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How many bikers cross the bridge? New GWB counter produces first tally

By Myles Ma, NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

FORT LEE — By the Port Authority's count, about 100 million vehicles cross the George Washington Bridge each year.

But drivers aren't the only people who cross the bridge.

Until this month, there were no exact numbers on the number of bicyclists and pedestrians who traverse the busiest span in the world. But thanks to a counter the Port Authority installed earlier this year, now we know: An average of 1,700 cyclists and 900 pedestrians cross the George Washington Bridge each day.



An average of 1,700 cyclists and 900 pedestrians cross the George Washington Bridge each day. (File Photo)

Transportation Alternatives and the **New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition** pushed the Port Authority to install the counter ahead of a \$1 billion project to replace the bridge's 592 suspender ropes, announced in May. The budget for the project also includes funding to rehabilitate the bridge's main cables, replace the north and south sidewalks, and improve pedestrian and bicycle access ramps.

Transportation Alternatives and the **New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition** announced the first set of counts Wednesday. The counter tallied 123,000 people who crossed the bridge from July 17, when it went live, to Sept. 2. Two-thirds rode bikes.

On weekdays, the busiest times for pedestrians and bicyclists came during the morning and evening rush hours. On the weekends, the number of westbound bicyclists peaks between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m., as New Yorkers take morning rides into northern New Jersey. Eastbound traffic peaks around 11 a.m. as they return home.

Cyndi Steiner, executive director of the New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition, said she expects the numbers to rise after the Port Authority makes improvements to the pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure.

"This is evidence that there is much more traffic than just car traffic," she said.

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