

Dear General Manager Mulligan,

Writing on behalf of the members of the Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District (the District) Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC), I wish to express our gratitude toward staff and our support for their recent effort to install automated bicycle and pedestrian counters on the entrances to the Golden Gate Bridge's east and west sidewalks. While a seemingly minor improvement, this has the potential to bring substantial benefits to the District.

At present, all of the Bay Area Toll Authority-managed bridges (the Dumbarton, Bay Bridge East Span, Richmond-San Rafael, Carquinez, and Benicia) have automated bicycle/pedestrian counters, and provide up-to-date totals on a web portal. Only the Golden Gate Bridge does not conduct daily counts. In fact, the most recent figures were from a manual count that took place in 2015. It is already known how many vehicles pass through the toll plaza every day and how many riders use the buses and ferries. By installing permanent automated counters, the District will achieve parity with the other modes of bridge users.

By providing user counts on the bridge, the District will have firm data on what many of us already know, namely that the Golden Gate Bridge is one of the most-bicycled bridges in the nation, and by far the most-ridden in the San Francisco Bay Area. This will make excellent supporting data for any competitive grant applications submitted by the District in which it seeks to improve safety or access for non-motorized users of the bridge.

Additionally, by having clear data about the number of people walking or bicycling over the bridge, staff and the Board of Directors will be able to make better-informed decisions about how best to allocate scarce resources to serve the bridge's many diverse users.

We have two requests for staff upon completion of the installation of the automated counters. First, there should be some public visibility into the count data. The gold standard for this would look like the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Bridge Counter Data (<https://mtc.ca.gov/tools-resources/data-tools/bridge-paths-counter-data>), which makes the counts accessible for anyone via web browser. Alternatively, this goal could be accomplished via the General Manager's report with an annual total at the end of the year.

Second, we request that staff or contractors be assigned to do periodic manual counts in order to do validation of the automated counters and to gather qualitative data about users, e.g. the share of rental bikes using the bridge.

Once again, we express our appreciation to staff for the continued work and for their support of our committee.

Sincerely,

Warren J. Wells, AICP
Committee Chair
Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee