2016 Downtown Pittsburgh Pedestrian Traffic Study
Pedestrian Counts and Intercept Survey
Executive Summary

Summary & Findings

The Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership commissioned a pedestrian traffic county and intercept survey in spring 2016 similar to a series of surveys beginning in 2006. The survey provides insight into traffic patterns and the opinions of pedestrians pertaining to a number of inquiries. This information has been used to shape the programs and services of the PDP and others to support the growth and satisfaction of Downtown workers, residents, and visitors. The survey focused on five primary areas of data collection:

- Pedestrian volume on select Downtown streets
- Pedestrian demographics and characteristics
- Transportation modes utilized and desired
- Overall satisfaction levels with Downtown and neighborhood amenities
- Spending habits and shopping and dining trends

Pedestrian Traffic Counts

The results of the 2016 Pedestrian Traffic Study continue to affirm a strong pedestrian base in Downtown Pittsburgh with 213,201 counted at ten locations over a three-day period. Findings are consistent with earlier PDP-commissioned studies and few significant variances were observed. The PDP will continue to evaluate data with strategic partners to identify any areas of interest or determine if further research should be considered in future studies.

- In general, the Downtown Pittsburgh pedestrian traffic peaked between Noon and 1:00 p.m. on Thursday 4/21 and Friday 4/22. On Saturday 4/23, the pedestrian traffic gradually increased throughout the day and peaked between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
    - Thursday 4/21 morning had the highest morning pedestrian counts. 17,854 pedestrians were counted between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. between all ten locations.
    - Friday 4/22 lunchtime had the highest hourly peak. 10,085 pedestrians were counted between noon and 1:00 p.m. between all ten locations.
    - Friday 4/22 (between 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.) was the busiest night for pedestrian traffic (17,943 counted) between all ten locations. That number is more than double the pedestrian counts from Thursday 4/21 night (7,534) and almost 50% more than Saturday night (12,060).
- The two Market Square locations had three out of the top five highest daily pedestrian counts per location (13,068, 11,609, and 11,480).
    - The two combined locations in Market Square experienced a 30% increase in pedestrian traffic (59,043 – 2016; 45,570 – 2012)
    - Thirteen new restaurants have opened in or near Market Square since the 2012 study
- Penn Avenue (near 9th Street) in the core of the Cultural District had the other two out of the top five highest daily pedestrian counts per location (12,624 and 9,260).
    - The Penn Avenue (near 9th Street) location experienced a 108% increase in pedestrian traffic (30,151 – 2016; 14,497 – 2012).
    - Eight new restaurants have opened along Penn Avenue since the 2012 study.
- Larger events such as the Pittsburgh Penguins playoff games (on 4/21 and 4/23) and the Gallery Crawl in the Cultural District (on 4/22) resulted in some distinct increases in pedestrian counts for several of the locations.

Intercept Survey

Researchers collected 598 surveys from all locations over the course of three days. Interviewers chose pedestrians at random, walking within half a block of a counting location. The survey had a response rate of 8%, meaning that 12 people had to be approached in order to gain one completed survey. The average time to complete was seven minutes and most interviewing as conducted on the move walking beside the survey taker.

Demographics

- The mix of respondents from the 2016 survey has become younger over time when compared to the 2012 and 2010 survey results.
  - 57% of 2016 respondents were under 34 years old compared to 45% in 2012 and 35% in 2010.
    - Less than 25 years old (29%-2016, 25%-2012, 17%-2010).
    - 25-34 years old (28%-2016, 20%-2012, 18%-2010).
- A smaller percentage of 2016 survey respondents were in Downtown for work compared to 2012 and 2010 which indicates that people are in Downtown for more diverse reasons.
  - Work remains the primary reason for being Downtown (38% - 2016, 48% - 2012, 57% - 2010).
    - This decrease may be related to extending survey hours until 11:00 p.m.
- A higher percentage of 2016 respondents live in the City of Pittsburgh including Downtown (51% - 2016, 48% - 2012).
  - The number of 2016 respondents from Allegheny County excluding the City of Pittsburgh (33%) was lower than the number of 2012 respondents (41%).
  - The “other” category for those outside of Allegheny County increased from 11% in 2012 to 16% in 2016.

