



LEGISLATIVE ANALYST REPORT

To: Members of the Board of Supervisors
From: Andrew Murray, Office of the Legislative Analyst
Date: September 9, 2005
Re: **Homeless Count Methodology** (BOS File No. 050641) (OLA No. 037-05)

SUMMARY OF REQUESTED ACTION

The Board passed a motion introduced by Supervisor Daly requesting that the Office of the Legislative Analyst research and make recommendations on methodologies and standards for conducting the count of homeless people, with attention on interaction with government institutions and the overall quality of life of homeless people in San Francisco.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A number of factors have combined over the past few decades to increase the number of people experiencing homelessness in the United States (US). San Francisco, in particular, has had one of the largest homeless populations, on a percentage basis, among major US cities. The City devotes substantial resources to addressing homelessness and there is considerable interest in determining whether these resources are having an impact.

The City conducted its first count of the homeless population in 2000, and most recently conducted a count in 2005. The 2005 count, which follows a methodology endorsed by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, a major funder of programs for the homeless, found a significantly lower number of homeless individuals than did the next most recent count, conducted in 2002. As the methodology has some recognized shortcomings and its successful implementation is challenging, there are reasonable questions about the accuracy of the count. In addition, the methodology of the City's count changed between 2002 and 2005, raising questions about the comparability of the resulting numbers.

Despite the shortcomings, the City's count methodology is basically sound. The count of the sheltered population is straightforward, so it seems reasonable to assume, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that the results of the two most recent counts of this subpopulation are accurate and comparable. The methodology of the unsheltered count is widely accepted, although it is challenging to implement and verifying the results after the fact in the absence of quality control mechanisms is difficult. It likely results in an undercount to an unknown degree by excluding people residing in abandoned buildings. This and other undercounting risks can be remedied by easy-to-implement means of estimating the number of unsheltered homeless not observed during the count.

The Office of the Legislative Analyst recommends instituting a number of improvements to future counts, including estimating the number of individuals not counted, broadening the subpopulations counted, and increasing the frequency.

BACKGROUND

An estimated 2.3 to 3.5 million people experience homelessness in the United States each year¹. This equates to approximately 450,000 to 850,000 people on a given night². A number of factors have combined over the past few decades to increase the number of people that experience homelessness. These include an increase in the number of people living in poverty, rising housing costs, and reduced public spending on housing and urban development, disability benefits, and mental health services. Over this period the demographics of the homeless population have changed, such that there are now more young people and families with children experiencing homelessness, and an increasing share of the homeless population experiences spells of homelessness that are shorter than in the past.

Although no formal count was conducted, local experts agree that the number of homeless individuals in San Francisco increased over the few decades before 2000, largely for the reasons noted above. For example, between 1975 and 1988 San Francisco reportedly lost 43% of its low-rent single room occupancy housing units³. Based on 1990 data from the US Census Bureau, San Francisco had the third highest share of population residing in homeless shelters (0.57%) among the country's 50 largest cities. Although rental housing prices have dropped significantly since heights of the dot com boom era, costs are still prohibitive for many people earning modest incomes.

A number of departments with auditing responsibilities have looked at the City's homelessness programs. In 2001, the Budget Analyst conducted a financial audit. In 2002, the Controller issued a report containing a number of recommendations, including modifying the design of the Local Homeless Coordinating Board, establishing the Department of Human Services (DHS) as the lead agency addressing homelessness, and improving data collection regarding the needs of and services to homeless clients. Despite the City's 2001 Continuum of Care Plan, the Controller's audit concluded that "although the City and County of San Francisco makes available a wide spectrum of well-delivered services for its diverse homeless population, the City has not yet developed an effective, unified strategy for dealing with the issues related to homelessness⁴."

In response to Proposition N, passed by voters in November 2002, in May 2004 DHS implemented the Care Not Cash program. The program replaces a large portion of the cash assistance formerly provided to San Francisco's County Adult Assistance Program (CAAP) participants with direct services, including housing and shelter. Following Care Not Cash's first eleven months of operation, DHS reported a dramatic decrease in the number of homeless CAAP participants. Since the

¹ Urban Institute, 2000

² Urban Institute, 2000

³ "Homeless Services," City and County of San Francisco Office of the Controller, 2002

⁴ "Homeless Services," City and County of San Francisco Office of the Controller, 2002, page S-1

implementation of Care Not Cash, DHS has housed nearly 900 formerly homeless CAAP participants and over 200 additional individuals have found housing on their own⁵.

MEASURING HOMELESSNESS

Counting the Population

Understanding the needs of the homeless and tracking progress on addressing the problem require accurate measurement of the population, including its size and characteristics. However, many challenges exist to accurate counting, including establishing appropriate definitions, planning and marshaling resources for the count, and simply locating homeless people that are in some cases reclusive, avoiding interaction with people and organizations, such as those attempting to conduct counts.

There are two common types of counts of homeless populations, point-in-time and period prevalence. Point-in-time (also referred to as point prevalence) is a count of people that are experiencing a condition (prevalence) at a given point in time. Period prevalence is a count of people that have experienced a condition at any point during a specified period. If most people that are homeless are permanently so, then the point and period prevalence counts will be similar. If there is significant turnover in the homeless population, then the point and period counts will differ significantly.

The homeless population is not homogenous, and different policies might be needed to support the needs of different segments. Data collected through counts and accompanying efforts can provide the information necessary to craft appropriate policies. For example, long-term homelessness suggests a homeless population that might have few resources or skills for independent living, whereas short spells of homelessness might suggest a population with more recent attachment to the labor force and stable housing arrangements.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides housing and community development funding to local jurisdictions. To serve the homeless population, HUD has encouraged local jurisdictions to create Continuum of Care plans, which are community-based, long-range plans identifying a network of services that will benefit the homeless. Most of the funding that HUD provides to local Continuums of Care in order to address homelessness is distributed through an annual competitive grant process (HUD SuperNOFA: Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Program). Starting in 2003, HUD began requiring Continuum of Care grant applications to contain, at least every other year, point-in-time counts, including the number of chronically homeless. HUD also requires Continuums of Care to estimate the number of sheltered homeless considered seriously mentally ill, chronic substance abusers, veterans, persons with HIV/AIDS, victims of domestic violence, unaccompanied youth, and families with children. These counts are now also a required element of the HUD Consolidated Plan regarding housing and community development, which communities are required to prepare every five years to be eligible to receive funding under most HUD formula grant programs. The federal departments of Education and Health and Human Services also require local

⁵ San Francisco Department of Human Services

jurisdictions to report data on some elements of the homeless population as a condition of grant eligibility.

Sheltered and Unsheltered Populations

At any point, the homeless population is composed of people who are sheltered and those who are not. The sheltered population, according to the HUD definition, includes those staying in emergency shelters and transitional housing (including domestic violence shelters), residential programs for runaway/homeless youth, and hotels/motels/apartments through voucher arrangements. Unsheltered people are those sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, primarily composed of public places (parks, sidewalks, alleys, etc.), vehicles, all-night commercial establishments, and abandoned buildings.

Point-in-time counts of the sheltered population (censuses of shelter and transitional housing occupants) are methodologically straightforward assuming the cooperation of facility operators, who must simply literally count their clients at a given point in time. Period prevalence counts of the sheltered population are more difficult, requiring that operators maintain data systems that allow them to uniquely identify clients and ensure that they do not “double count” clients that use services repeatedly over the study period. To capture data on the homeless population, HUD has recently required local jurisdictions to develop their own homeless management information systems (HMIS). If implemented by all shelter providers, HMIS, which contain identifying data and shelter use information, can be used to generate point-in-time and period prevalence counts without the need for a manual census. Both point-in-time and period prevalence estimates can also be obtained through surveys of a representative cross section of a community’s residents to determine whether they used a homeless shelter or transitional housing during a specified period.

Counts of the unsheltered population are usually much more challenging than of the sheltered population, and are addressed by a recently released authoritative HUD resource, “A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People.” Pursuant to its requirement that Continuums of Care provide point-in-time counts of the homeless population at least biannually, HUD permits three main approaches for counting the unsheltered homeless. Two of the methods currently accepted by HUD are 1) an actual count performed by canvassing a specified area and 2) an actual count in a statistically valid sample of subregions, extrapolated to a specified area. The canvassing count is known as a “simple street count”, and referred to as “complete coverage” when an entire jurisdiction is covered in this fashion. HUD also accepts counts limited to “known locations” where the homeless congregate, or a combination of the complete coverage and known locations approaches for different parts of a jurisdiction. These approaches present similar challenges, including:

- Conducting the count in a sufficiently short period of time that it qualifies as a point-in-time count;
- Marshaling the requisite human resources to conduct the count; and
- Instituting quality control mechanisms to ensure that the methodology is implemented properly.

A third method also accepted by HUD, referred to as a service-based count, is an unduplicated count of homeless clients that interact with a community’s complete set of providers of non-shelter services

(such as soup kitchens, drop-in medical clinics, etc.). Many services, such as street outreach teams, drop-in centers, and mobile food programs particularly cater to the unsheltered homeless. Service-based counts must contain a screening mechanism to verify that the service recipients are indeed homeless, opposed to low-income housed people that might be using the same services. A mechanism for ensuring unduplicated counts, such as collecting identifying personal information, is also a necessary element of this approach. Service-based counts can be used for both point-in-time and period prevalence estimates. They can also be a good complement to a simple street count to identify people not easily observed, such as those living in cars, abandoned buildings, or other places that are difficult for enumerators to access. In order for a service-based count to yield an accurate estimate of the unsheltered population, the implementing agency must be confident that the bulk of the unsheltered population in fact interacts with the service agencies involved in the count, which can be difficult to verify.

Counting methods that were commonly accepted earlier, such as relying on expert opinions (key informants) and interpolating from national estimates, are now discouraged. Expert opinions are now only accepted as valid in circumstances where an individual can have reasonably complete first-hand knowledge of the local situation to enable an accurate estimate⁶.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Different Approaches

Different count methodologies have different strengths and weaknesses. Point-in-time data, which is a snapshot of the population, might not be representative of the population over time. However, a point-in-time count of public places is the only currently feasible methodology for collecting information on unsheltered individuals that do not come into contact with service providers. To balance the shortcomings of the different approaches, some jurisdictions undertake a family of studies composed of multiple methodologies to count different segments of the population.

Accuracy and Consistency

To ensure that results are accurate and comparable count-to-count, methodologies must be consistently and well implemented over time. Quality implementation of public place counts is particularly challenging because the field nature makes enumeration difficult and unexpected circumstances can occur. Methodology that cannot accommodate, in a planned fashion, unexpected circumstances beyond the control of researchers, such as severe weather or geographical changes in the nature of homelessness, can result in counts that are inaccurate and where period-to-period comparisons are invalid.

Beyond Counting: Collecting Other Information on the Homeless

Data on population characteristics can be used to assess needs and be complemented by gap analysis to determine what additional services a jurisdiction should provide. To collect information on the characteristics of the population, some jurisdictions couple their counts with surveys. Such surveys can include questions on the city and county of residence prior to homelessness, length of homelessness

⁶ “Practical Methods for Counting the Homeless: A Manual for State and Local Jurisdictions,” The Urban Institute, 1996

spell, number of spells, gender, ethnicity, reasons person became homeless, medical conditions, veteran status, employment status, family situation, and others. Not only can information on the characteristics of the population help jurisdictions provide appropriate services, but it can also be used to assess whether the conditions endured during spells of homelessness (quality of life measures) are improving over time, which itself could be a goal of a homelessness program.

SAN FRANCISCO’S HOMELESSNESS COUNT

The Mayor’s Office on Homelessness conducted the City’s first official count of the homeless population in 2000. Prior to that, the City relied upon US Census counts and the opinions of local experts, whose estimates of the unsheltered population varied by as much as 10,000⁷. Following the dissolution of the Office on Homelessness in 2003, DHS assumed responsibility for overseeing homeless programs and conducted the 2005 count.

The City’s count has always been composed of a point-in-time census of its publicly and privately operated shelters and transitional housing and public places. In addition, although not required as part of the HUD point-in-time count, the City has also counted the number of homeless individuals residing in hospitals, jails (beginning in 2005), and residential treatment facilities. In all years, the public places count has relied heavily on volunteer enumerators. It is important to note that the City’s count, which has primarily been conducted to meet HUD requirements upon which funding is contingent (approximately \$16 million per year), does not capture all elements of the population included in the City’s official definition of homelessness (Appendix A). Notably, it excludes those “doubled up” or residing in private Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotel rooms.

Methodology

The City’s methodology adheres to general guidelines provided by HUD, and is described in Appendix B, San Francisco Homeless Count 2005 Final Report. The specific methodology of the City’s point-in-time counts of the sheltered and unsheltered populations changed between its two most recent iterations, 2002 and 2005. The changes in methodology are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Changes in Count Methodology, 2002 to 2005		
Count Element	2002	2005
Count of Sheltered Population	Shelter and transitional housing staff manually counted occupants.	City staff extracted data from the HMIS to count the emergency shelter population. Transitional housing staff manually counted residents.
Count of Unsheltered Population (Public Places)	Volunteer enumerators completely canvassed the entire City, including parks, in an approach known as “complete coverage.”	Volunteer enumerators completely covered some parts of the City (Districts 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10) while covering just “known locations” in other parts of the City (Districts 1, 2, 4, 7, and 11). Recreation and Park Department staff provided park counts.
Number of Public Place Enumerators	Staff and volunteer enumerators numbered approximately 300.	Volunteer enumerators numbered approximately 250.
Time of Year	Conducted in October	Conducted in January

⁷ “2001 Homeless Count Report,” City and County of San Francisco Mayor’s Office on Homelessness

Although not part of the 2005 count, the City is currently developing capacity for service-based counts, which will require combining data from DHS and DPH programs that serve homeless clients (DPH has seven patient data systems that could contain information on services to homeless clients). In addition, the City is developing capacity to better track the needs of homeless clients, the services provided (including transitional and permanent supportive housing), and the associated outcomes.

