



Peter Bruce, Consultant ■ Since 1991

Dec. 20, 2007

2007 Downtown Minneapolis Pedestrian Traffic Count Summary

Introduction

The 2007 Downtown Minneapolis Pedestrian Traffic Count is the seventeenth annual downtown-wide measurement of foot traffic. Organized by Pedestrian Studies, the project involves an informal collaboration of nine building management companies and City Lites, Inc. The figures in this report include volume measurements at 30 key locations in the downtown retail core.

Skyway Traffic Increases

The median change in pedestrian traffic volume from historical averages (which compares the 2007 count with the average of all previous counts) at 16 locations in the skyway system was relatively high at +10 percent.

In 2006, the median change from historical averages was +5 percent. For several years prior to 2006, the median change was not increasing. Prior to 2006, traffic volumes at many locations were down because new construction of office towers had the effect of spreading the downtown traffic among many new and existing buildings.

The annual traffic volume change (which compares the 2007 count with the 2006 count) at 11 locations in the skyway system was +5 Percent.

The weather during the October study in both years was relatively similar, which provides a comparable situation for pedestrians making a choice between using skyways or sidewalks.

5218 Eleventh Avenue South ■ Minneapolis Minnesota 55417
612.827.8080 ■ f 612.827.8181 ■ pbruceceo@aol.com

www.pedestrianstudies.com

Busiest Skyways

The Retek on the Mall/Target Store skyway over 9th Street was the busiest, with 16,127 crossings.

City Center, Northstar Center and TCF Tower also placed in the highest volume category with average daily pedestrian traffic volumes above 13,000 crossings.

The Buildings with the highest percent change in pedestrian traffic volumes from 2006 were City Center, Northstar Center and the Campbell Mithun Tower.

Reasons For Increases

Buildings reporting large increases in volumes have also experienced recent increases in office occupancy.

Several buildings, notably City Center following its renovation, have added more food service and retail businesses in recent years. Additional retail opportunities have attracted worker traffic from nearby blocks as well as visitors and residents from farther away.

The City Center/Macy's skyway has become a major connection for both Target Corporation employees and vendors traveling between Target offices on either ends of the Nicollet Mall. It is also a major connection for shoppers traveling to and from the Target Store and other retail buildings along the Nicollet Mall.

Lunchtime Volumes

Average lunchtime volumes continue to account for approximately 50 percent of the daily volume at locations in the retail core.

Sidewalk Traffic

Nicollet Mall - Pedestrian traffic on Nicollet Mall sidewalks has been studied annually since 1997. Historical data shows that traffic has been highest in the 8th Street area.

The 2007 average daily volume on Nicollet Mall from 8th to 9th Streets was an estimated 20,000 trips. A full day count of the Midwest Plaza block (east side of Nicollet Avenue from 8th to 9th Streets) showed a daily volume there of a 9,233 trips. This block has experienced a steady traffic volume in the 9,000 to 10,000 trips range since 2002, a year after the Target Store opened on Nicollet Avenue. The store and accompanying new office buildings saw increased sidewalk traffic on the both sides of Nicollet between and 8th and 9th Street by 69 percent between 2001 and 2002.

Projections

Downtown pedestrian traffic volumes are projected to increase 5 percent in 2008. This projection is generally based on the observed upward trends in office space occupancy downtown over the last two years. The existing office buildings are filling up, and there are no new office construction projects that might change traffic patterns.

In addition to increasing office occupancies, additional retail occupancy at City Center and other retail buildings is on the rise, and the increasing use of light rail transit (LRT) will help push retail core traffic slightly above average. As office building occupancies increase, the level of commuter traffic to and from fringe parking ramps will increase a similar amount and help boost traffic in some office buildings along these commuter paths.

Hennepin Avenue Entertainment Corridor - New developments and redevelopments on Hennepin Avenue will increase traffic volumes in the Hennepin Avenue entertainment corridor in 2008 and 2009. The Twins Ballpark – two blocks from Hennepin Avenue – will stimulate traffic greatly in its opening year of 2010. The Entertainment District and Hennepin Avenue will become much busier, especially at night. Traffic levels in and near these developments will rise more sharply than the forecasted general downtown increase. On baseball game days, many blocks could enjoy volumes that are more than double the current average daily volumes.

LRT Corridor - The LRT line along 5th Street is now bringing visitor traffic from the neighborhoods in the metro area and airport visitors to downtown's retail and entertainment districts. Locations within a few blocks of Nicollet Mall and Hennepin Avenue station areas will see more foot traffic from LRT riders and experience traffic volume increases above 5 percent in 2008.

Summary - Foot traffic will increase an average of 5 percent in the coming year at nearly all locations in 2008 and increase more on selected blocks in the financial district and Nicollet Mall retail area where office and retail occupancies are growing more sharply. This activity will be heightened as the Twins stadium nears completion and LRT access is improved and the North Star Route Train access to the Minnesota Twins Ballpark begins.

Sponsors

Owners and managers of the following buildings and companies sponsored the 2007 study:

225 South Sixth

Block e

Campbell Mithun Tower

City Center

City Lites USA

Midwest Plaza

Northstar Center

Retek on the Mall

TCF Tower

US Bank Plaza

Pedestrian Studies consulting firm and the above sponsors own the data and information contained in the full Minneapolis Pedestrian Count Report. The general public may purchase the full report from Community Enhancement and Pedestrian Studies by calling (612) 827-8080.