

# **San Francisco 2007 Homeless Count**

**San Francisco Human Services Agency  
March 2007**

**Prepared by**

**HSA and  
Kerry Abbott and Shelagh Little, Abbott Little Consulting**

# San Francisco 2007 Homeless Count

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	3
I. Executive Summary .....	6
II. Introduction.....	7
III. Planning Process .....	8
IV. Methodology.....	8
<i>Unsheltered Count</i> .....	9
<i>Logistics of Counting</i> .....	11
<i>Sheltered Count</i> .....	12
<i>Survey</i> .....	13
<i>Changes to the Methodology Since 2005</i> .....	14
V. Data Results.....	16
<i>Unsheltered Count</i> .....	16
<i>Sheltered Count</i> .....	22
<i>Survey Results</i> .....	23
VI. Limitations .....	26
<i>Unsheltered Count Limitations</i> .....	26
<i>Facilities Count Limitations</i> .....	27
<i>Survey Limitations</i> .....	27
VII. Conclusions.....	27
Appendices.....	30

## Acknowledgements

The San Francisco 2007 Homeless Count planning team would like to thank the following individuals and agencies that contributed to the success of the count. The count is dependent upon the participation of partner agencies and volunteers from the initial planning phases, to the night of the count and after. Volunteers assisted with refining the methodology and instructions, with publicity, with coordinating the dispatch centers, with the actual counting, and with data entry.

The following organizations and agencies participated in planning efforts preceding the count, and provided feedback on proposed methodologies:

Arriba Juntos	Corporation for Supportive Housing
Bar Association of SF	Episcopal Community Services
Bernal Heights Neighborhood Corporation	Larkin Street Youth Services
CATS	Mission Neighborhood Resource Center
Children's Council of San Francisco	North Beach Citizens
Conard House	San Francisco Homeless Service Providers Network
Coalition on Homelessness	Toolworks
Community Housing Partnership	Walden House
Compass Community Services	Young Community Developers

The San Francisco Local Homeless Coordinating Board, the coordinating body for San Francisco's Continuum of Care, provided overall oversight of the 2007 Homeless Count planning. Its meetings served as a forum for stakeholder and community input.

Dariush Kayhan of SF Connect and Judith Klain of Project Homeless Connect assisted with volunteer recruitment for the count by publicizing the event through their website and e-mail list serves.

The following individuals represented their agencies in inter-agency planning efforts in the months preceding the count: Lieutenant David Lazar (San Francisco Police Department), Benjamin Amyes and Rajesh Parekh (Homeless Outreach Team), Lydia Zaverukha and Gloria Koch-Gonzalez (Recreation and Park Department), Edwin Lee (City Administrator), and David Nakanishi (Department of Public Health).

The following agencies mobilized volunteer participation in the unsheltered count among their staff members:

AACE TS-Daly City	Harm Reduction Coalition
African American Family Healing Center	Health At Home
AIDS Legal Referral Panel (ALRP)	Huckleberry Youth Programs
Arriba Juntos	Larkin Street Youth Services
Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center	Mayor's Office of Communities of Opportunity
Cecil Williams Community Housing Project	Mission Neighborhood Resource Center
Chief Medical Examiner's Office	Office of the Mayor
Community Housing Partnership	Raphael House
Conard House	Safety Network
Conservator's Office	San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium
Corporation for Supportive Housing	San Francisco Redevelopment Agency
Division for Children, Youth, and Their Families	San Francisco's College Access Center
Department of Telecommunications and Information Services	SF Revival Ministry
Department of Public Health	St. Anthony Foundation
Department of Public Works	Saint Vincent DePaul
Episcopal Community Services	Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation
Episcopal Community Services	UCSF Global Health Sciences
Faithful Fools Street Ministry	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Human Services Agency	Walden House

The following individuals provided security training and assistance on the night of the count: Neils Tagerlini (San Francisco Fire Department), and Victor Silveira, Art Howard, Will Escobar, John Conway, Chris Schaffer and William Conley (San Francisco Police Department). Sergeant Laura Clare of the California Highway Patrol coordinated counting on highway underpasses and on-ramps.

The following City staff provided assistance in counting homeless persons in selected city parks and other areas:

- San Francisco Police Department: Officers Gary Moriyama, George Ludeke, Gary Trubin, Kirk Leong, Ernest Trapsi, Gearld Schimdt, Don Kallsen, Laxman Dharmani, Luis Tillan, Darren Wong, Benny Lew, Robert Morse, Sanjay Shastri, Robert Cebalo, Anthony Pedroza, Susan Lavin, Priscilla Espinoza, Michael Diskin, William Whitfield, Bobby Cheung, Robert Ramos, Robert Wong, Gary Peachy, Timothy Davis, Ray Mahvi, Herbert Najarro, and Brian Barba.
- Recreation and Park Department: Carl Baylock, Timothy Brunmeier, Christopher Campbell, Maggie Cleveland, Adrian Field, Joseph Figone, Gloria Koch-Gonzalez, Darlene Lockwood, Daniel Lombardo, James Lunney, James McCormick, Arthur Motaquin, Robert Nastor, Brian O'Brien, Teresa O'Brien, Brian Pangan, Roy Perez, Nicholas Repetto, Charles Sheehy, Robert Sheets, Dennis Tucker, Daron Tyson, Robert Watkins, Lisa Wilder, and Lydia Zaverukha.
- Homeless Outreach Team members: Jason Albertson, Eric Bayer, William Brown, Angi David, Linda Duncan, Isaac Foster, John Flentoil, Tito Fuentes, Ibrahim Ghannam, Brenda Mesken, Raj Pahekh, Rann Parker, Denise Serres, Pascual Yaxon Saloj.

The dispatch centers were operated by: Centro Latino (Gloria Bonilla, Executive Director); Young Community Developers (Ellouise Patton, Executive Director); St. Ignatius (Mr. Michael Shaughnessy, Teacher/Campus Minister); San Francisco Department of Public Health/101 Grove Street (Willie Crawford, General Services Manager).

Whole Foods and a private donor provided refreshments for the volunteers.

Pamela Tebo, Human Services Agency, assisted with media coordination on the night of the count.

The following staff at the Human Services Agency assisted by inputting data collected during the unsheltered count: Millie Aranda, Shane Balanon, Kim DaRosa, Michaela Greeley, Jane Johnson, Mikyung Kim, Uriah Russel, Sajid Shaikh, and Vickie Tamondong.

The following agencies provided data for the sheltered portion of the count:

<u>Shelters</u>	<u>Transitional Housing Programs</u>	<u>Hospitals</u>
St Joseph's Family Shelter	A Woman's Place	St. Luke's
Central City Hospitality House	Clara House	St. Mary's
A Woman's Place	Washburn Hotel	St. Francis
Compass Family Center	Friendship House of Am. Indians	VA Hospital
Ella Hill Hutch	Hamilton Transitional Housing	UCSF
The Sanctuary	Program	General Hospital
Next Door	Larkin St. Avenues to Independence	
Hamilton Family Emergency	Castro Youth Housing Initiative	<u>Treatment Programs</u>
Shelter	The LOAFT (Larkin)	Acceptance Place (SA)
Hamilton Family Residences	LEASE (Larkin)	Joe Healy Detox (SA)
Huckleberry House	Ashbury House (Progress	Ferguson Place (SA)
Dolores Street	Foundation)	Baker St. House (MH)
La Casa de Las Madres	Harbor House	Grove St. (MH)
Lark Inn for Youth	Father Alfred Center	Joe Ruffin Place (MH)
Diamond Youth Shelter	Marian Residence for Women	Robertson Place (MH)
Providence	Brennan House	San Jose Place (MH)
Raphael House	Trans. Living for Chronic Vets	Langley Porter (Psych. Inpatient)
Marian Residence for Women	Trans. Living for homeless Vets	St. Francis (Psych. Inpatient)
MSC South	Jelani House	SFGH (Psych. Inpatient)
Rosalie House	Harbor Light	CPMC (Psych. Inpatient)
Larkin After Care	Richmond Hills	SFGH ED Case Mangmt.
150 Otis St.	Walden House Programs	(Stabilization rms.)
Bethel AME (Winter)		Jelani House Treatment
Interfaith	<u>Jail</u>	
Larkin Assisted Care	SF County Jail	

Resource Centers

39 Fell

150 Otis St.

United Council of Human Services

Surveys were administered at the following social service agencies: St. Anthony's Dining Hall, Bayview Resource Center, Mission Neighborhood Health Center, Larkin Street Drop In Center, and North Beach Citizens Drop In Center.

The Planning Unit of the Human Services Agency provided assistance to the team in numerous ways throughout the process including design and production of maps for the unsheltered count, advice regarding methodology, coordination of data entry, presentation, and editing and proofreading of this report.

The planning team comprised Kerry Abbott, Benjamin Amyes, Ellen Galatti, Daryl Higashi, Shelagh Little, and Alison Schlageter.

This report was compiled by Kerry Abbott and Shelagh Little, Abbott Little Consulting, and by Alison Schlageter, Liaison to the Local Homeless Coordinating Board.

## I. Executive Summary

The San Francisco 2007 Homeless Count was a community-wide effort that took place on the night of January 31, 2007. The count provides information about San Francisco's homeless population, which is critical to future San Francisco City and County planning of programs and services for those who experience homelessness. In addition, it is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). All jurisdictions that receive Federal funding through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grant are required to do a point-in-time homeless count during the last week in January every two years. The purpose of this report is to convey the results of the count, to provide supporting information about the methodology used and its limitations, and to offer analysis of the results.

This year's count incorporated an unprecedented number of volunteers and an expanded methodology that made it our most comprehensive and accurate count to date. More than 500 volunteers covered every area of the City to capture all individuals living on the streets on the night of the count. Through coordination with other City departments, the count included the homeless living in City parks and on highway on-ramps and underpasses. Those who self-identify as homeless and living in a variety of facilities were also counted, beyond those required by HUD and beyond what was included in the 2005 count. Finally, a survey of homeless individuals in service sites was also conducted to gather information about this population's demographics and history of homelessness. In total, at least 374 persons included in this year's unsheltered and sheltered count would not have been counted using the methodology employed in 2005 (the increase is due to counting additional hospitals, parks and highway underpasses).