Results

Table 2 below displays the results of the City’s counts. They illustrate substantial increases 2000 – 2002, particularly in the unsheltered population, and a notable decrease 2002 – 2005, again particularly in the unsheltered population.

Point-in-Time Count Date	Sheltered Population	Year-Over-Year Change, Sheltered	Unsheltered Population	Year-Over-Year Change, Unsheltered	Total Population	Year-Over-Year Change, Total
4/27/2000	NA	NA	1,805	NA	NA	NA
10/25/2000	3,343	NA	2,033	27% ⁸	5,376	NA
10/25/2001	4,149	24%	3,156	55%	7,305	36%
10/29/2002	4,105	(1%)	4,535	44%	8,640	18%
1/25/2005	3,593	(6%) ⁹	2,655*	(17%) ⁹	6,248	(12%) ⁹

Source: San Francisco Department of Human Services and Mayor’s Office on Homelessness

* Figure adjusted by DHS to account for people missed due to “known locations” approach

Table 3 below details the number of unsheltered homeless counted in 2001, 2002, and 2005, by Supervisorial District. After increasing in all districts except 6 from 2001 to 2002, the number decreased in all districts except 6 from 2002 to 2005.

District	2001	2002	2005 (Adjusted)	Percentage Change, 2002 to 2005
1*	69	127	76	(40%)
2*	92	96	79	(18%)
3	280	444	167	(62%)
4*	161	331	97	(71%)
5	233	569	110	(81%)
6	1,158	1,071	1,233	15%
7*	34	266	25	(91%)
8	108	374	159	(57%)
9	238	249	192	(23%)
10	733	811	484	(40%)
11*	50	197	34	(83%)
Total	3,156	4,535	2,655	(41%)

Source: San Francisco Department of Human Services and Mayor’s Office on Homelessness

⁸ Annualized growth rate over six month period, April 2000 to October 2000.

⁹ Annualized growth rate over 27 month period, October 2002 to January 2005.

* These districts were counted based on known locations in 2005, opposed to the complete coverage methodology utilized in 2002

To inform public policy, it would be useful to know what factors underlie the dramatic decrease in the unsheltered population count 2002 - 2005. This report focuses on the methodology of the counts, and to what degree it might contribute to changes in the results. It is therefore beyond the report's scope to investigate factors beyond methodology. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to speculate that an improving economy, lower housing costs in the post-dot com era, and new and continuing City homelessness programs are partially responsible for the observed changes. For example, the housing of nearly 900 formerly homeless CAAP participants through Care Not Cash would be expected to result in a reduced count, all other things equal.

Assessment of the Count Methodology and Implementation

As noted above, different methodologies have different strengths and weaknesses, and all count efforts are limited by resource constraints that require accepting some level of inaccuracy. DHS's final report on the City's 2005 count notes the following shortcomings of its approach:

- Enumerators might miss people during the public places count that are hidden or obscured;
- Exclusion of parks and abandoned buildings results in an undercount;
- Conducting the census in "known locations" risks missing people in unknown locations and not accounting for changes in the geography of the homelessness situation; and
- Identification of people as homeless or not by enumerators is subjective based on appearance as there is no verbal communication between the enumerators and the individuals being counted.

Some additional shortcomings of the approach include:

- No mechanism for estimating the number of homeless not observed (and therefore not counted);
- Lack of a survey component to gather information on population characteristics and reduce subjectivity of enumerator assessment of homelessness status; and
- Inability to adjust for unexpected circumstances, such as severe weather, which might impact the count.

(Note that none of the shortcomings listed above relate to the count of the sheltered population.)

Despite the shortcomings described above and opportunities for improvement, the City's 2005 methodology, which adheres to general HUD guidelines, is basically sound and largely consistent with the best practices of other jurisdictions. The count of the sheltered population is largely derived from the HMIS. Assuming this system is accurate (it is key to DHS's homeless services), it is reasonable to assume in turn that the 2005 count of the sheltered population is accurate. As the 2002 method of counting this population (manual enumeration of shelter and transitional housing residents) is straightforward, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it seems reasonable to assume that the 2002 count of the sheltered population is also accurate, and that the 2002 and 2005 numbers for this population are comparable.

The methodology of the public places counts in 2002 and 2005 is also basically sound. Basing determination of an individual's housing status on observation, rather than a questionnaire-driven dialogue, is bound to result in some misidentification. It is unknown whether this will result in a count that is higher or lower than actual, and to what degree. Many of the enumerators are knowledgeable and motivated staff members of community-based organizations that serve the homeless, so presumably are skilled at both discovering congregation sites and visually identifying the homeless. Experts view the exclusion of abandoned buildings as a reasonable tradeoff for safety's sake, although it results in an undercount to an unspecified degree¹⁰. Regarding parks, it is unclear whether Recreation and Park Department (RPD) staff or volunteer enumerators would provide more thorough counts. Unfortunately, there is no information from past counts on how many people were observed in parks, so it is not possible to compare past data with the 2005 figures.

The known locations approach has been adopted by a number of jurisdictions and is accepted as valid in cases where pre-testing and other procedures for identifying the known locations are sufficiently robust to ensure that few important sites are overlooked. DHS's 2005 process for identifying known locations relied on a broad range of knowledgeable stakeholders¹¹. It is interesting to note that the count of the unsheltered homeless decreased more from 2002 to 2005 in districts where only known locations were covered than in those with complete coverage (60% decrease opposed to a 41% decrease). This might lead one to suspect that the known locations approach, even after the count was adjusted¹², might systematically undercount. However, because the known locations approach was only used in districts with historically small homeless populations, systematic undercounting in these districts would not be expected to have a large impact on the total¹³ count if geographical patterns of homelessness have not changed dramatically.

It is difficult to determine how the change in timing of the count from October (in 2002) to January (in 2005), which was mandated by HUD¹⁴, might have impacted the results. October is reliably warmer and drier than January¹⁵. Weather reports indicate that although the temperature did not differ greatly on the night and morning of the 2002 count compared to 2005, it did not rain during the 2002 count but did rain the night of the 2005 count¹⁶ from about 11:30 PM on. The street count was conducted from 8 PM until 12 AM and the park count was conducted the following morning. Bad weather would be expected to drive some homeless in public places to use limited resources to seek low-cost shelter, perhaps outside of the network of shelters included in the count.

