
ENHANCING HOMELESS COUNTS:

NEW STRATEGIES FOR THE 2017 HOMELESS COUNT IN METRO VANCOUVER

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2017 HOMELESS COUNT PARTNERS:



Significant in-kind support was provided by:

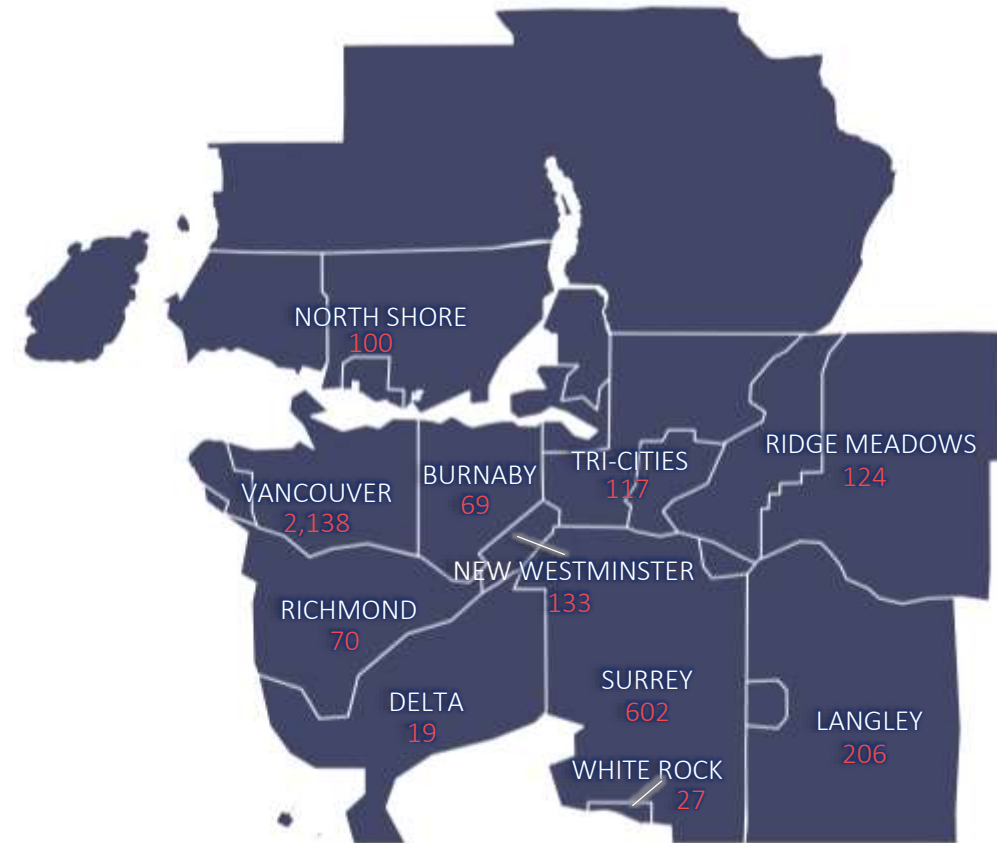


OUTLINE

1. Context: Homeless Counts in Metro Vancouver
2. 2017 Count Overview
3. Core Methodology Overview
4. Results
5. Enhanced Strategies
 - a. Rural
 - b. Surrey Extended Urban Strategy
 - c. Waterways
 - d. No Fixed Address

CONTEXT

- Metro Vancouver (Count locations shown on map)
 - 21 municipalities
 - 1 treaty First Nation
 - 1 electoral area
- Point-in-Time counts across Metro Vancouver
 - Every 3 years since 2002
- PiT counts in City of Vancouver
 - Annually since 2010 (10 total since 2002)
- Methodology consistent for comparability



OVERVIEW OF THE COUNT

- 24-hour snapshot of homelessness
 - Point-in-Time Count methodology
 - March 8th 2017
 - 1,140 volunteers deployed
- Objectives:
 1. Estimate the number of people who are homeless in the region
 2. Obtain a demographic profile of this population
 3. Identify trends compared to previous Counts



Volunteer Package Preparation (2017)

CORE PiT METHODOLOGIES

Daytime

Streets
Alleys
Doorways
Parkades
Parks

Nighttime

Shelters
EWR
Safe Houses
Transition Houses
NFA

Aboriginal

Specific Routes
Outreach
70 Volunteers

Youth

Stipends
Magnet Events
Outreach
School Strategy

2017 HOMELESS COUNT RESULTS

3,605
people were
found to be
experiencing
homelessness




Homelessness
increased
30%
since 2014

In comparison...
.....
the general
population
grew by
6.5%
between
2011 and
2016

"Where did you stay
last night?"