The chart below provides the total number of homeless individuals counted on January 31, 2007 and compares the results with those from the 2005 and 2002 counts. Superficially, the juxtaposition of the 2005 and 2007 results leaves the impression that there has been little or no change in San Francisco's homeless population over the last two years. These numbers belie the changes to the homeless population over this time, however. In the past few years, San Francisco has applied more innovation and resources to ending homelessness than any time in its history. From 2004 to the end of January 2007, **2,907** homeless individuals were placed in permanent supportive housing with the help of several ambitious City initiatives. During this time span, another **1,864** homeless individuals left San Francisco to be reunited with friends or family members in other parts of the country through the City's Homeward Bound Program. In addition, **453** individuals on public assistance secured housing on their own. **In total, since 2004 through the end of January 2007, 5,224 individuals exited homelessness through various initiatives.** However, the fact that San Francisco remains a destination for homeless persons from other counties and states counterbalances the City's progress at reducing the number of homeless. In fact, **one-third of surveyed homeless individuals reported that they first became homeless outside of San Francisco.**

As the chart below indicates, there were 6,377 homeless counted this year, compared to 6,248 in 2005. This represents an increase of about 2%. As noted above, however, this increase is largely attributed to the expanded methodology and unprecedented volunteer effort, which allowed us to cover the entire geographic area of the City. In fact, a direct comparison of analogous routes used in the 2005 and 2007 unsheltered counts reveals a 7% decline in the unsheltered or "street" population. It is also important to note that the 2007

count demonstrates that the progress the City had made since late-2002 has been sustained as homelessness in 2007 is 26 percent lower overall than in 2002, and there are 38 percent fewer street homeless.

#### Homeless Count Results

	Single Adults 2007	Person in Families 2007	Family Status Unknown 2007	2007 Totals	2005 Totals	2002 Totals
Street	1,935	66	770	2,771	2,655	4,535
Shelter	1,175	322	0	1,497	1,754	2,308
Transitional Housing & Treatment Centers	1,076	190	0	1,266	1,141	1,365
Resource Centers and Stabilization	321	0	0	321	192	331
Jail	400	0	0	400	415	Not reported
Hospitals	122	0	0	122	91	101
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,029</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>6,377</b>	<b>6,248</b>	<b>8,640</b>

## II. Introduction

The San Francisco 2007 Homeless Count was a community-wide effort on the night of January 31, 2007 to collect a comprehensive count of the City's homeless population. The count was also part of a national effort: All jurisdictions that receive Federal funding through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grant are required to do a point-in-time homeless count during the last week in January every two years. Currently San Francisco receives \$18.8 million in Homeless Assistance Grant money. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the point-in-time count must capture all unsheltered homeless and sheltered homeless living in emergency shelters and transitional housing programs. The results are reported in the annual application to HUD to receive the Federal funding.

Over 500 community volunteers took to the streets in San Francisco on January 31<sup>st</sup> between 8 p.m. and midnight to count homeless individuals living outdoors. Simultaneously, homeless individuals residing in emergency shelters, drop-in centers, transitional housing, mental health facilities, treatment centers, the County jail, and city hospitals were counted by workers in those locations.

This year's count employed a more expansive methodology than used in previous years. The unsheltered count was expanded to all areas of the City, more facilities provided numbers than in previous counts, and this year a survey of homeless individuals at several social service providers was also included. The count provides an estimated size of the homeless population residing in San Francisco that can be used by the City and County to plan homeless programs and allocate resources to better serve the homeless population.

This report details the planning process that led up to the count, the methodology used, and the results and limitations. Finally, it provides some conclusions and context with which to

consider these findings, given the overall rubric of homeless services offered in San Francisco.

### **III. Planning Process**

In anticipation of the count, several City and community agencies collaborated to ensure a high volunteer turn-out and a consistent and agreed-upon methodology.

#### ***Community Involvement***

San Francisco has a large community of homeless service providers and advocates who have been instrumental in planning and implementing homeless counts in the past. Community representatives were invited to comment on the proposed methodology, the instructions for volunteers, and methods to locate hard-to-find populations. Representatives from more than sixty agencies were invited to participate. Feedback from the community meetings mostly centered on the desire for a comprehensive count. Count organizers incorporated much of the community feedback into the volunteer training and/or the methodology. The Local Homeless Coordinating Board (LHCB), the lead entity of San Francisco's Continuum of Care, was invited to comment on the methodology, and subsequently endorsed it.

In the weeks leading up to the count, flyers were produced for distribution to homeless individuals and families. These flyers were given to outreach agencies to distribute during the course of their work. The intent of the flyer was to inform those experiencing homelessness about the January 31<sup>st</sup> count.

#### ***Interagency Coordination***

Very early in the planning process, the planning team (staff from the Human Services Agency's Housing and Homeless Division, the Liaison to the Local Homeless Coordinating Board, and private consultants) sought collaboration and cooperation from the multiple government agencies that interact with homeless individuals and possess knowledge and expertise that would improve the quality of the count. In October 2006, count organizers called a meeting of representatives of the San Francisco Police Department, the Department of Public Health, the Recreation and Parks Department, the San Francisco Unified School District and the Department of Public Works. Count organizers requested cooperation and collaboration from these agencies in four key areas related to the unsheltered count: mobilization of volunteers among City employees, mapping of "hotspot" information, staff involvement in counting homeless individuals in City parks, and safety coordination on the night of the count. A series of more focused meetings to coordinate the park count and night of count logistics were convened in the following weeks and months. A final meeting of all agency representatives was called on January 10, 2007 to review and finalize all plans.

### **IV. Methodology**



San Francisco's 2007 count of its homeless population consisted of the following components:

1. *Unsheltered Count*: A count of unsheltered homeless persons living on the street and other places not fit for human habitation.
2. *Sheltered Count*: HUD requires that homeless individuals residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing be included in the Count. In addition, San Francisco counted homeless individuals temporarily living in jails, hospitals, and mental health and drug treatment facilities.
3. *Survey*: A survey of homeless individuals receiving services from several pre-designated service sites was conducted to provide additional information.

San Francisco's count was conducted from 8 p.m. until midnight on the night of Wednesday, January 31, 2007. As mentioned above, HUD requires that all jurisdictions conduct their homeless counts during the final week of January 2007. Homeless count data must be submitted to HUD with Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance funding applications, which are typically due in May or June of each year.

### ***Unsheltered Count***

For its unsheltered homeless count, San Francisco drew upon best practices as detailed in a recently revised HUD publication, *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*.<sup>1</sup>

San Francisco selected a "simple street count" methodology by which volunteers directly observe persons in non-shelter, non-service, public locations. In 2007, San Francisco opted for complete coverage in all areas of the City for its point-in-time count, supplemented by a survey conducted at service sites. This was a change from our 2005 methodology, when the focus was on complete coverage in densely populated and commercial areas, and selected coverage of "hotspots" in more sparsely populated and residential areas.

### ***Volunteer Recruitment and Training***

Approximately 500 volunteers participated in the unsheltered count. To recruit them, the Human Services Agency mailed and/or e-mailed a "Save the Date" announcement to more than 2,000 non-profit homeless service provider agency and government agency employees approximately three months prior to the count, and then again approximately six weeks prior to the count. Flyers were mailed to non-profit service provider and government agencies for posting. SF Connect, the umbrella organization for Project Homeless Connect, e-mailed its volunteer base and posted the announcement on its website. The Local Homeless Coordinating Board, the Continuum of Care oversight body for San Francisco, announced the count at all general meetings and subcommittee meetings for several months preceding the count and posted the announcement and supplemental materials on its website. A volunteer recruitment notice was posted on SFGate.com, the website of the San Francisco Chronicle. There was also a posting on the main page of the SFGOV website, the official municipal government website for San Francisco. Advertisements for volunteers were placed in the SF

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*. September 2006.

Weekly, a local free newspaper, and on Craigslist.org, a community bulletin board website. Finally, a press release describing the upcoming count and asking for volunteers was sent out to media outlets approximately two weeks before the count.

Volunteers served a number of functions in the unsheltered count, including counting homeless persons on the street in teams, signing in volunteers at the four dispatch centers, distributing instructions and equipment to counters, collecting data sheets from counters, and data entry of count data.

All volunteers were required to participate in a one-hour training on the night of the count, and given printed instructions detailing how to count (see Appendix A). Flashlights were provided to volunteers to allow them to count homeless individuals in unlit areas from afar. Walking volunteers were provided bright orange safety vests.

### *Dispatch*

Four areas were identified for the placement of dispatch centers on the night of the count. The dispatch centers were located in the Civic Center, Mission, Sunset, and Bayview Districts. Volunteers were then instructed to report to the centers they chose as most convenient. Routes were divided up and assigned at the dispatch center closest to or most central to the precincts covered.

### *Who Was Counted*

Volunteers were instructed how to determine whether to count an individual as 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, which may be structurally unsound and/or are sites of illegal activity.

### *Areas Covered*

The 2007 unsheltered count included **all areas** of the City without exception. Certain parks and highway on-ramps were deemed unsafe to be included in volunteer routes. To cover parks, the Department of Recreation and Parks (Rec/Park), the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD), and the Homeless Outreach Team, in collaboration with the Human

Services Agency, developed a plan for counting homeless individuals residing in the parks that would be accurate and safe for volunteers.

This group divided the City's parks into three categories, with a separate strategy for each.

Category 1 parks were those that were classified as too big and/or densely wooded to inspect safely and accurately in the dark on the night of the count. There were approximately 39 Category 1 parks, including Golden Gate Park. Individuals identified as homeless in Golden Gate Park were counted by teams consisting of one SFPD personnel, one Rec/Park personnel, and one HOT member on the morning of Thursday, February 1, 2007. Remaining Category 1 Parks were divided up per SFPD District. Each SFPD district had a team comprising one SFPD staff and one Rec/Park supervisor who was responsible for counting all Category 1 Parks in each district on the morning of Thursday, February 1, 2007.

Category 2 parks were those that were considered to be in dangerous locations or contain too many remote or hidden areas to be visited by volunteers on the night of the count. There were approximately 55 Category 2 parks, which were divided up per SFPD District. Teams comprising one SFPD staff member and one Rec/Park supervisor were responsible for counting all Category 2 Parks in each district on the night of the count.

Category 3 were parks found to be safe and small enough that volunteers could accurately count homeless individuals from the street or perimeter of the park on the night of the count. There were approximately 95 Category 3 parks. These parks were included as part of regular volunteer routes. Route maps used by volunteers indicated if they were to count homeless persons in the parks on their routes or if they were being counted by SFPD/Rec Park teams.