¹⁰ Professor Dennis Culhane, University of Pennsylvania

¹¹ The known locations were identified through consultation with the Police Department, homeless outreach teams of DPH, currently and formerly homeless individuals, Board of Supervisors staff and constituents, and members of the general public. The locations were pre-tested by DHS staff prior to the 2005 count.

¹² DHS computed "adjusted" count numbers based on the actual count and historical count data.

¹³ For example, if the percentage decrease in the districts covered by the known locations approach is actually the same as in the complete coverage districts (41% opposed to 60%), the total count of unsheltered individuals would only be understated city-wide per the 2005 figures by fewer than 300 individuals.

¹⁴ HUD stated in the SuperNOFA application that it preferred that jurisdictions conduct point-in-time counts during the last week in January.

¹⁵ Per the National Weather Service and the Global Historical Climatology Network, the average low temperature and precipitation are 55F and 1.1 inches in October compared to 46F and 4.4 inches in January.

¹⁶ Weather Underground, www.wunderground.com, as reported for the Panhandle

Quality implementation of public places counts is challenging given the field nature and the associated difficulty addressing unexpected circumstances. Although the methodologies of the 2002 and 2005 public places counts are basically sound, it is difficult to assess, after the fact, how the implementation might have affected the accuracy of the counts, and the resulting comparability. For example, anecdotal information suggests that past count numbers might have been inflated to attract higher levels of federal support for homeless programs¹⁷. If numbers were artificially inflated, it seems reasonable to suspect that the public places element might have been particularly susceptible to tampering, as it is virtually unauditible after the occurrence. Also, a 2002 Civil Grand Jury report found the City's count lacking in consistent, scientific methodology. DHS's report on the 2005 count notes that the 2002 street count numbers were widely divergent from the numbers observed in 2000 and 2001. The lack of information about the quality of the 2005 and earlier counts undermines confidence in the results. However, as noted, many of the volunteer enumerators in 2005 were associated with community-based organizations serving the homeless, so were familiar with the population and presumably committed to a thorough count. In addition, many commented to DHS on the quality of the 2005 count's implementation. To improve confidence in future counts, recommendations are provided below on how to improve implementation and verify results.

The infrequency of the count undermines confidence in the results and comparability as the number and composition of the homeless population changes night-to-night. More frequent counts would illuminate consistent patterns in the data.

Verifying the Count - Comparing DHS Homeless Count Data with that from Other Sources

As noted above, one particular shortcoming of the current and past methodologies is the absence of broad quality control and verification mechanisms. One informal mechanism to assess the accuracy of the count, particularly in light of the 2005 finding that the overall homeless population has declined, is to determine whether this observation is consistent with data from other sources, such as organizations that interact with the population. As noted, the City is in the process of developing the capacity for service-based counts, which would be a useful comparison.

Discussions with a number of San Francisco nonprofit organizations that serve the homeless (Glide Memorial Church, St. Anthony Foundation, Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation, and others) reveal that they have experienced an increase in the demand for their services over the past few years. For example, the St. Anthony Foundation reported that the demand for its dining room meals has increased by 20% over the past two years. The increased demand for these agencies' services could, however, be explained by a number of factors apart from an increase in the homeless population, such as more successful outreach or the reduction in services of other providers. DHS reports that one prominent program it funds, the Glide Memorial Church meals program, actually served fewer meals in FY 2004-05 than it did in FY 2003-04. DHS also notes that some of these agencies provide services to the non-homeless that are co-mingled with those for the homeless, so it might be difficult to determine whether an overall increase in demand indicates an increase in demand by the homeless alone.

¹⁷ "Green and Red Apples", *San Francisco Bay View*

The San Francisco Police Department issued over 1,100 citations in 2004 for violations of Park Code section 3.12¹⁸ prohibiting camping. This is dramatic in comparison with just 436 citations issued in 2003 and 273 in 2002¹⁹. However, it is not clear whether such a trend indicates increased levels of camping in public parks by homeless individuals (and an increase in the unsheltered population) or simply shifting geography of the homeless population or increasing vigor citing individuals for this offense.

Unfortunately, because San Francisco has historically been considered an outlier in terms of the size of its homeless population, it is unknown to what degree national rates of homelessness can be applied to San Francisco to assess the reasonableness of the recent local count results. For example, the 2000 Urban Institute estimates of 450,000 to 850,000 people daily experiencing homelessness nationally equate to percentages of 0.16% and 0.30% (based on a 2000 total population of 281,000,000, US Census). Applying the same percentages to a recent San Francisco population estimate of approximately 750,000 results in homelessness estimates of 1,200 and 2,265, considerably smaller than the count's actual result of 6,248.

Descriptive Information

Many jurisdictions couple their counts with survey efforts. San Francisco enumerators do not survey, but do record a small set of information during their point-in-time counts based on observation, including gender, ethnicity, family status, age, whether the person is in an encampment or car, location sited, and whether the person has a shopping cart or pet. To collect additional basic descriptive information on the homeless population, the City relies on separate efforts, including Project Homeless Connect, a service and referral program that has a survey component. This includes information on a homeless person's number of minor children, income sources, public benefits, and health status (including mental health and substance abuse), among others. In addition, homeless outreach teams of DPH also collect information on the characteristics of the clients they interact with on the street. Although this information can assist service planning, the fact that these surveys are not coupled with a census results in ambiguity about the representativeness of the respondents relative to the entire population.

CONCLUSION

The methodology that DHS currently follows to count the City's homeless population is based on practices recommended by HUD. The methodology has well known shortcomings, including reliance on enumerator judgement in identifying homeless people, exclusion of abandoned buildings, and selective coverage of "known locations" rather than complete coverage of the jurisdiction. Despite this, the methodology is basically sound.

¹⁸ San Francisco Park Code Section 3.12. "No person shall construct or maintain any building, structure, tent or any other thing in any park that may be used for housing accommodations or camping, except by permission from the Recreation and Park Department or Commission." (Added by Ord. 603-81, App. 12/18/81)

¹⁹ Coalition on Homelessness, San Francisco, based on information obtained through a California Public Records Act request.

DHS faces many challenges in the implementation of the count, and does not currently have sufficient systems in place to estimate the number of homeless people missed by the count. As such, its accuracy can be called into question. The possibility of inconsistent implementation and the methodological changes from 2002 to 2005 raise additional questions about the count-to-count comparability of the results. However, the count of the sheltered population is straightforward, so in the absence of evidence to the contrary, can reasonably be assumed to be accurate and consistent. It is difficult to assess the accuracy of the street count without additional information, particularly regarding the reliability of identifying the homeless visually, the thoroughness of the known locations, and the exclusion of abandoned buildings. The risk of not counting individuals in the unsheltered population that reside in locations difficult for enumerators to access can be addressed in future counts by easy-to-implement means of estimating this number, described further below.

