuters, as well as information on number of jobs. It can be joined to different sets of data based on:

- FIPS County Code
- Census Tract Code
- Census Block Group Code
- Metropolitan Code
- Zip Code Tabulation Area Code
- Place Code

**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
The EPA provides environmental data sources that supports funding applications and informs decisions on where to focus bike/pedestrian infrastructure:

- EJScreen: a tool that maps environmental justice by combining environmental and demographic factors. The EJScreen uses 12 environmental indicators and six demographic indicators and 12 EJ indexes. Environmental justice communities may qualify for more extensive sources of funding such as cap and trade.

- Smart Location Database: examines location efficiency based on 90 built environment-based indicators, including development density, street network design, destination accessibility, transit service, demographics and employment statistics. A Smart Location may be more suitable for walking and biking with greater numbers on destinations within a shorter travel time – this metric could be used to identify priority areas for infrastructure projects and active transportation programs.