For safety reasons, volunteers were instructed not to enter bushes or drive on to highway on-ramps in order to observe homeless individuals living in these locations. The counting of such areas was executed by the California Highway Patrol and reported to count organizers the next morning.

The efforts to count homeless individuals in parks and under highway on-ramps were a departure from the methodology employed in 2005, when volunteers were instructed to count homeless persons only from the periphery of the parks. Golden Gate Park was surveyed by Rec/Park without the assistance of the SFPD or HOT. Individuals under high on-ramps were not included at all.<sup>2</sup>

### *Logistics of Counting*

Teams of two to six volunteers covered routes of approximately six to 30 blocks each, with routes in commercial and well-populated routes covered on foot and more sparsely populated and residential areas covered by car. There were a total of 150 routes. Each team was

---

<sup>2</sup> San Francisco Homeless Count 2005. Prepared by Shelagh Little and John Murray, San Francisco Department of Human Services. March 18, 2005. <http://www.sfgov.org/site/frame.asp?u=http://www.sfhsa.org/>

provided a map of its route, which outlined the route and showed the perimeters of the counting area. Teams also received two smaller maps: a map showing the rough location of the route in the context of the larger city, and a map of the route showing any known hotspots. Each team was also provided tally sheets to record basic demographic information and the location of each person counted (see Appendix B: Tally Sheet for more information). At least one person on each team had a cell phone available for their use during the count.

Members of the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), a trained squad of outreach workers, accompanied teams in densely populated areas with known large populations of homeless persons. HOT members provided guidance on where and how to look for homeless persons, whom to count, and provided an extra measure of safety for volunteers.

### *Tester Cars*

An additional quality measure was introduced in the 2007 count methodology. To gauge the quality of the volunteer counting process, the planning team planned to place designated cars on 10 percent of the routes before 8:00 pm on January 31. The planning team sought to have them placed in each of the supervisor districts of the City, with additional cars placed in areas with high populations of homeless individuals, based on information from public agencies and recent homeless counts. Volunteers were to count the cars and record them on tally sheets.

However, due to a number of logistical challenges, tester cars were not placed as planned. See page 22 for more information on the results of the test car effort.

### *Safety*

SFPD coordinated safety planning for the night of the count. The following steps were taken to minimize risks to volunteers:

1. An officer was assigned to each of four dispatch centers to serve as the safety trainer and call responder if any volunteer needed assistance.
2. A patrol car was assigned to the Tenderloin and South of Market areas to shadow volunteer teams and provide assistance if necessary.
3. SFPD requested and received CHP cooperation in counting homeless persons who live in difficult to observe locations near or on highway on-ramps and underpasses.
4. The San Francisco Fire Department assigned a paramedic captain to one of the dispatch centers to coordinate emergency medical assistance if needed by volunteers or a homeless person observed by volunteers.
5. Officers partnered with representatives of the Recreation and Parks Department to count homeless individuals in parks that were too densely wooded or otherwise dangerous to be counted by volunteers.

### ***Sheltered Count***

The 2007 San Francisco Homeless Count includes individuals who were staying in a number of facilities on the night of January 31, 2007 and who identified themselves as homeless. HUD requires the inclusion of individuals staying in:

- *Emergency shelters and transitional housing.* Overall 24 shelters and 22 transitional housing programs reported numbers.
- *Resource centers.* All three resource centers in operation at the time of the count (drop-in service sites) provided information.
- *Stabilization rooms.* The Homeless Outreach Team reported the number of homeless individuals in stabilization rooms, which are temporary program rooms in single room occupancy hotels that are used to provide intensive case management services to the most vulnerable and chronic of the street homeless population. Case plans to move toward stability and follow through with case management are the key eligibility components of this program, which is managed by the Homeless Outreach Team.

In addition, the count included self-identified homeless individuals residing in other facility types, not required by HUD rules. These included:

- *Mental health facilities and substance abuse treatment centers.* The Department of Public Health and local agencies assisted in gathering information on self-identified homeless persons in various facilities on the night of January 31, 2007. Census numbers included inpatient psychiatric services, Acute Diversion Units, medically-assisted and social model detoxification facilities, and residential drug treatment facilities.
- *Jail.* Information on those identified as homeless in the County jail comes from a Sheriff's Department estimate. The Sheriff's Department has determined that roughly 20 percent of the population on any given day is "homeless." The average daily census in the jails is roughly 2000 inmates; therefore approximately 400 are "homeless."
- *Hospitals.* The San Francisco Hospital Council and individual hospital social workers collected a census of the homeless in their facilities on the night of the count. The hospital numbers do not duplicate the inpatient mental health units. Six out of 12 hospitals provided numbers, including San Francisco General Hospital.

All information was collected by staff at each of these facilities. Clients were not interviewed. Homeless individuals identified in treatment centers, jails, and hospitals do not meet HUD's definition of homelessness, but do meet San Francisco's local definition.

## **Survey**

A new component of the 2007 count was a survey conducted at service site locations throughout San Francisco, conducted on January 31<sup>st</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup>. The purpose of the survey was to gather demographic data on a sample of San Francisco's homeless community. The survey also helped to gather an estimate of the number of chronically

---

<sup>3</sup> A Guide to Counting Sheltered Homeless People. October 2006. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Community Planning and Development

homeless persons, which is a HUD reporting requirement. Homeless persons were surveyed at the following social service agencies:

- St. Anthony's Dining Hall
- Bayview Resource Center
- Mission Neighborhood Health Center
- Larkin Street Drop-In Center
- North Beach Citizens Drop In Center

The survey did not request any personal identifying information. All responses were anonymous and participation was completely voluntary. No incentives were provided to homeless persons who participated. Surveys were either self administered or administered by a staff member at the participating service sites. All staff members who assisted with the surveys were provided detailed instructions and training if needed. See Appendix C for a copy of the survey instrument.

In total, 292 homeless clients were surveyed, representing almost 5% of the homeless population counted the previous night.

### ***Changes to the Methodology Since 2005***

The chart below describes several changes implemented in how the count was conducted in 2007 vs. 2005 and estimates the impact of the changes in terms of the number of individuals counted. Several of these changes were new methodology components implemented in direct response to concerns raised by the community following the 2005 count. Other factors beyond the control of count organizers, such as weather, also have an impact on the number of people counted. There were several areas of the City where the change in methodology is likely to have resulted in a higher number tallied in 2007, while not necessarily representing an actual increase in homelessness. **The chart demonstrates that a total of 374 persons were tallied in 2007 due to these improvements in methodology and would likely not have been counted in 2005.**

	2005 Method	2007 Method	Potential Impact
<b>Unsheltered Count Methodology</b>			
Areas Covered	Mixed Complete Coverage and "Known Locations" Methodology: Counters covered some districts completely or nearly completely (3, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10), and in other areas counted only the "known locations" pre-determined to have concentrations of homeless. Final count adjusted for areas not covered (overall adjustment was +6.3%)	Complete Coverage Methodology: Counters covered the whole City. Final count numbers not adjusted.	No significant change noted in 2007 from adjusted 2005 totals for Districts 2, 4, 7 and 11. The significant increase noted in District 1 (which includes Golden Gate Park) more likely due to change in parks methodology (see below).
Parks	Count of Golden Gate Park early next morning by park staff. Other parks included in route coverage areas counted by volunteers only on periphery due to safety concerns.	Comprehensive count of all 189 city parks (including Golden Gate) conducted by volunteers, park staff and SFPD on the night of the count and the next morning.	The change in approach to counting parks resulted in counting 280 individuals who most likely would not have been counted in 2005.  <i>Estimated impact:</i> <b>+280</b>
Volunteers	250 volunteers for 100 routes	500 volunteers for 150 routes	More volunteers per counting team is likely to produce a more accurate count.
Hotspots	Hotspots mapping based on reports by San Francisco Police Department personnel and homeless outreach teams.	Hotspots mapping based on citizen calls to and staff reports by the San Francisco Police Department, the Department of Public Works, and the Recreation and Parks Department.	Improved designation of hotspots likely to have improved the accuracy of the count by ensuring that counters pay special attention to specific areas.
Outreach Team Involvement	Not included.	Skilled homeless outreach team members accompanied volunteers on routes known to have higher concentrations of homeless people.	Expertise of outreach professionals likely to have improved the accuracy of assessments as to was counted as homeless.
Highway On-Ramps and Underpasses	Volunteers instructed not to drive onto highways for safety reasons	CHP counted these areas "hidden" to counters from the street	CHP counted persons who would most likely not have been counted in 2005. <i>Estimated impact:</i> <b>+63</b>
Dispatch Centers	One dispatch center with dispatch to all counting areas	Four dispatch centers.	Where possible, volunteers were matched with areas based on which was most convenient. Matching volunteers to areas they are familiar with may increase accuracy.
Advance Notice	No outreach to homeless persons to notify them of the count.	Homeless persons notified of the date and time of the count.	Homeless persons less likely to avoid/hide from counters.
<b>Sheltered Count Methodology</b>			
Hospitals	SF General only hospital surveyed.	Six hospitals surveyed.	Increased number of individuals counted. <i>Estimated impact:</i> <b>+31</b>
<b>Other Factors</b>			
Weather	Intermittent rain	No rain	Lack of rain likely improved volunteer attendance. It may also have resulted in a higher percentage of "visible" unsheltered homeless for counting.
<b>Total</b>			<b>+374</b>

## V. Data Results

The following tables present the results of the point-in-time count conducted on January 31, 2007, with detailed demographic information. These tables show the results of the unsheltered count by supervisor district. In all, 2,771 unsheltered, or “street,” homeless persons were counted. The supervisor district with the largest population of homeless individuals was district 6, with 45 percent of the total (see Appendix D for a map of the supervisor districts). These results reflect that the majority of homeless individuals are male and either white or black. However, volunteers could not determine the race or gender of a large percentage of those counted.