Increasing the frequency of the count would help illuminate consistent patterns in the data, but require the allocation of additional resources to DHS²⁰. Also, expanding the count to include all elements of the population covered in the City's official definition, opposed to HUD's, would enable broader consideration of the homelessness problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Office of the Legislative Analyst recommends that the Board of Supervisors or DHS consider the following:

- Heighten the role of an independent advisory body, such as the Human Services Commission, in the count methodology and implementation.
- Install measures to estimate the number of people missed by the count. Possible approaches include the use of confederates in observable locations who subsequently report whether they encountered enumerators, and interviews with unsheltered homeless following the count to determine how many stayed in hidden locations that would not have been covered by the enumerators, such as abandoned buildings.
- Increase the frequency of the counts and conduct counts during fair weather months. Consider implementing counts in designated areas by outreach teams, which although serving a different purpose than citywide counts, have proven useful in other cities for measuring progress in specified areas.
- Establish a reliable and comprehensive method of counting the homeless in public parks.

²⁰ A private contractor, Applied Survey Systems, conducted a count, survey, and needs assessment in 2004 for Santa Clara County at a cost of \$167,000.

- Verify that the benefits outweigh the costs of excluding abandoned buildings in the public places enumeration. Although it is generally accepted that excluding abandoned buildings is a reasonable tradeoff for safety's sake, one study conducted in Houston found 60% of the total homeless population dwelling in abandoned buildings²¹.
- Develop service-based counts, which would require directing DPH to develop a registry of homeless clients across its numerous data systems. Expand HMIS to include street outreach.
- Implement an unduplicated period prevalence count, which will likely reveal a much more substantial homeless population. For example, the 2005 point-in-time count identified 1,754 shelter occupants, whereas DHS reported 9,005 unduplicated individuals using shelters in 2004.
- Attach a survey element, which could be done on a sample basis, to the point-in-time count. Although the survey components of Project Homeless Connect and the homeless outreach teams gather some information, its representativeness cannot be established and therefore is of limited value.
- Enlist the participation of the homeless or formerly homeless in planning, enumeration, or survey efforts.
- Allow enumerators to interact with observed individuals to conduct screening for housing status. In the absence of interaction between the enumerators and those observed, pretest the guidance given to enumerators for visually identifying the homeless.
- Assess the costs, benefits, and feasibility of expanding the count, which is currently geared to the HUD definition, to include all individuals defined by the City as homeless (see Appendix A). Notably, the current count does not include families that are doubled up or that reside in private SROs.
- Using HMIS, CHANGES, and street count resources, provide a more comprehensive profile of the City's sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations, including the characteristics measured for HUD (such as serious mental illness, chronic substance abuse, veteran status, persons with HIV/AIDS, victims of domestic violence, unaccompanied youth, and families with children), the number of families on shelter waiting lists, and period prevalence counts.
- Stabilize methodology to ensure consistency count-to-count.

²¹ "Practical Methods for Counting the Homeless: A Manual for State and Local Jurisdictions," The Urban Institute, 1996

Appendix A – City and County of San Francisco Definition of Homelessness

Note: Poverty is the major cause of homelessness. In order to reach a definition of homelessness, this root cause must be addressed. These definitions are not meant to supersede or replace definitions of homelessness and chronic homelessness that have been set forth by funding sources, contractual agreements, or existing data collection systems.

HOMELESSNESS ¹	
The term "homeless" includes individuals or families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and who have a primary nighttime residence in one or more of the following categories:	
Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anyone staying in a mission or homeless or domestic violence shelter, i.e., a supervised public or private facility that provides temporary living accommodations. ▪ Anyone displaced from housing due to a disaster situation.
Street	Anyone staying outdoors; for example, street, sidewalk, doorway, park, freeway underpass.
Vehicle	Anyone staying in a car, van, bus, truck, RV, or similar vehicle.
Make-Shift	Anyone staying in an enclosure or structure that is not authorized or fit for human habitation by building or housing codes, including abandoned buildings ("squats") or substandard apartments and dwellings.
Doubled-Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anyone staying with friends and/or extended family members (excluding parents and children), because they are otherwise unable to obtain housing, or ▪ Any family with children staying in a Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotel room – whether or not they have tenancy rights, or ▪ Anyone staying in temporary housing for less than 6 months, and the accommodations provided the person are substandard or inadequate, for example, garage, small room, overly crowded space.
Transitional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anyone staying in a Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotel room <u>without</u> tenancy rights, or ▪ Anyone formerly homeless (formerly in one of the above categories) who is now incarcerated, hospitalized, or living in a treatment program, half-way house, transitional housing or ▪ Anyone formerly homeless (formerly in one of the above categories) who has obtained supportive housing or permanent housing for less than 30 days. While we recognize that the issues that brought people to homelessness may take a lifetime to overcome, we believe that at a minimum, 90 days of wrap-around aftercare services should be provided for individuals exiting homelessness into permanent housing.

CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS ²
An individual or family who has been continuously homeless for at least one year, or has been homeless on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years.

¹ Homeless definition adopted by Board of Supervisors 12-17-01, Approved by Mayor Willie L. Brown 12-28-01, File No. 012191, Gloria L. Young, Clerk of the Board

² Chronically Homeless definition adopted by DPH 01-11-05, Approved by Homeless Cluster Group of 10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness 01-26-05

Appendix B - San Francisco Homeless Count 2005 Final Report

**San Francisco Homeless Count 2005
Final Report**

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San Francisco Department of Human Services

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The following persons/agencies assisted DHS by providing information on public spaces frequented by homeless persons in preparation for the street count: San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team, City-wide Clinic Consortium, staff of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and the San Francisco Police Department.

Ben Amyes of the San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team conducted pre-tests of public spaces and mapped counting routes during the weeks leading up to the street count.

Brian Pangan of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department coordinated the count of homeless persons living in Golden Gate Park in the early morning hours of January 26, 2005.

Lt. David Lazar of the San Francisco Police Department coordinated safety training and security for volunteers during the street count.

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Introduction

San Francisco's homeless count, conducted on January 25, 2005, consisted of a point-in-time census of the street population and homeless persons residing in shelters, resource centers, transitional housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment beds, San Francisco General Hospital and the County Jail.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires all jurisdictions that receive McKinney-Vento Act Continuum of Care funding to submit detailed information on their homeless populations, both sheltered and unsheltered, as part of annual funding applications. Beginning in 2005, HUD will require the count to be conducted bi-annually at a minimum. The 2004 funding application specified that jurisdictions were to conduct their 2005 count in the final week of January 2005.

