



Trends in Cambridge Bicycling

Analyzing the Data

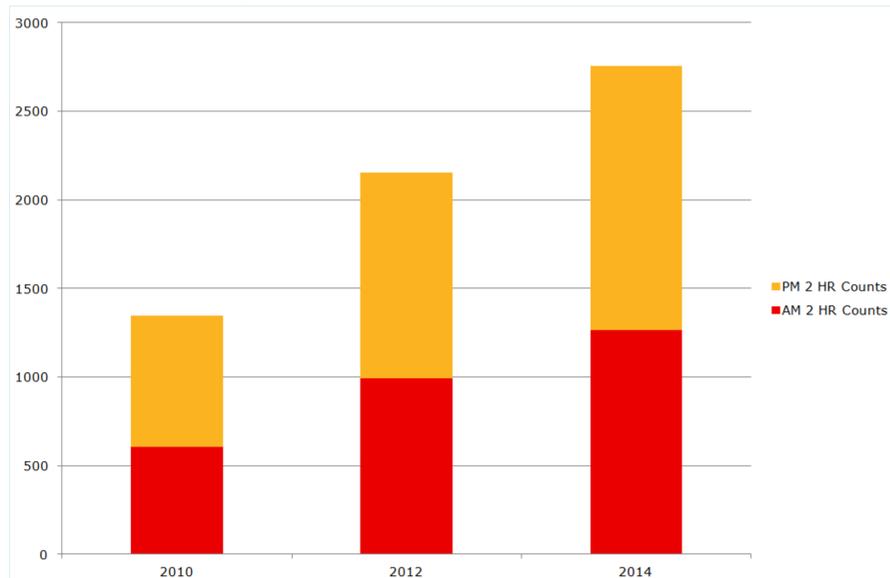
DECEMBER
2014

About the Data

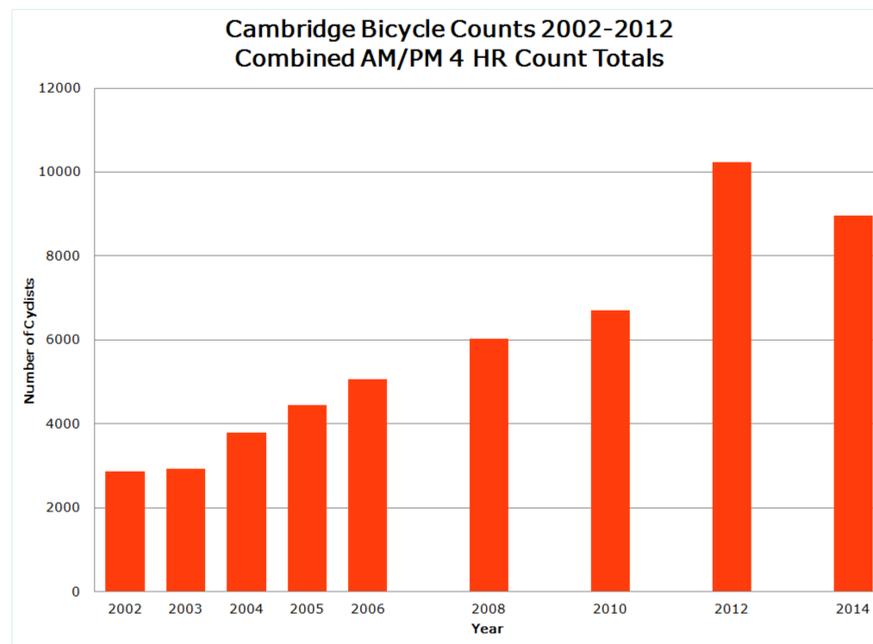
Cambridge conducts biennial counts of bicycle traffic at various intersections throughout the city. These help us understand trends throughout the city and how different projects have affected riders, and suggests how infrastructure can be improved. While there has been a steady upward trend in bicycling, there was a slight decline in 2014 when compared with 2012. A closer look suggests that the extensive roadway construction on several major corridors in the city appears to be correlated with a decline in riders at affected intersections, while other intersections have seen dramatic increases in the number of riders. The charts on this poster demonstrate some of the trends.

Mass Ave. and Vassar St.

Because bicycle count data only exists for the intersection of Massachusetts Ave and Vassar St since 2010; this intersection is not included in the total counts when comparing data from before 2010. However, the number of cyclists at this intersections has exploded over the past four years, more than doubling between 2010 and 2014. One explanation for this rise is the cycle track on Vassar St. which provides riders a sense of security that they do not have on a traditional bike lane. Additionally, Vassar passes through MIT's campus to Kendall Square, both popular destinations for cyclists.