### ***Unsheltered Count***

**Homeless Count Results By Supervisor District: 2007  
Gender and Race**

Supervisor District	Total	Gender				Race					
		Male	Female	Trans-gendered	Unknown	Asian	Black	Latino	Other	Unknown	White
1	218	80	16	0	122	1	8	0	3	150	56
2	81	38	8	0	35	1	11	0	0	38	31
3	206	150	17	0	39	11	38	5	0	54	98
4	70	5	3	0	62	0	2	0	0	62	6
5	114	76	11	0	27	0	29	2	1	31	51
6	1,239	744	212	3	280	5	566	40	1	327	300
7	21	5	3	1	12	2	2	0	0	12	5
8	190	119	20	0	51	6	23	11	2	59	89
9	200	121	6	0	73	2	23	30	0	87	58
10	349	152	66	1	130	3	119	17	7	138	65
11	20	7	2	0	11	0	2	1	0	13	4
CHP	63	51	11	1	0	1	33	10	0	0	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,771</b>	<b>1,548</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>782</b>
<b>Count %</b>		<b>55.8%</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>30.4%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>35.0%</b>	<b>28.2%</b>
<b>% SF population*</b>	776,733	50.8%	49.2%			30.7%	7.6%	14.1%	4.0%		43.6%

\* Source: [www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/counties/SanFranciscoCounty.htm](http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/counties/SanFranciscoCounty.htm)

The overwhelming majority of those counted were identified as single adults, rather than living with a family. Youths accounted for a small percentage of the overall homeless population. Volunteers tallied individuals living in cars and encampments. When volunteers encountered a car that was likely to be a dwelling, they were instructed to estimate that two individuals were living inside (and mark “unknown” for all other demographic information). Encampments were defined as groups of five or more individuals living together. Most homeless persons counted were found to be living on the street and not with other homeless persons (68%).



**Homeless Count Results By Supervisor District: 2007  
Family Status, Age, and Living Situation**

Supervisor District	Total	Family Status			Age			Living Situation		
		Single Adult	Individual in Family	Unknown	Adult	Unknown	Youth	Cars	Encampment	Individual
1	218	102	4	112	102	111	5	77	48	93
2	81	59	2	20	58	23	0	30	13	38
3	206	196	3	7	192	13	1	13	23	170
4	70	6	2	62	8	62	0	65	0	5
5	114	94	0	20	92	22	0	16	5	93
6	1,239	924	19	296	926	304	9	89	138	1012
7	21	10	0	11	10	11	0	2	7	12
8	190	151	0	39	140	39	11	25	1	164
9	200	139	2	59	126	69	5	52	23	125
10	349	187	33	129	124	216	9	156	54	139
11	20	4	1	15	6	13	1	10	0	10
CHP	63	63	0	0	63	0	0	0	48	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,771</b>	<b>1,935</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>1,847</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>1,876</b>
		<b>70.0%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>27.8%</b>	<b>66.6%</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>67.7%</b>

*Unsheltered Count Breakdowns*

The following tables provide further detail regarding the demographics of those observed during the unsheltered count. Among all age groups, males make up the majority of homeless individuals observed. Homeless men and women are more likely to be white or black than other racial or ethnic groups. Single adults far outnumber those in families.

**Age by Gender**

Gender	Adult	Youth	Unsure	Total
Female	308	8	59	375
Male	1,367	31	150	1,548
Transgendered	5	0	1	6
Unknown	167	2	673	842
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,847</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>2,771</b>

**Race/Ethnicity by Gender**

Gender	Asian	Black	Latino	White	Other	Unsure	Total
Female	6	178	12	144	1	34	375
Male	24	661	100	617	12	134	1,548
Transgendered	0	1	2	2	1	0	6
Unknown	2	16	2	19	0	803	842
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>2,771</b>

**Family Status by Gender**

Gender	Individual in Family	Single Adult	Unsure	Total
Female	20	307	48	375
Male	28	1,401	119	1,548
Transgendered	0	6	0	6
Unknown	18	221	603	842
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>1,935</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>2,771</b>

*Unsheltered Results Comparison: 2000-2007*

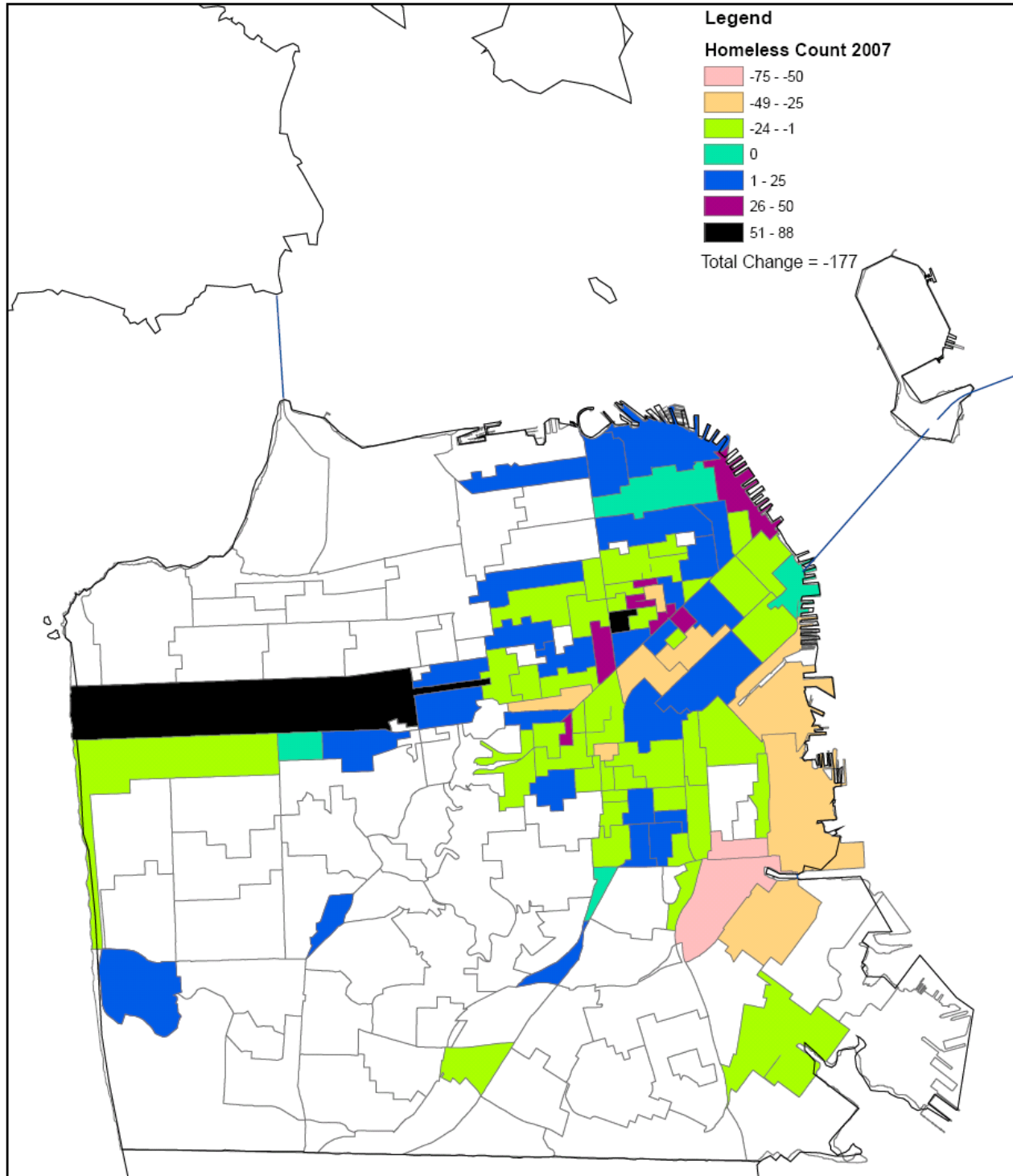
The table below presents the results of this year's count alongside those of previous counts. The overall counted number of homeless individuals increased in the early 90s, and has been fairly consistent over the past two counts. The small increase from the 2005 count is likely attributable to the expanded methodology employed this year. As mentioned in the Methodology section, at least 374 persons were included in the 2007 count who would likely not have been counted in 2005. Moreover, a direct comparison between analogous routes used during the unsheltered counts in 2005 and 2007 shows a decline in the street homeless population since 2005 of 7 percent. See the map below for more information.

Supervisor District	4/27/2000	10/25/2000	10/25/2001	10/29/2002	1/25/2005	Adjusted* 2005	1/31/2007
1	N/A	3	69	127	75	76	218
2	N/A	46	92	96	22	79	81
3	N/A	80	280	444	166	167	206
4	N/A	9	161	331	34	97	70
5	N/A	136	233	569	109	110	114
6	N/A	1,004	1,158	1,071	1,232	1,233	1,239
7	N/A	9	34	266	10	25	21
8	N/A	113	108	374	158	159	190
9	N/A	205	238	249	191	192	200
10	N/A	412	733	811	483	484	349
11	N/A	9	50	197	17	34	20
Unsure		7					
CHP							63
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,805</b>	<b>2,033</b>	<b>3,156</b>	<b>4,535</b>	<b>2,497</b>	<b>2,655</b>	<b>2,771</b>

\* 2005 counts were adjusted to reflect areas not covered by counters.