Transportation Modes

- 2016 survey respondents who drive alone or walk have remained comparable to 2012 and 2010.
  - While at a low level, carpooling has increased among respondents.
  - Bus usage has decreased among respondents.
- During the day (before 7:00 p.m.), a higher percentage of 2016 respondents travelled to Downtown by bus or T (38% - 2016, 31% - 2012) and walking (15% - 2016, 11% - 2012).
- 67% of 2016 survey respondents said they have used the North Shore Connector at some point which represented an increase from 2012 (53%).
- 26% of 2016 survey respondents said they have ridden a bike Downtown at some point.
  - Bike riders named “More bike lanes” and “More/better trail connections” as the most prevalent reasons that would encourage them to bike more often Downtown.
- 74% of 2016 survey respondents are aware of the Healthy Ride Bike Share system and 13% had ridden the bike share system at some point in time.

Public Spaces and Perceptions

- Market Square was named as the favorite public space by 48% of 2016 survey respondents; Point State Park came in 2nd place at 35%.
  - Respondents like Market Square the best because of:
    - Variety of restaurants and food choices (29%)
    - The people and people watching (13%)
    - Events and activities and things to do (12%)
  - Respondents like Point State Park the best because of:
    - Scenery/views/sights (22%)
    - Open space/outdoor/nature areas (20%)
    - The fountain (14%)
- Mellon Square and Katz Plaza were the least favorite public spaces in 2016 (2% of responses).
  - Mellon Square’s score decreased from 3% in 2012 to 2% in 2016 even though the public park was closed for renovation in 2012.

- Overall 80% of pedestrians feel safe Downtown; this was an increase in the perceived feeling of safety among pedestrians from 2012 (70%).

Retail and Spending Trends

Far more respondents desire a grocery store in Downtown (38% - 2016; 23% - 2012) as the top desired shopping destination with Giant Eagle as the most named store. Downtown has seen a significant increase in the number of restaurants and bars that are opened later into the evening that has shifted visitor tendencies.

- 2016 survey respondents would like to see Grocery stores (38%), Department stores (16%), and Clothing stores (14%) added Downtown.
    - These types of stores were also the three most prevalent responses in the 2012 survey.
- Respondents spent the most on Food & Beverage ($109.02 per month) compared to other expense categories.
    - Respondents who live Downtown reported spending a much higher amount on Food & Beverage ($183.57 per month)
    - Respondents in the age group 45-54 spent more money on average Downtown than all other age groups across all 6 expense categories.

Study Notes

The study, conducted by Campos, Inc., was conducted over a three day period beginning on April 21, 2016 and ending on April 23, 2016. Researchers observed and recorded pedestrian volume (counts) and conducted intercept surveys at random from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. each day. The study was conducted using identical methodology to prior studies to allow comparative analysis, however three of the locations were new or different compared to the 2012 study and the study period was extended from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at all locations.

Pedestrians and people in wheelchairs who crossed over a reference point where the counter was stationed were counted, however, bicyclists, skateboarders, and children too small to walk independently were not. Each pass of a pedestrian was counted, whereas someone crossing by a counter twice was counted twice. Both sides of the street were counted. In the 2016 study, 213,201 pedestrians were counted walking by the following ten Downtown locations:

1) Market Square (Market St & 5th Ave mid-block)	6) Liberty Avenue (near 10th Street)
2) Market Square (Forbes Ave near Delray)	7) Smithfield Street (btw. 6th & Oliver)
3) Wood Street (btw. Fifth & Forbes)	8) Smithfield Street (btw. First Ave & Blvd of Allies)
4) Penn Avenue (near 9th Street)	9) Grant Street (btw. Fifth Ave and Oliver)
5) Penn Avenue (near 6th Street)	10) Wood Street (btw. Third Ave & Blvd of Allies)

There is a maximum margin of error of +/- 4.0% at the 95% confidence level.

The full survey findings can be found at DowntownPittsburgh.com/Research.