 **29% Unsheltered**

 **64% Shelter**

 **7% Extreme Weather
Response Shelter**

NEW METHODOLOGIES

- New Methodologies
 - Rural
 - Surrey Extended Urban Strategy (SEUS)
 - Waterways
 - No Fixed Address (NFA)

ENHANCED STRATEGY I: RURAL

- Intent
 - Provide better coverage of homelessness in hard to reach areas
- Goal
 - To increase coverage of individuals experiencing homelessness in a rural setting
- Strategy
 - Add resources to the mapping process conducted by Area Coordinators (ACs) with stakeholders in rural areas
 - Add routes based on additional knowledge gathered through mapping process
 - Magnet events (Delta, Tri-Cities, Ridge Meadows)

RURAL STRATEGY OUTCOME

- Difficult to measure the impact of the strategy in hard numbers
- Challenge in that rural campsites may be more transient
- Completed 'check-ins' in the week prior to the count
- Advantage to additional resources and planning time for ACs in communities with rural areas

ENHANCED STRATEGY 2: SURREY EXTENDED URBAN STRATEGY

- Intent
 - Determine extent of undercounting on count day
- Goal
 - To better understand the limitations of the Point-in-Time count methodology (undercount)
- Strategy
 - Followed a similar approach taken by Montreal's 2015 Homeless Count
 - Extend the length of the count by two days in a limited geography to determine how many individuals experiencing homelessness were not surveyed on count day
 - Survey continued on established routes and partner organizations' sites on March 9th and 10th in Newton area of Surrey
 - Screening questions: whether individuals had already been counted (a) in the 24-hour count on March 8 and (b) in the follow-up survey on March 9 and 10

SEUS OUTCOMES

- 13 additional interviews from individuals not captured on March 8th
- A total of 119 individuals on count day were interviewed in the same area, for a total of 132 individuals
- 10% of the total individuals interviewed were counted during the SEUS enumeration
- 9 questions were asked providing a basic demographic profile

ENHANCED STRATEGY 3: WATERWAYS

- Intent
 - Provide better coverage of homelessness in hard to reach areas
- Goal
 - To enumerate and gather a demographic profile of individuals experiencing homelessness on vessels
- Strategy
 - Developed a stakeholder base and reached out to public organizations, government agencies and businesses to secure boats, experienced crews and targeted volunteer recruitment
 - Boats with crews were deployed on waterways across the region, with a particular emphasis in certain areas that live-aboard boaters are known to frequent

WATERWAYS OUTCOMES

- Defining homelessness on the waterways as challenging, as living aboard a boat can be a valid housing strategy
- The survey approach garnered significant interest from the live-aboard community, but also some caution about being labelled homeless
- Eleven individuals surveyed who identified as homeless
- Future research could focus on boats as a housing strategy, with an emphasis on needs of different groups of live-aboards

ENHANCED STRATEGY 4: NO FIXED ADDRESS

- Intent
 - Identify more detailed survey data for those with NFA
- Goal
 - To enumerate and gather demographic information on individuals experiencing homelessness in jails, detox centres and hospitals/short-term medical facilities
- Strategy
 - In partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health, surveys were administered in hospitals: St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver General Hospital, Ridge Meadows Hospital and Surrey Memorial Hospital.

NFA OUTCOMES

- Strong participation and partnership from health authorities bolstered the demographic data collected from hospitals
- Health authorities had the intent of accessing this data through a data sharing agreement with Metro Vancouver
- Win-win for both the Homeless Count and Health Authorities in collecting point in time data on individuals with no fixed address

THANK YOU!

- To view the full report, please visit [MetroVancouver.org](http://www.metrovancouver.org):
<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/homelessness/HomelessnessPublications/2017MetroVancouverHomelessCount.pdf>