# City and County of San Francisco Homeless Count 2007

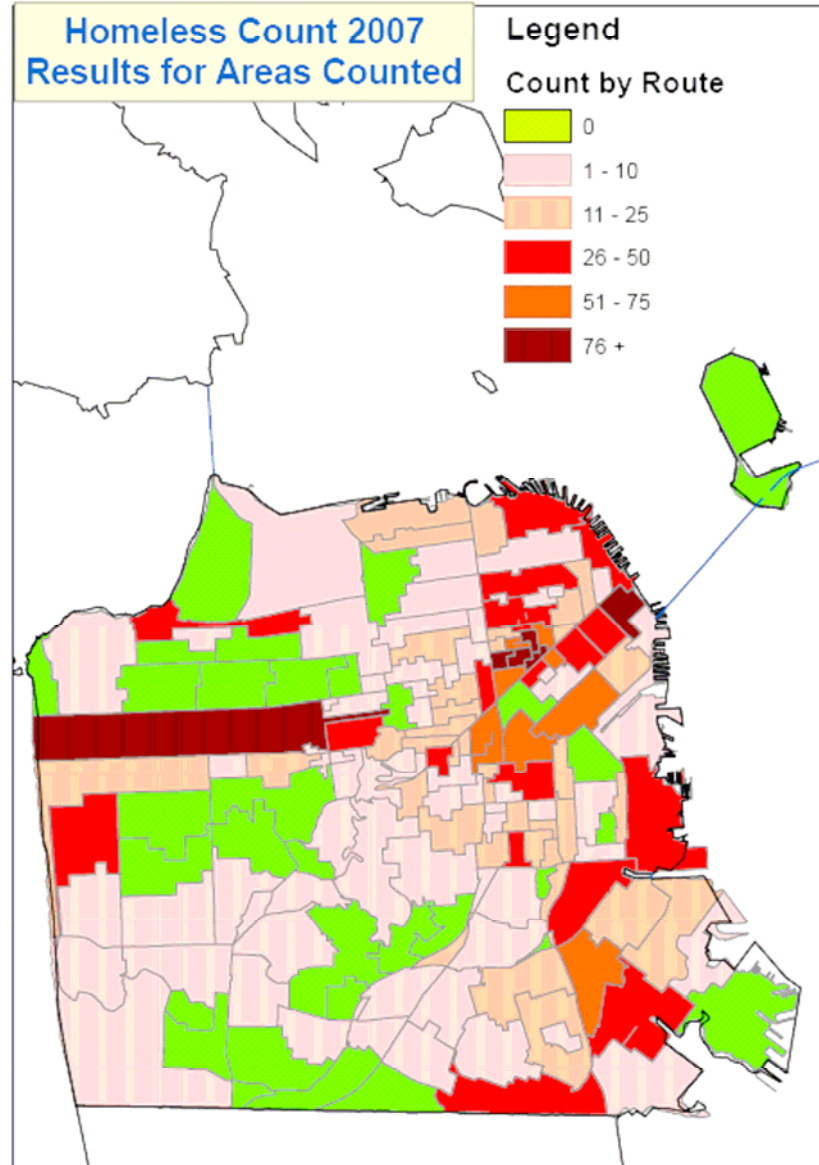
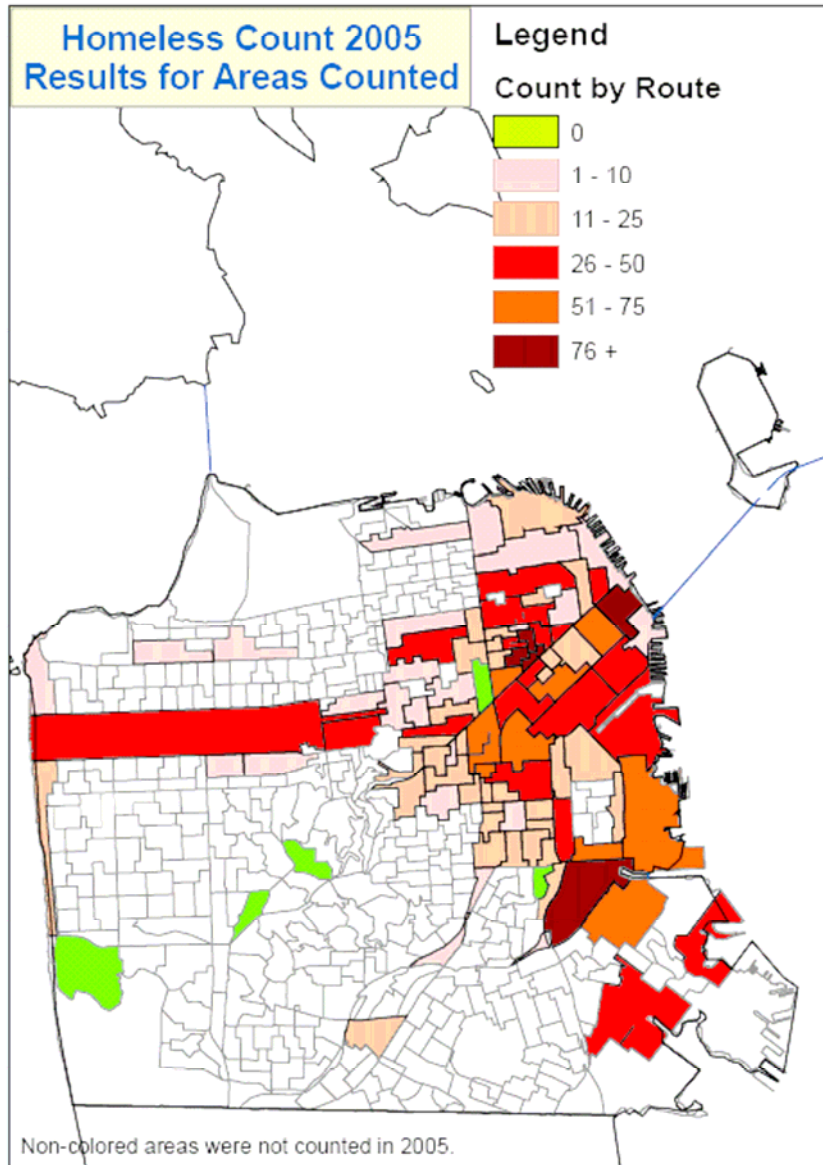
## Comparison of 2005 to 2007 Analogous Route Variances



Comparison based on 2005 unadjusted count.

The following map compares the 2005 unsheltered count results to those of 2007. The areas not shaded/colored in the 2005 map were uncounted areas. Areas in green in both maps were included in the count, but no homeless individuals were recorded there. In the 2007 map, the number of homeless persons counted in Category 1 and 2 parks are reflected as part of the surrounding routes results. See Appendix E for a map of the hotspots used in the planning of the unsheltered count.

## City and County of San Francisco Homeless Count 2005 - 2007 Comparison



## Tester Cars

On the night of the count, 15 cars were scheduled to be placed in the districts, as described in Methodology. Due to last-minute logistical challenges, only 14 cars were placed. While the count planners had intended that there be an even distribution of cars on routes, they were placed where parking was convenient for the drivers, so the routes with known “hot spot” locations in crowded neighborhoods ended up being under-represented. Of those 14, six were spotted by the volunteer counters during the unsheltered count. Counters were more likely to identify the cars on routes where volunteers walked, rather than drove. Possible reasons for not identifying the tester cars are the placement of signs where someone driving past might not see them, a lack of lighting in the lower density areas, or volunteer confusion.

Overall, this new component of the methodology should be refined in future homeless counts so that it can better reflect the efforts of volunteers.

## Sheltered Count

The table below presents the data from the various participating facilities that regularly house individuals who self-identify as homeless. The largest group of sheltered homeless individuals reside in shelter or programs that provide transitional housing and/or treatment.

	Single Adults 2007	Person in Families 2007	Family Status Unknown 2007	2007 Totals	2005 Totals
Street	1,935	66	770	2,771	2,655
Emergency Shelter	1,175	322	0	1,497	1,754
Transitional Housing and Treatment	1,076	190	0	1,266	1,141
Resource Centers and Stabilization	321	0	0	321	192*
Jail	400	0	0	400	415
Hospitals	122	0	0	122**	91
Total	5,029	578	770	6,377	6,248

\* Stabilizations room were not included in the 2005 count.

\*\* This number includes five additional hospitals; the 2005 count included numbers only from San Francisco General Hospital.

There were 257 fewer individuals in emergency shelters this year than in 2005. Since the 2005 count, there was a reduction of 326 beds in the City-funded shelter system, which likely contributes to this decline.<sup>4</sup> The number of homeless persons in San Francisco’s transitional housing programs and residential treatment centers for drug and alcohol abuse reflects 36 facilities reporting numbers. Overall, there is no significant change in numbers between 2005 and 2007.

<sup>4</sup> The reduction in shelter beds (year-round and winter only) was due to a number of causes, including one shelter losing its lease (provider is negotiating to reopen this facility), temporary closure due to renovations (scheduled to reopen), and a variety of other reasons.

The County jail reported an estimate of 400 homeless persons in that institution. This estimate is based on the number of prisoners who provide addresses that are shelters or SRO's, or whose booking cards indicated no local address or transient in general. The Sheriff's Department has found that roughly 20% of the population on any given day is "homeless." The average daily census in the jails is roughly 2,000 inmates; therefore approximately 400 are considered to be homeless. However, some percent of those with no local address may have an address outside of the City, and some of those who report their status as "transient" may be unwilling to provide an address.

The 2007 count included homeless patients residing in five hospitals that did not report in the 2005 count. The increase in the number of hospitals that reported clearly resulted in an increase in the number of hospitalized homeless as compared to 2005. However, of San Francisco General Hospital reported 48 homeless patients, **representing a decline of 47% since 2005**. The increase of "stabilization housing" units, medical respite, and other alternatives to hospitalization for the chronically homeless likely contributed to this decline. The other five reporting hospitals reported a total of 74 homeless patients.

### **Survey Results**

As mentioned in previous sections of this report, the implementation of a survey was a new component of the count. Five service site locations participated and a total of 292 homeless persons were surveyed. The survey collected a range of information about the current living situation and demographics of respondents. The results paint a slightly different portrait of homeless individuals than the unsheltered count, in part because survey respondents included individuals who are residing indoors but who meet the City's definition of homeless. See Appendix C for a copy of the survey instrument.

#### *Current Sleeping Place*

The table below presents survey data about where the respondents were sleeping. The majority of respondents were staying in San Francisco's emergency shelters or somewhere outdoors. The survey also asked about living situations that were not considered as part of the unsheltered or facilities components of the count: abandoned buildings, motel/hotels, and houses in which the person does not permanently live, which is often referred to as "doubled-up" or "couch surfing." HUD's definition of homelessness does not include persons in these living situations.

**Survey Data: Current Sleeping Place**

Which of the following best describes where you slept last night.	Number	Percent
Emergency Shelter	117	40.0%
Outdoors/street/park/campground	78	26.7%
Other	22	7.5%
A place in a house (e.g., floor/couch)	19	6.5%
Motel/Hotel	16	5.5%
Automobile/van/camper	13	4.5%
No response	13	4.4%
Transitional Housing	7	2.4%
Abandoned Building	4	1.4%
Treatment Facility	3	1.0%

Total 292 100.0%

*Chronic Homelessness*

Of those 292 respondents, 38% were in their first homeless situation and 62% had been homeless more than once in their lifetime. Two-thirds of homeless persons surveyed had been homeless for one year or more.

