<u>Project Effectiveness Guidelines</u>

This memo describes the process for using data to measure the success of new projects recommended in the Active Transportation Plan (ATP), specifically for Class II, Class IIB, and Class IV bicycle facilities. The goal of this approach is to ensure that transportation projects developed by the ATP and completed through the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) successfully advance the City's goals and priorities.

The ATP supports two City policy priorities. These are traffic safety (Vision Zero Action Plan) and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Climate Action Plan). The City's Vision Zero Action Plan calls for eliminating serious and fatal collisions by 2040, and the Climate Action Plan seeks to reduce vehicle trips and their associated emissions in part by shifting short driving trips to walking, biking, and transit.

To demonstrate progress toward these goals, staff must track the number of people using new facilities and the safety of those facilities. This proposed data-driven evaluation approach will allow the City to answer basic but important questions, such as whether these projects encourage the use of active transportation modes, whether collision rates are decreasing even as ridership increases, and, potentially, which types of improvements deliver the greatest benefits.

The City does not currently own the counting technology needed to answer these questions on a citywide scale. Historically, staff has relied on occasional spot counts or project-specific traffic studies, which provide only short snapshots of bicycle and pedestrian volumes. To fully measure the effect of new ATP projects, staff proposes establishing an approach that combines a one-time citywide baseline count effort along with project-specific before-and-after counts for key bikeway projects. This will require the purchase or lease of bike-ped counting equipment and, potentially, the associated analytics software, so bicycle and pedestrian activity can be measured in a repeatable way.

Staff recommends that the first action of the ATP should be to conduct a comprehensive baseline bicycle and pedestrian count at several top ATP bicycle project locations across the City. This initial effort would record how many people are currently biking (and walking, where feasible). The equipment could be repositioned over several weeks or months to cover a variety of ATP project locations, providing the City with a clearer picture of existing conditions.

For future Council-approved and initiated bikeway projects, staff proposes a before-and-after evaluation for Class II, Class IIB, and Class IV bikeways. As a project moves into design, staff will begin a data collection period at the project location to determine existing volumes. Counters would be deployed at a set of locations along the project limits to record bicycle activity on typical weekdays and weekends. At the same time, staff would track reported collisions using Sheriff reports and SWITRS. This establishes a clear pre-project picture of both ridership and safety.

After the project is constructed and open to the public, and a suitable amount of time has passed to account for possible changes in transportation behavior, staff will repeat this process during the post-project period, using the same locations and equipment to ensure comparable data. With these two datasets, staff can calculate changes in average daily and peak-period bicycle volumes, as well as changes in collision rates. The key metric will not just be the number of collisions, but collisions relative to the number of bicyclists or pedestrians. A successful project will be one in which more people use the facility while the collision rate per rider remains the same or decreases. This will be referred to as the Safety Plus Mode Shift (SPMS) rate, which aligns with Vision Zero and Climate Action Plan objectives.

To proceed with this approach, the City will need to either purchase equipment or contract for services. One option is to purchase a set of movable counters. This would involve an upfront capital cost but would give the City full control over how and when the equipment is deployed. This approach would also build internal expertise over time. Another option is to lease equipment or work with a contractor that provides turnkey services, including counter deployment, data processing, and reporting. This method would reduce the upfront cost and technical burden, but could be more expensive if used intensively over many years. A hybrid approach is also possible, in which the City purchases a small number of cameras for ongoing monitoring and supplements them with leased equipment or contractor services for larger, one-time efforts such as the initial baseline count.

Staff envisions this work rolling out in phases. In the near term, following Council direction, staff would refine this evaluation approach, identify preferred equipment and procurement approaches, and bring forward a funding request. Once counters or services are secured, staff will conduct the baseline count at ATP priority project locations. As ATP individual projects advance, staff will complete the one-year before-

and-after evaluations and prepare project summaries for Council and the community that describe changes in volumes and safety. Ultimately, this data can be incorporated into public-facing tools such as dashboards or annual reports for residents to review projects.

This approach is intended to improve transparency and accountability around active transportation projects. It gives Council a simple way to compare projects and project types, it allows designs to be refined based on what works best in practice, and it creates a feedback loop between adopted policy goals and actual outcomes. By committing to this measurement approach, the City can signal that success is defined not only by miles of bikeway delivered, but by quantifiable improvements in safety and mode shift toward sustainable transportation.

If Council supports this approach, staff will incorporate these guidelines into the final ATP as an internal policy that then applies to new ATP projects.