For sheltered homeless people, Continuums of Care (CoCs) are instructed to count all adults, children, and unaccompanied youth residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing, including domestic violence shelters, residential programs for runaway/homeless youth, and any hotel/motel/apartment voucher arrangements paid by a public/private agency because the person is homeless. For unsheltered homeless people, CoCs are instructed to count all adults, children and unaccompanied youth sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, which include:

Streets, alleys, parks, parking ramps, parts of the highway system, transportation depots and other parts of transportation systems (e.g. subway tunnels, railroad cars), all-night commercial establishments (e.g. movie theaters, laundromats, restaurants), abandoned buildings, building roofs or stairwells, chicken coops and other farm outbuildings, caves, campgrounds, vehicles and other similar places. (2004 CoC application)

While HUD does not require reporting on the number of homeless persons residing in hospitals, jails, and treatment facilities, San Francisco opted to include these homeless persons in its count for the purpose of more accurately capturing the full current extent of homelessness in San Francisco.

Street Count

Methodology

In designing its street count methodology, San Francisco drew upon best practices as detailed in a recent HUD publication, *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*.¹

San Francisco selected a "simple street count" methodology (directly observed count of persons in non-shelter, non-service locations) using the "public places method". The need to cover a large area with a limited number of volunteers prevented surveying or interviewing the persons counted. An unrelated effort, Project Homeless Connect, provides an opportunity for in-depth data collection on the service needs and housing histories of unsheltered homeless persons.

Public places counts are conducted at "known locations" (those areas where homeless people are reported to congregate) and/or strive for "complete coverage" (where every part of a

¹Abt Associates. October 2004. *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

specified geography, such as an entire downtown area, is covered). San Francisco combined these two approaches by providing complete coverage in more densely populated and commercial areas, and selected coverage focusing on known locations or “hotspots” in more sparsely populated and residential areas (see “Areas Covered” below).

“Communities often pair the complete coverage of one geographic location with a count of homeless people at known locations in outlying areas. For example, a CoC may send enumerators up and down every street in a downtown area, and send groups to outlying parts of the city where homeless people are known to live and sleep.” (Abt Associates 2004)

Timing of Count

San Francisco’s street count was conducted from 8 p.m. until 12 a.m. on the night of Tuesday, January 25, 2005. As mentioned above, HUD recommended that all jurisdictions conduct their homeless counts during the final week of January 2005.

HUD prescribed that the count be conducted:

- *at night*, when those who utilize shelters are in for the night, to minimize the risk of double counting the population that utilizes shelters.
- *during winter* because winter has historically been a time of peak shelter use across the nation. The shelter census and street counts are conducted simultaneously, so that both the sheltered and unsheltered population are captured.
- *on a weeknight* to minimize the disruption caused by high pedestrian traffic or special events that attract visitors.
- *during the final week of the month* so that those who use public benefits or limited income to rent transient housing for part of the month will not be missed. (Abt Associates 2004)

Volunteer Recruitment and Training

To conduct the street count, the Human Services Agency (HSA) recruited approximately 250 volunteers. A “Save the Date” announcement was e-mailed and mailed to more than 1,500 non-profit homeless service provider agency and government agency employees approximately one month prior to the count, with potential volunteers asked to RSVP. Volunteers included City employees, homeless service provider staff, and members of the general public.

On the night of the count, volunteers were provided training on whom and how to count to ensure a uniform methodology. A handout entitled “Homeless Count 2005 Volunteer Instructions” was provided to each volunteer (see Attachment 1). In addition to detailed instructions on how to count, the handout provided a sample tally sheet and safety information and contact phone numbers for assistance during the count.

Logistics

Teams of 2-3 volunteers covered routes of approximately six to thirty blocks each, with routes in commercial and well-populated routes covered on foot and more sparsely populated and residential areas covered by car. Volunteers either self-selected as teams or were paired based on experience (newer volunteers paired with those who had volunteered before). Each team was provided a map of its route and tally sheets to record basic demographic information and the location of each person counted (intersection or street address). See tally sheet, Attachment 2. In addition, at least one person on each team had a cell phone available for their use during the count.

Who was counted

Volunteers were instructed how to assess whether a person encountered was homeless. The following factors, alone and in combination, were to be considered:

- Walking or standing “with no purpose” (loitering)
- Panhandling (with or without cup/sign)
- Carrying bags, backpacks, garbage bags, suitcases, blankets, and/or bedrolls
- With shopping cart containing personal belongings
- Recycling, especially large numbers of items
- Sleeping on the street
- Disheveled
- Inebriated/passed out on sidewalk

Special instructions were provided for those living in vehicles, tents, and other makeshift dwellings. For safety reasons, volunteers were told not to enter abandoned buildings – many such buildings in San Francisco are structurally unsound and/or are sites of illegal activity. Also for safety reasons, volunteers were advised not to enter parks, but instead to count persons that are observable from the sidewalk (a census of persons sleeping in Golden Gate Park was conducted the following morning by park staff and is included in the final street count numbers). Flashlights were provided to volunteers to allow them to count homeless individuals in dimly or unlit areas, such as parks, from afar.

Areas covered

In preparation for the count, DHS staff collected information regarding areas where homeless persons regularly congregate. Information on known encampments and “hot spots” was provided by the Police Department, homeless outreach teams, currently and formerly homeless persons, staff of members Board of Supervisors and members of the general public (as documented by agency staff). In addition, DHS “pre-tested” locations throughout the City during evening hours in the weeks preceding the count.

“Pre-screening or pre-testing the selected study areas will produce better enumeration results. Pre-screening will alert organizers to any problems or issues in each study area, including hidden locations that enumerators might overlook and differing patterns of use between the day or night.”
(Abt Associates 2004)

Based on the information gathered from the above described sources and collected during pre-testing, DHS devised more than 100 counting routes spanning all eleven supervisorial districts. Complete or near-complete coverage was provided in densely populated and/or commercial districts with higher known concentrations of homeless persons (Districts 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10), while more residential districts with a lower homeless presence received selective coverage that focused on identified areas where homeless tend to congregate (Districts 1, 2, 4, 7, and 11). Volunteer maps were annotated with information regarding encampments and hotspots so that they would be sure to count persons at these locations.