Length of homelessness and disability status are components of the federal definition of chronic homelessness. HUD defines a person as chronically homeless if s/he meets the following definition: “an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years.” A disabling condition is defined as “a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions. To be considered “chronically homeless,” the person must have been living on the streets or in another place not meant for human habitation, or in an emergency homeless shelter, during these periods of homelessness.”<sup>5</sup>

One of the purposes of the survey was to gauge the extent of chronic homelessness in San Francisco. **In all, 105 or 36% of respondents met the federal definition of chronic homelessness.** A total of 84 respondents (28.7%) met the federal definition of chronic homelessness because they indicated they had a disability and had been homeless for one year or more. Another 21 individuals (7.2%) were categorized as chronically homeless because they have a disability and have experienced homelessness four or more times within the past three years. Sixteen individuals met both definitions of chronic homelessness.

**Survey Data: Length of Homelessness**

How Long Have You Been Homeless?	Number	Percent
Less than 1 year	74	25.3%
1 year	35	12.0%
2 years	39	13.4%
3 years	16	5.5%
More than 3 years	102	34.9%
Declined to answer	11	3.8%
Don't know	15	5.1%
Total	292	100.0%

*Cause of Homelessness*

The highest number of respondents faulted a lack of employment for their current spell of homelessness. Other commonly cited reasons for homelessness included inability to pay rent or mortgage payments, and drug and alcohol abuse.

**Survey Data: Reasons for Becoming Homeless**

Please identify your reasons for becoming homeless	Number of Responses*	Percent of Respondents
Unemployment	127	43.5%

<sup>5</sup> A Guide to Counting Sheltered Homeless People. October 2006. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Community Planning and Development



Unable to pay rent/mortgage	91	31.2%
Other	64	21.9%
Drug or alcohol abuse	60	20.5%
Mental disability	53	18.2%
Physical disability	47	16.1%
Family or personal illness	32	11.0%
Bad credit	24	8.2%
Criminal record	23	7.9%
Discharged from jail or prison	20	6.8%
Domestic Violence	12	4.1%
Declined to answer	11	3.8%
Child abuse	8	2.7%

\* Respondents were asked to identify all reasons that applied.

### *Changing Locations*

Thirty-one percent of respondents said they became homeless outside of San Francisco, suggesting that a large percentage of San Francisco's homeless population come to the City when they are already homeless.

### **Survey Data: City of Residence When Became Homeless**

Where were you living when you became homeless (most recent episode of homelessness)?	Number	Percent
San Francisco	182	62.3%
Outside of CA	46	15.8%
Other County in CA	44	15.1%
No response	20	6.8%
Total	292	100.0%

### *Transition Aged Youth*

Of the total number of survey respondents, 11% (32 respondents) listed their age as 18 to 24. Three-quarters of these reported having been homeless for one year or more; 36% have been homeless for three years or more.

### *Survey Implications*

These results, in conjunction with those from the unsheltered and sheltered counts, suggest a few differences between the populations captured by the different components of the count. This comparison suggests that there may be a larger percent of Latino or Hispanic homeless individuals receiving homeless services than the unsheltered count reflects. It also may indicate there is a larger percent of homeless families than would be captured by the unsheltered count alone.

### **Comparison Between Count Components\***

Demographics	Survey Results (n=292)	Unsheltered Count Results (n=2,771)	Sheltered Count Results (n=3,606)
Gender	<i>(known n=279)</i>	<i>(known n=1,929)</i>	
Male	82.1%	80.2%	
Female	15.1%	19.4%	
Transgendered	2.9%	0.3%	
Race/Ethnicity	<i>(known n=272)</i>	<i>(known n=1,800)</i>	
Asian	2.6%	1.8%	

African American/Black	37.5%	47.6%	
Latino/Hispanic	15.8%	6.4%	
White	30.5%	43.4%	
Other	13.6%	0.8%	
Family Status	<i>(known n=225)</i>	<i>(known n=2,001)</i>	
Single Adult	75.1%	96.7%	85.8%
Individual in Family	24.9%	3.3%	14.2%

\* Percentages for each category do not include “unknown” to provide comparisons.

Community members have expressed concerns that the unsheltered count under-counts homeless families. The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) uses a broader definition of homelessness, and has estimated that there are as many as 1,377 homeless school-aged youth, pre-K to 12th grade, who participate in their programs over the course of a year. See Appendix F for the SFUSD’s definition of homelessness.

## VI. Limitations

Every study involves certain limitations and constraints. Addressing these shortcomings in future counts would involve an investment of additional resources.

### ***Unsheltered Count Limitations***

Instructions provided to volunteers notwithstanding, the assessment of who is homeless during the unsheltered “public places” count involves subjectivity, which can compromise the accuracy of the count to some degree. Some homeless individuals may not manifest any of the characteristics or behaviors described in the volunteer instructions and therefore may be missed by volunteers. Conversely, persons involved in certain behaviors, such as panhandling, may be mistaken for homeless when in fact they are housed. Counts of individuals in cars and in tents are rough estimates because volunteers were discouraged from approaching these types of dwellings for safety reasons.

The count’s organizers considered other unsheltered count methodologies to determine whether they could decrease subjectivity and thereby improve accuracy. One approach is to conduct interviews of all persons observed during the street count to ascertain whether they are homeless. This approach in San Francisco would require more volunteers or a multiple-night count, which, in turn, would require a methodology to eliminate double counting. Interviewing raises several additional concerns, including that conducting interviews can be disruptive to homeless persons living on the street and can create unsafe situations for volunteers.

San Francisco has adopted a broad definition of homelessness to include people who are moving from one acquaintance’s house to another, families staying in units that are inadequate in terms of occupancy standards, and others who are transient but indoors in private residences on the night of the count. The relevant HUD definition of homelessness is limited to people who are on the streets or staying in shelters or transitional housing. San Francisco targets both outreach and services to families, children, and youth in particular who fall into the broader definition, but remain ineligible for HUD homeless assistance. San Francisco has not, however, adopted a strategy of trying to count all of the people in the living situations mentioned above. Including these categories would require a tremendous effort

and additional financial resources that would potentially be diverted from direct homeless assistance. Thus, the point-in-time count is limited to those who were on streets or in designated facilities on January 31, 2007.

Point-in-time counts are “snapshots” that capture the size of the homeless population at any given point during the year, but may not be representative of the homeless population over time.

### ***Facilities Count Limitations***

The numbers included in this portion of the count are based on responses of staff and not on interviews with clients. The number of homeless individuals in the County jail is based on an estimated number of homeless typically in the jails, not a specific count. As with the unsheltered count, the facilities count is a point-in-time snapshot of the homeless population, which may or may not be representative over time.

### ***Survey Limitations***

The survey was not translated from English to other languages, and therefore may have excluded non-English speaking individuals.<sup>6</sup> Experiences of those who declined to respond could not be recorded, and are therefore excluded.

## **VII. Conclusions**

Many will read this report with the goal of understanding how the size and nature of San Francisco’s homeless population has changed since the last City-wide count in 2005. Though the results from 2005 and 2007 are very similar, it should not be interpreted that the nature of the homeless population in San Francisco is static, or that there has been no progress in addressing homelessness. To make a thorough assessment, it is important to consider the many factors that influence the count, from local and regional changes and influences to the methodological refinements made in the count itself. **As discussed throughout this report, the expanded methodology employed in 2007 likely led to an overall reported increase in the number of homeless individuals, though this may not reflect an actual increase. A direct comparison between analogous street routes used during the unsheltered counts in 2005 and 2007 shows a 7 percent decline in the street homeless population since 2005.**

Homelessness is a broad problem and one locality’s efforts may not be as effective when national or regional factors act as a counterbalance. **In San Francisco’s service site interviews, 31% of those surveyed came to San Francisco *after* becoming homeless.** This may mean that people who become homeless are more likely to come to cities such as San Francisco, where housing and services directed at homeless persons are more widely available. The survey cannot accurately track this phenomenon, however, without receiving the same information from other locations.

The numbers reported in the 2007 count must be understood within the context of the ambitious initiatives that San Francisco has implemented over the past four years to reduce the size of the homeless population, including the *Ten Year Plan to End Chronic*

---

<sup>6</sup> The Mission Neighborhood Resource Center had bilingual staff available to administer the survey.

*Homelessness.* The cumulative result of the efforts described below is that approximately 5,224 persons exited homelessness either by securing permanent housing in the City or by moving back home to a city outside of San Francisco. A summary of these initiatives follows:

- *Care Not Cash:* Care Not Cash is a program that offers homeless recipients of County general assistance housing/shelter and support services as a portion of their benefit package. Homeless persons receiving cash assistance from the City's County Adult Assistance Program (CAAP) were phased into Care Not Cash over a seven-month period (from May through November 2004). CAAP is San Francisco's cash aid program for adults without dependent children. Since June of 2004, the population of homeless single adults receiving public assistance has dropped from over 2,175 individuals to 373 as of January 2007. By the end of January 2007, a total of 1,778 homeless CAAP recipients had been placed in permanent housing through the Care Not Cash Program cumulatively, and another 453 had found housing on their own. Implementation of Care Not Cash began in 2004.
- *Housing First:* In addition to the population impacted by Care Not Cash, the Human Services Agency master leasing program, called Housing First, also provides permanent housing for homeless single adults referred by emergency shelters and community-based agencies. Cumulatively, the Housing First Program has provided housing for 610 formerly homeless individuals since 2003-2004. In all, there are a total of 2,317 units in both programs.
- *Direct Access to Housing (DAH):* The Department of Public Health operates the Direct Access to Housing Program, which provides permanent housing to formerly homeless persons with disabilities referred through the public healthcare system. The DAH program has housed a total of 519 homeless individuals since 2003-2004, and contains a total of 828 units.
- *Street Outreach and Case Management:* Since the time of the last homeless count, San Francisco has ramped up efforts to reach homeless persons living on the street who do not use other available services. Services offered include case management, enrollment in food stamps, temporary stabilization housing, primary care, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and referral to permanent housing. Stabilization Rooms are temporary program rooms in single room occupancy hotels that are used to provide intensive case management services to the most vulnerable and chronic street homeless people. Case plans to move toward stability and follow through with case management are the key eligibility components of this program, which is managed by the San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team. Currently, 358 persons are actively being case managed through such programs. In addition, the San Francisco Department of Public Health, through its Sobering Center and its Emergency Medical Services High User Project, aim to decrease use of high cost emergency medical services through direct outreach to chronic inebriates and other frequent users of emergency services. The High User Program served 219 unduplicated homeless persons in 2005-2006.