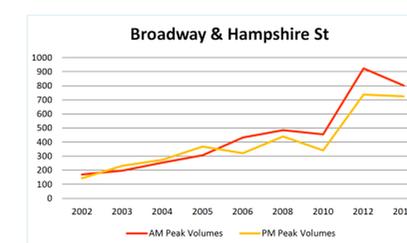
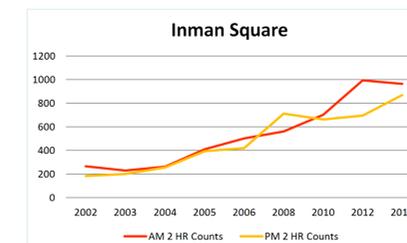
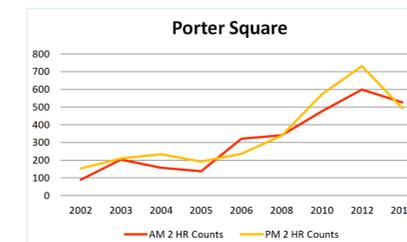
Bicycle Counts 2002-2014; Combined AM/PM



The table above shows the results of all of the counts the city has done since 2002. There was a drop in counts between 2012 and 2014, which was the first drop since counts began. The table at right shows whether there was a net increase or decrease at each intersection where counts were taken. In the sections at right and below, a likely explanation is identified as to why the decreases occurred.

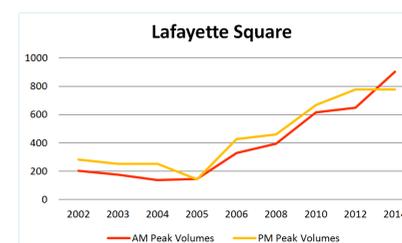
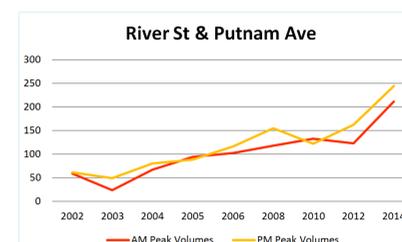
| Intersection | Net Change in Volume |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Brattle St/Mason St | ↓ |
| Brattle St/Sparks St/Craigie St | ↓ |
| Broadway/Hampshire St | ↓ |
| Brookline St/Granite St | ↑ |
| Fresh Pond Pkwy/Concord Ave | ↓ |
| Huron Ave/Fayerweather St | ↓ |
| Garden St/Concord Ave | ↑ |
| Inman Square | ↑ |
| JFK St/Memorial Drive | ↓ |
| Lafayette Square | ↑ |
| Massachusetts Ave/Cedar St | ↑ |
| Massachusetts Ave/Vassar St | ↑ |
| Memorial Drive/Massachusetts Ave | ↑ |
| Porter Square | ↓ |
| Quincy Square | ↑ |
| River St/Putnam Ave | ↑ |
| Western Ave/ Memorial Drive | ↓ |

Other Trends



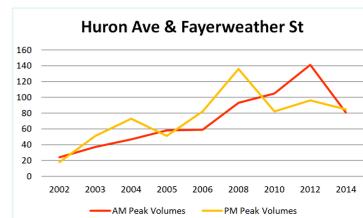
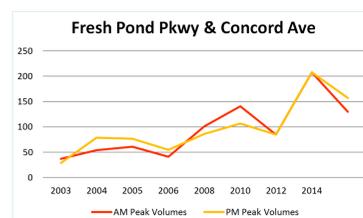
While the majority of the decline in cyclists can be accounted for by drops near construction sites (see below), almost all other decline can be accounted for by looking at the corridor between Porter Square and the intersection of Broadway and Hampshire St., passing through Inman Square. This route goes along Beacon Street, which is also undergoing reconstruction. The relatively steady number of cyclists at Inman Square indicates that the Beacon Street construction does not account entirely for the lower counts, but it certainly is a contributing factor.

Not all intersections saw decline. The intersections shown in the graphs at right show steady increases over recent years.



Bike Traffic and Construction

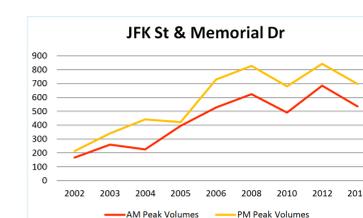
Most Cambridge cyclists can tell you about the construction going on all over the city. Even if the end result of construction projects is better cycling infrastructure and safer streets, the process of getting there can be months or even years of disruption and stressful travel. As one might expect, intersections near major construction projects currently underway saw a decline in cycling in 2014. At right are the data from four Cambridge intersections that reflect this scenario.



Counts done here were likely affected by the reconstruction of Concord Ave. and surrounding streets. As a part of the project, the Garden/Field corridor will become a Bicycle Priority Street.

Huron Ave. and surrounding streets have been under construction since 2012. When it is completed, it will have new buffered bike lanes.

The Anderson Memorial Bridge, connecting JFK St. in Cambridge to Harvard St. in Allston, has been under construction for a couple years. The project includes adding bike lanes to the bridge.



The Western Ave. project is nearing completion, but construction is ongoing and the cycle track was not completed at the time of the counts.