Methodology Shortcomings

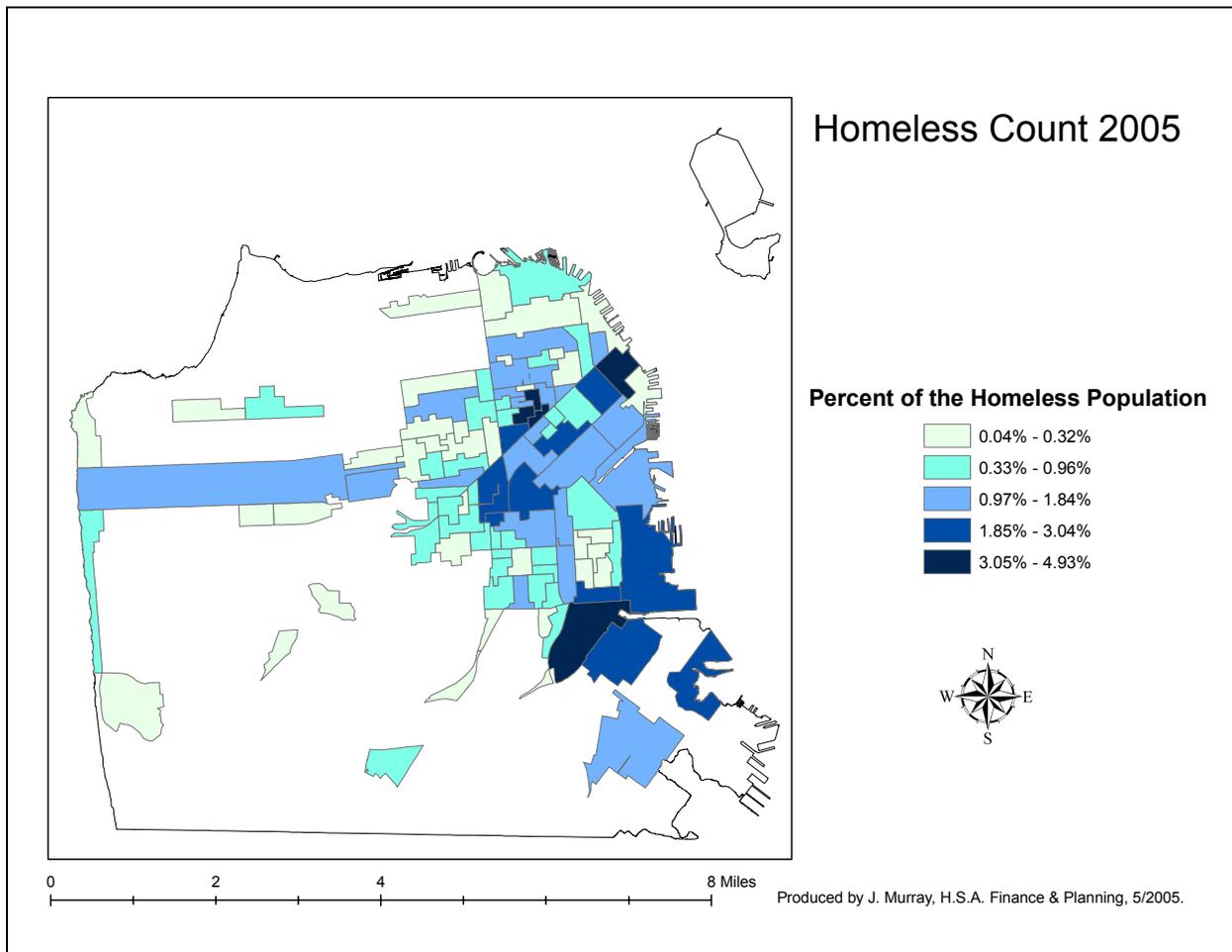
Point-in-time counts are “snap shots” of the homeless population and as such may or may not be representative of the homeless population over time. Other concerns regarding point-in-time counts and the methodology chosen include:

- Volunteers may miss homeless persons if they are hidden or obscured (especially in inclement weather);
- The exclusion of parks and abandoned buildings due to concerns about volunteer safety may result in an undercount;
- A “known locations” or hotspots approach risks missing homeless persons in other, less frequented locations;
- Subjective assessments regarding who is homeless assure some margin of error in the final count (some assessed as homeless may be housed, while some who are in fact homeless may not appear to be).

Despite these shortcomings, the count does provide the City with information regarding the trend of the number of homeless over time. Because this and previous years’ counts were conducted in the same manner and around the same time of the year, the current results provide a sound basis for comparison and enable us to conclude with confidence that the number of homeless in San Francisco has declined over the past two years.

Street Count Results

Volunteers counted an unduplicated total of **2,497** persons on the street. The adjusted total (see footnote number 3 on the following page) was **2,655**. District and demographic breakdowns of the unsheltered persons counted follow. The following map details the concentration of homeless people counted across the routes.



Street Population By District: 2000-2005

The results of the street count conducted on January 25, 2005 (shaded area) are presented below alongside results from previous counts for purposes of comparison.

District	4/27/00 ²	10/25/00	10/25/01	10/29/02	1/25/05	Adjusted 2005 ³
1 (including Golden Gate Park)	N/A	3	69	127	75	76
2	N/A	46	92	96	22	79
3	N/A	80	280	444	166	167
4	N/A	9	161	331	34	97
5	N/A	136	233	569	109	110
6	N/A	1,004	1,158	1,071	1,232	1,233
7	N/A	9	34	266	10	25
8	N/A	113	108	374	158	159
9	N/A	205	238	249	191	192
10	N/A	412	733	811	483	484
11	N/A	9	50	197	17	34
Unsure		7				
TOTAL	1,805	2,033	3,156	4,535	2,497	2,655

2005 Street Population By Gender, Race, Family Status and Age

Gender				Race/Ethnicity						Family Status			Age		
F	M	T	U	A	B	L	O	U	W	F	S	U	A	U	Y
14.9%	65.3%	.5%	19.3%	1.4%	36.4%	6.8%	.6%	23.3%	31.5%	1.7%	83.9%	14.5%	80.3%	18.9%	.8%
F=Female M=Male T=Transgendered U=Unsure				A=Asian B=Black L=Latino O=Other U=Unknown W=White						F=Family S=Single U=Unknown			A=Adult (18+) U=Unknown Y=Youth (<18)		

Shelters and Transitional Housing

A total of 1,754 unduplicated persons were recorded as utilizing emergency shelters and a total of 768 were recorded as utilizing transitional housing on the night of January 25, 2005. Information on the shelter population for the night of January 25, 2005 was collected from the City's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), CHANGES, as well as an independent survey conducted by HomeBase under contract with DHS. Information on residents of transitional housing during the night of January 25, 2005 was collected as part of the independent survey conducted by HomeBase under contract with DHS.

² The report for the count conducted on April 27, 2000 did not include a breakdown by district.

³ Because the volunteer street count provided only partial coverage in some districts as described above, the final count includes an adjustment factor for those districts (see italics). The adjustment factor is based on the relative rates of homelessness in the 11 districts as recorded in the three counts conducted in 2000 and 2001 (the 2002 count was not included in this calculation because the numbers recorded were widely divergent with the numbers observed in 2000, 2001, and 2005, which were more consistent). The overall adjustment was +6.3% (from 2,497 to 2,655).

Resource Centers

A total of 192 persons were counted as being in Resource Centers on the night of the homeless count. Information on the population counted in 24 hour resource centers is based on the number of persons counted in 24 hour resource centers at 12:00 AM on the night of the homeless count as reported to DHS by Coordinated Referral, a program of CATS.