- *Homeward Bound:* The Homeward Bound Program (HBP) reunites homeless persons living in San Francisco with family and friends living elsewhere. Homeless clients who request to return home through this program must be homeless living in San Francisco, and be medically stable enough to successfully travel to the destination. HBP staff directly contact the client's family member or friend at the point of destination to ensure that the client will have a place to reside and have ample support to assist in establishing stabilized housing and transition from homelessness. A total of 1,864 homeless individuals have been assisted by this program.
- *Rental Subsidies and Rental Assistance for Homeless Families.* HSA has completed the RFP process and approved four new contracts for provision of rental subsidies and expanded rental assistance for homeless families. These programs were designed in response to a six-month community process that made several recommendations to place a renewed emphasis on prevention and rapid re-housing for those families that become homeless consistent with the "Housing First" approach.
- *Project Homeless Connect:* Every other month over 1,500 community volunteers partner with city government, nonprofits and the private sector to provide a one-stop clearinghouse of health and human services for homeless San Franciscans. Services include medical, mental health, substance abuse, housing, dental, benefits, legal, free eyeglasses, California ID, food, clothing, wheelchair repair and more. The main goal of PHC is to transition the City's homeless off the streets and into permanent, supportive housing. To date, there have been 15 bi-monthly Project Homeless Connect events, with between 1,500 and 2,000 individuals served at each.

## Appendices

## Appendix A: Volunteer Instructions

### HOMELESS COUNT 2007 VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS

Welcome and thank you for volunteering for Homeless Count 2007. 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. If there are stairs into a BART or MUNI station, walk down the stairs, into the station and record any homeless you observe. Count only the part of the station that is in your route.

If you are driving and there is a BART or MUNI station on your route, please park and walk into the station.

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 should help you determine whom to count.

##### Automatically Count People:

- Sleeping outside
- Vehicles with windows covered (see below)
- Tents, Makeshift structures, Boxes (see below for all of these)

##### Do NOT Automatically Count

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

Consider these as factors when deciding whether to count. Not everyone engaged in these activities is homeless.

- Walking, sitting, or standing “with no purpose” (loitering)
- Panhandling (with or without cup/sign) (This should be considered with other factors as not all panhandlers are homeless.)
- Carrying bags/backpacks/garbage bags/suitcases/blankets/bedrolls
  - With shopping cart containing personal belongings
- In possession of recycling, especially large numbers of items
- Disheveled
- Inebriated/passed out on sidewalk

### **HOW TO COUNT CARS (VEHICULARLY HOUSED)**

On some routes, many 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.

**Note:** A number of “tester” cars with brightly colored paper covering the inside of the windows and marked “Homeless Count 2007” have been placed throughout the City and there may be one on your route. If you see such a vehicle, you must note its location separately on your tally sheet in the space provided.

### **TENTS, OTHER STRUCTURES**

As with vehicles, do not approach. Assume TWO persons per structure. Mark “unsure” for gender, race/ethnicity, single/family, and age. If you see an abandoned building, do not enter the building. If you hear people inside, assume three persons per building.

### **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.

**If you are on a driving route and see a commercial establishment that appears to have homeless inside or around, please get out and count. See further instructions below (under “driving routes”).**

### **PARKS**



Only enter parks if your map instructs you to do so. Some parks will be counted by City staff. Parks that you should NOT go into are indicated on your map.

### **ALLEYS**

Use caution when deciding whether to enter a “dead-end” alley. Only enter if it is well-lit. If it is dark or appears dangerous, use your flashlight to scan for any homeless occupants. Observe as much as possible from a safe distance and make reasonable assumptions.

If there is an ally way on your driving route, only drive down the alley if it goes all the way through.

### **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 areas. 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.**

A list of phone numbers (attached) is provided for your use in the event you need police or medical assistance any time during the count. The dispatch center phone number is also included for routine questions.

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.

#### **Important Reminder:**

**When you have completed your assigned route along with the tally sheet please return it your dispatch center. All tally sheets must be returned on the night of the count, no exceptions.**

# Appendix B: Tally Sheet

San Francisco Homeless Count 1/31/07																					
District				Route Number																	
Directions: Fill in one line per person counted.																					
Gender				Race/Ethnicity					Single or Family			Age			Encampment <sup>2</sup>	Car <sup>3</sup>	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 <sup>1</sup>	Adult	U						
1																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
2																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
3																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
4																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
5																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
6																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
7																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
8																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
9																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
10																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
11																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
12																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
13																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
14																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
15																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
16																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
17																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
18																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
19																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
20																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
21																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
22																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
23																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
24																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
25																	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	

<b>Tester car location (if any) - Note address or intersection:</b>			
M=Male	B=Black	O=Other	<sup>1</sup> Youth = under 18 years of age <sup>2</sup> Encampments are communities of five or more homeless persons in a group of tents or other living structures. Circle Y(es) or N(o). <sup>3</sup> 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		

## Appendix C: Survey Instrument

LOCATION where surveyed (address)\_\_\_\_\_:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm with the 2007 San Francisco Homeless Count. We would like to learn more about people who are homeless. We would like to ask you a few questions.

All of your responses are strictly confidential and completely anonymous, and your privacy will be protected. Your honest response is appreciated and will only be used to benefit homeless people. Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time, or refuse to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable.

Have you already been interviewed today? *If yes, thank them and say we are only interviewing people once.*

### 1. Are you homeless?

- Yes       No       Declined to answer

### 2. Which of the following best describes where you slept last night?

- Outdoors/streets/parks/campgrounds       Emergency Shelter  
 Automobile/van/camper       Transitional Housing  
 Treatment Facility       A place in a house/floor/couch/ (don't pay rent)  
 Abandoned building       OTHER  
 Motel/Hotel (temporary; night/weekly stay)

If the respondent is NOT homeless, defined by an above response, please do NOT continue the survey

### 3. Are you currently experiencing any of the following (check all that apply):

- 3a. Physical Disability       Yes       No       Declined to answer  
3b. Mental Illness       Yes       No       Declined to answer  
3c. Alcohol use       Yes       No       Declined to answer  
3d. Drug use       Yes       No       Declined to answer  
3e. AIDS/HIV/related diseases       Yes       No       Declined to answer  
3f. Other Chronic Health problems       Yes       No       Declined to answer

### 4. Is this the first time you have been homeless?

- Yes       No

### 5. How long have you been homeless?

- Less than 1 year       2 years       More than 3 years       Declined to answer  
 1 Year       3 years       Don't know

\*If client responded with 1 year or more (2 years, 3 years, etc) please skip to question # 8.

### 6. In the last 12 months how many times have you been homeless including this last time?

*(Episode of homelessness is a separate, distinct, and sustained stay on the streets and/or in an emergency homeless shelter)*

- 1 time                       3 times                       5 times                       Don't know
- 2 times                       4 times                       more than 5 times                       Declined to answer

**7. In the last three years how many times have you been homeless?**

- 1 time                       3 times                       5 times                       Don't know
- 2 times                       4 times                       more than 5 times                       Declined to answer

**8. Where were you most recently living at the time you became homeless?**

- San Francisco                       Other County in CA                       Out of CA



**GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

**1. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Transgender

**2. What is your ethnicity?**

- White/Caucasian                       Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African American                       Multi-racial/Other
- Hispanic/Latino                       Declined to answer
- American Indian/Alaskan Native

**3. Are you over age 18?**                       Yes                       No

**4. How old are you?** \_\_\_\_\_

**5. How many total people are in your family/household (including yourself)?** \_\_\_\_\_

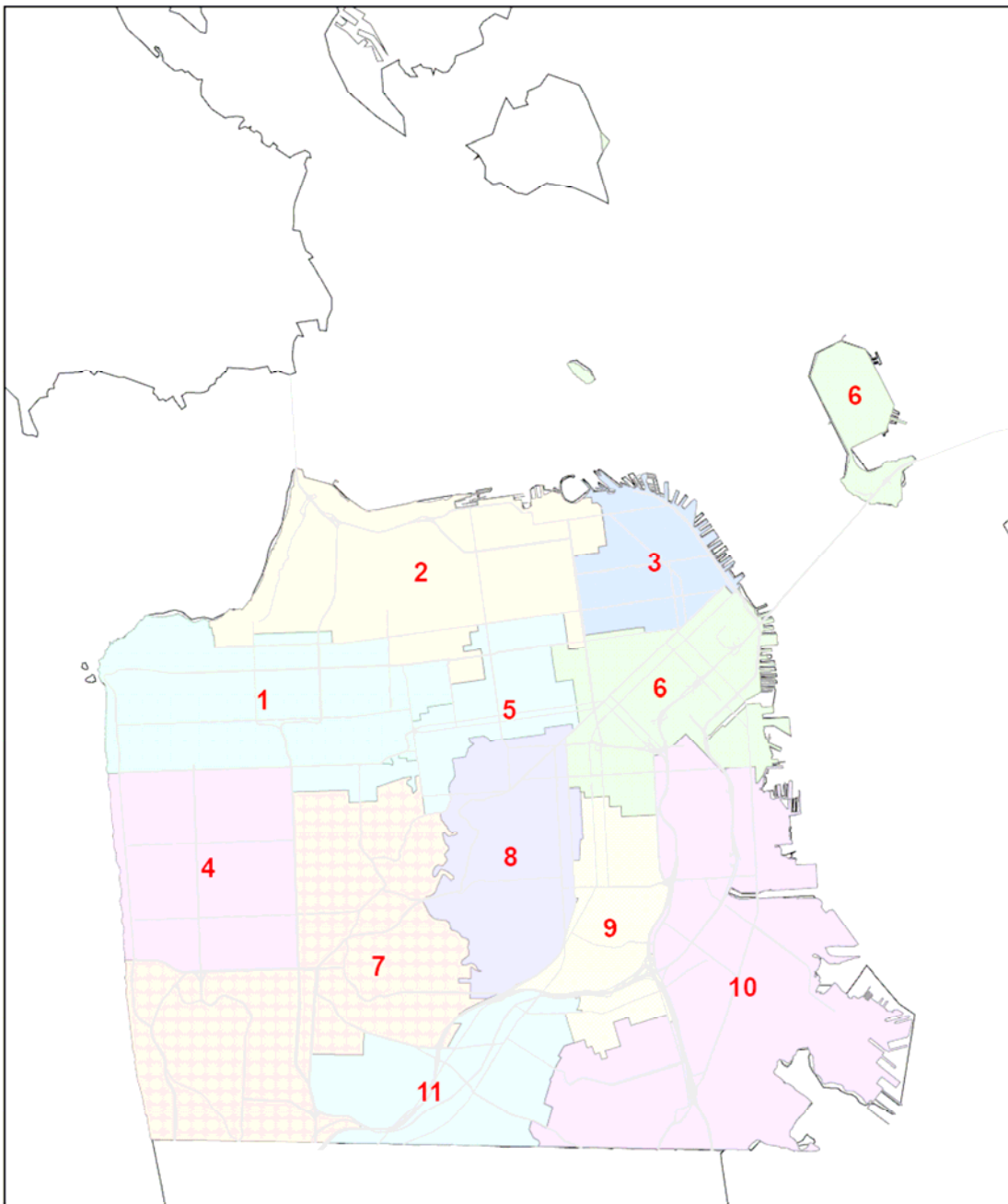
**5a. How many children aged 18 or under are in your family?** \_\_\_\_\_

