

By

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Last October I volunteered part of my day to the 2015 Bike/Pedestrian Count as a part of the Washington State Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project. Blink encourages us to spend at least one day a year volunteering around the city. I chose to spend my time counting cyclists and pedestrians for two main reasons. First, as a bike commuter, I want to see continued improvements made for non-traditional commuters in a city where congestion and traffic seems to be getting worse and worse. And second, I can get behind the approach that WSDOT and the Cascade Bicycle Club are using to drive change: through the collection of data.

The sun rising behind a bridge in Seattle

Sunrise at the intersection of the Duwamish Trail and the W. Seattle Bridge Trail.

When I moved to Seattle from Kansas City just over two years ago it was clear to me that Seattle is a much more bike-friendly town than Kansas City (though organizations like BikeWalkKC are making great strides to improve KC's bikability). This is partly due to the temperate climate of Seattle but, more importantly, it is due to political support and the work of organizations like the Cascade Bicycle Club to make Seattle a more "bikeable" city through the Seattle Bicycle Master Plan. Commuting to work on my bicycle seemed like the obvious choice, especially when my office provides bike storage and locker rooms. In 2014, I rode nearly 1,120 miles on my bike and in 2015 I exceeded 1,500 miles.

When I learned that volunteers were needed to count cyclists as a part of the effort to make Seattle more bikeable I wanted to help. I was especially excited to learn more about why we

would be counting commuters at key locations throughout the city. The Washington State Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project is an annual bicycle and pedestrian count taken at numerous locations throughout Washington State. The data collected from these counts will be used to monitor success in making areas around the state more bikeable as well as providing critical data to support future improvements. The crucial part of this project is doing the actual counting of bicyclists and pedestrians to more accurately estimate demand, measure the benefits of investments, and design future projects.

At Blink, I see the positive way in which data drives good decision-making every day. Our goal is that the user research we do informs the designs we produce. Important decisions, including how to make Seattle more bikeable, should be made with good supporting data. I hope the information I collected helps to make improvements for the fellow commuters in my neighborhood.

Here are the numbers for the morning commute at the intersection where I counted:

2009 - 139 | 2010 - 123 | 2011 - 289 | 2012 - 258 | 2013 - 233 | 2014 - 315 | 2015 - 308



Cyclist counted at the intersection of the Duwamish Trail and the W. Seattle Bridge Trail from 2009 to 2015.

At least for my intersection, it looks like the numbers overall are trending up but I'll leave it to the Washington State Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project folks to really crunch the numbers.

Tim is one-half of the technology team at Blink helping to make the amazing work we do even more amazing. On the weekends Tim can be found on his bike, on a trail, or sipping lattes with his wife at [Espresso Vivace](#). Tim also blogs at www.uxpursuit.com.