Treatment Facilities

A total of 373 persons were recorded as utilizing treatment beds on the night of the homeless count. Information on the number of homeless persons in residential treatment was provided by the Department of Public Health and based on those who self-declared as homeless upon intake. Treatment facilities included inpatient psychiatric services, Acute Diversion Units, medically-assisted and social model detox facilities, and residential drug treatment facilities.

SF General

A total of 91 homeless persons were recorded as utilizing hospital inpatient services on the night of the homeless count. Information on the number of homeless persons inpatient at General on the night of the Count was provided by the Medical Discharge Social Work unit of General Hospital and based on those that self-declared as homeless upon admission to the Hospital.

Jail

A total of 415 homeless persons were incarcerated in the San Francisco County Jail system on the night of the count. Information on the number of persons in jail was provided by Jail Health Services and based on those that self-declared as homeless upon incarceration.

Summary: 2005 Homeless Count

Combining all of the categories noted above, a total of **6,248** individuals were identified as homeless in the 2005 count. The results of the homeless count conducted on January 25, 2005 (shaded area) appear in the table below. The 2002 count results also appear in the table for purposes of comparison.

	Single Adults	Persons In Families	Total 2005	2002	% Change
Street	2,613	42	2,655	4,535	- 41%
Emergency Shelter	1,434	320	1,754	2,308	- 8% ⁴
Transitional Housing and Treatment	897	244	1,141	1,365	- 16%
Resource Centers	192	0	192	331	- 42%
Jail	415	0	415	Not reported	N/A
SF General Hospital	91	0	91	101	- 10%
Total	5,642	606	6,248	8,640	- 28%

⁴2002 Shelter numbers included 395 persons on the Connecting Point wait list, which includes families living doubled up with family/friends. These numbers were not included in the 2005 count. The percent change includes the decline in numbers of persons utilizing emergency shelter only.

ATTACHMENT 1: VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS

HOMELESS COUNT 2005 VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS

Welcome and thank you for volunteering for Homeless Count 2005. The following instructions are provided for your use during the Count.

TEAMS

Teams must contain at least two persons, and at least one of the two people must be carrying a cell phone. If you are volunteering alone and have not yet been matched up with a partner or team, we will find a partner for you. Generally, one team member takes responsibility for completing the tally sheet as the count proceeds, while the other(s) navigate the route and look for persons to count.

YOUR ROUTE

Your team will be provided a route map. Each team is responsible for all of the square blocks within the outlined area (not only the periphery). When you get to the outer boundary of your map, cover that side of the street only (the side closest to the rest of your route). Do not cross the street.

Some routes are notated with comments regarding known “hot spots” or encampments where homeless people are known to congregate. This information is provided so that you 1) will pay special attention to these areas and 2) so that you can exercise appropriate caution. **Do not limit your count to these places.**

WHOM TO COUNT

Counting requires subjective judgments as to who is homeless. The following factors, alone and in combination, should be considered when deciding when to count an individual.

- Walking or standing “with no purpose” (loitering)
- Panhandling (with or without cup/sign)
- Carrying bags/backpacks/garbage bags/suitcases/blankets/bedrolls
- With shopping cart containing personal belongings
- Recycling, especially large numbers of items
- Sleeping on the street
- Vehicles with windows covered (see below)
- Tents (see below)

- Makeshift lean-tos (see below)
- Boxes (see below)
- Disheveled
- Inebriated/passed out on sidewalk

DO NOT (AUTOMATICALLY) COUNT

- People engaged in illegal activities (drug activity, prostitution)
- People leaving bars/other establishments
- People waiting for busses

HOW TO COUNT

CARS (VEHICULARLY HOUSED)

On some routes, most of the homeless persons counted will be living in cars, vans, trailers and campers. Use your judgment as to whether to count these bearing in mind the following criteria:

- The vehicle's windows are covered
- The vehicle is very cramped/cluttered
- The vehicle is occupied but obviously not operational
- The camper/trailer is not attached to a cab
- The camper/trailer is parked in a desolate area and/or near an encampment

Do not approach the vehicle. Assume two persons per vehicle. Mark "unsure" for gender, race/ethnicity, single/family, and age.

TENTS, OTHER STRUCTURES

As with vehicles, do not approach. Assume two persons per structure. Mark "unsure" for gender, race/ethnicity, single/family, and age.

COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS

If there is a commercial establishment on your route likely to attract homeless people (e.g. fast food restaurants, transportation depots), enter and count as safety allows.

PARKS

Do not enter parks, even if they are on your route map.

ALLEYS

Do not enter "dead end" alleys on foot or in cars. Observe as much as possible from a safe distance and make reasonable assumptions.

DRIVING ROUTES

- If you are responsible for a driving route, you may, as time and safety precautions permit, decide to park your vehicle and walk part(s) of the

route (e.g. commercial districts) to get a more accurate count. Do NOT exit your car in desolate area. Use discretion in deciding whether to get out of your car.

- If an on-ramp is part of your route (driving routes only), count from the car at the base of the on-ramp. Do not get on the freeway.

TALLYING YOUR COUNT

You will be provided tally sheets for your route. Please fill out one line of the tally sheet for each person observed. Most of the information is check boxes or yes/no. Under location, please provide an intersection or street address where the person was observed. Please see the attached sample.

SAFETY/EMERGENCIES

Do not engage anyone during the course of the count.

If your personal safety seems in jeopardy at any time, call Lt. Lazar at 519-1367. Volunteers in the Tenderloin should call 713-0847.

If someone on the street appears to need medical attention, call the dispatch center contact (760-1390), who will then contact paramedics.

If you are asked about your activities, you should reply “We’re counting homeless persons so we can get more funding for our City for services,” and continue on your way.

For any other issues that come up as you count, call the dispatch center at (415) 725-1354.

ATTACHMENT 2: TALLY SHEET

San Francisco Homeless Count 1/25/05																						
										District						Route Number						
Directions: Fill in one line per person counted.																						
	Gender				Race/Ethnicity					Single or Family			Age			Encampment? ²	Car? ³	Shopping Cart?	Pets?	Location: Intersection or Street Address		
	M	F	T	U	B	W	L	A	O	U	Single Adult	Person in Family	U	Youth ¹	Adult						U	
1																	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H		
2																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
3																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
4																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
5																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
6																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
7																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
8																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
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23																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
24																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	
25																		Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	Y / H	

M=Male	B=Black	O=Other	¹ Youth = under 18 years of age ² Encampments are communities of five or more homeless persons in a group of tents or other living structures. Circle Y(es) or N(o). ³ Car: Circle Y(es) or N(o). Count two persons for each car being used as a dwelling (one line each).
F=Female	W=White	U=Unsure	
T=Transgender	L=Latino		
U=Unsure	A=Asian		