**5b. How many adults are in your family?** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Please identify your reasons for becoming homeless?(check all that apply)**

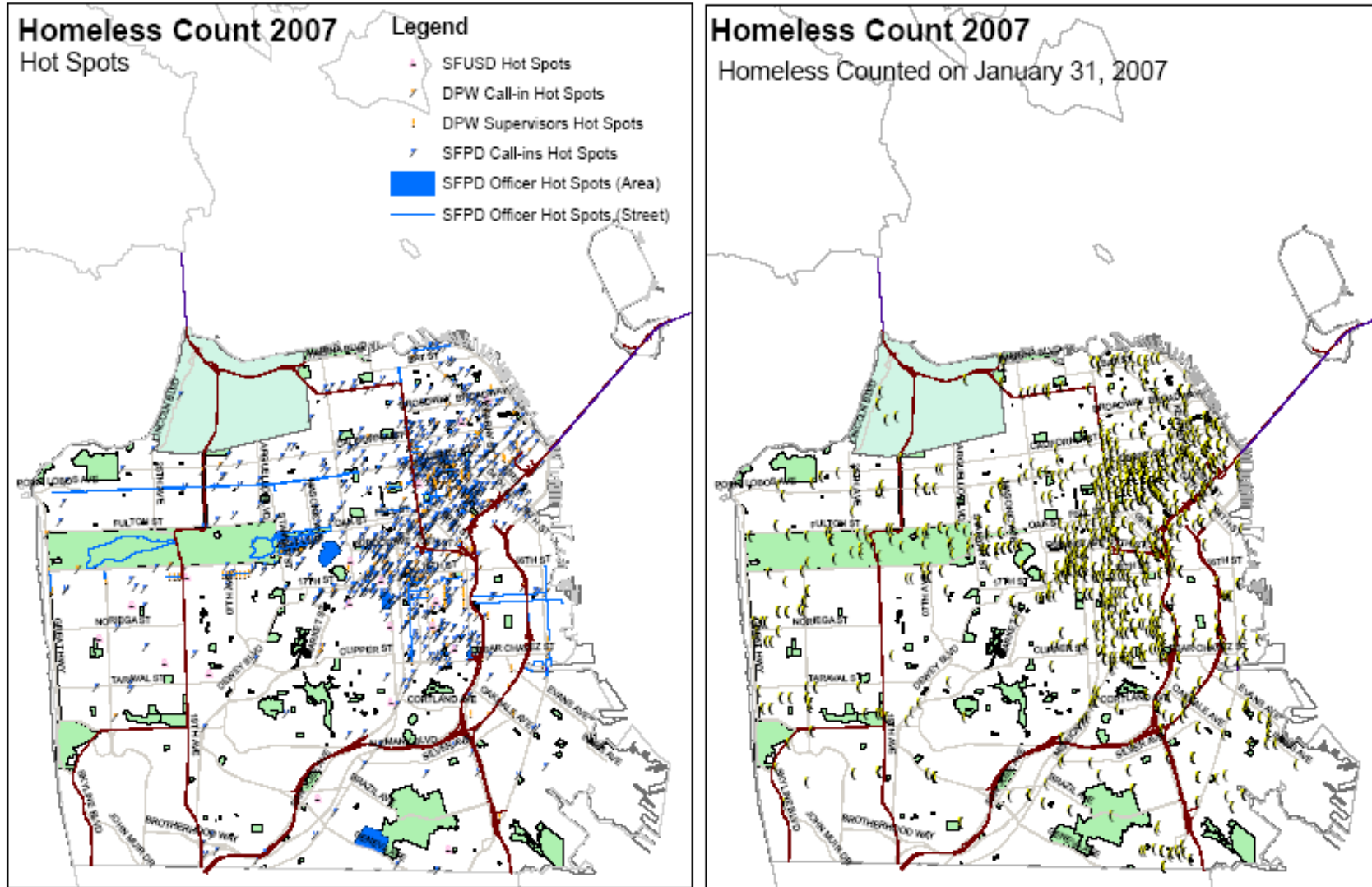
- unemployment                       mental disability                       discharge jail/prison
- unable to pay rent/mortgage                       physical disability                       bad credit
- family or personal illness                       domestic violence                       criminal record
- alcohol/substance abuse                       child abuse                       other
- declined to answer

## Appendix D: Map of Supervisor Districts



## Appendix E: Hot Spot Maps

*Unsheltered Count: Known Hotspots Compared to Street Count Results* These maps compare the areas where homeless people had been reported to be living (that were used in the route planning process) with where people were actually counted.



## ENROLLMENT OF FAMILIES IN TRANSITION (HOMELESS CHILDREN)

---

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized in December 2001, ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Children of Families in Transition (FIT) who wish to enroll in SFUSD for the first time will enroll at the Educational Placement Center (EPC) located at 555 Franklin Street, Room 100. Please contact the EPC at 241-6085 or 241-6136. Students may apply to any school in the district provided they meet the admissions requirement if there is one. The actual assignment to a specific school will be based on space availability for the grade level or program need. The District Liaison for Families in Transition is Ms. Rosalinda del Moral, located at 555 Portola Drive, Bungalow #2. Her phone number is 695-5569.

### **What if a homeless child or youth does not have the documents required for school registration?**

- Schools, agencies, shelters and others shall contact a placement counselor at EPC (241-6085 or 241-6136) to start the process for enrollment.
- The school selected shall immediately enroll the child/youth in school, even if the child or youth lacks records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation (Sec. 722(g)(3)(i)).
- If a child or youth lacks immunizations or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school can refer parent/guardian to the District Liaison, who shall help obtain necessary immunizations or immunization or medical records. (Sec 722(g)(3)(C)(iii)).
- The enrolling school must immediately contact the last school attended to obtain relevant academic and other records (Sec. 722(g)(3)(c)(ii)).
- The terms “enroll” and “enrollment” are defined to include attending classes and participating fully in school activities (Sec. 725(3)).
- Any record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, of each homeless child or youth must be maintained so that the records are available, in a timely fashion (14 days grace period), when a child or youth enters a new school or school district, and in a manner consistent with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (Section 722(g)(3)(D)).
- Coordinating services provided to the shelters & others by the District Liaison include Muni fast passes, uniforms, tutoring, and school materials.

**Dispute Resolution Process** -Local educational agencies (LEAs) must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool program, as other children and youths. Following are the components for resolving disputes:

- If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the child/youth must be immediately enrolled in the school in which he/she is seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute (PL 107-110, Section 722(g)(3)(E)(iv)). Enrollment is defined as “attending classes and participating fully in school activities.”
- The school must refer the student, parent, or guardian to the District Liaison to carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible. The homeless liaison must ensure that the dispute resolution process is also followed for unaccompanied youths.
- A written explanation of the schools decision regarding school selection or enrollment must be provided to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth.
- If the dispute remains unresolved at the district level or is appealed, then the District Liaison shall forward all written materials to the Executive Director of Pupil Services for review and a decision within 5 working days.
- If the dispute remains unresolved, the Executive Director of Pupil Services shall forward all documents to the State Homeless Coordinator, Leanne Wheeler.

#### What children are considered homeless?

- **Children and Youth Living in Shelters, Single Room Occupancy (SRO), Transitional Housing, the Streets, Cars, Abandoned Buildings, and Other Inadequate Accommodations** are considered homeless.
- **Children and Youth Living in Trailer Parks and Camping Grounds:** Children living temporarily in trailer parks or camping areas because they lack adequate accommodations are considered homeless. But, if they are living there on a long-term basis in adequate accommodations they are not deemed homeless.
- **Doubled up Children and Youth:** Children living in housing that heir family shares with other families or individuals are considered homeless if they are doubled-up due to a loss of housing. But families who are voluntarily doubled-up to save money generally are not considered homeless.
- **Foster Children and Youth:** In general, children in foster homes are not considered homeless. But children placed in foster homes because of their parents’ lack of shelter are deemed homeless. Also, children living in an emergency shelter or transitional living facility because there is nowhere else to send them while they are awaiting placement in a foster home or home for neglected children are considered homeless - until the placement is made.
- **Hospitalized Children and Youth:** Children who are ready for discharge but remain hospitalized because their families have abandoned them are considered homeless. Children who were homeless prior to hospitalization are considered homeless while in the hospital unless regular and adequate accommodations will be made available to them upon discharge.
- **Incarcerated Children and Youth:** Children who are under the care of the State and are held in an institution because they have no other place to live are considered homeless.



- **Migratory Children and Youth:** Children of migrant workers are considered homeless only to the extent that they are staying in accommodations not fit for habitation.
- **Runaways:** Children who have run away from home and live in runaway shelters, on the streets, in abandoned buildings, or other “inadequate accommodations” even if their parents have and are willing to provide a home for them, are considered homeless.
- **Throwaways:** Children whose parents or guardians will not permit them to live at home are considered homeless if they live on the streets, in shelters, or other transitional or inadequate accommodations.
- **Unwed Mothers:** School-age children or youth who are living in homes for unwed and expectant mothers and have no other available living accommodations are considered homeless. But, if they are in such homes only to receive specific services, and intend to move to other adequate accommodations, they are not considered homeless.

In those cases in which children do not fit neatly into one of these clear categories, state and local educational agencies must make case-by-case determinations.