### 2014 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count

# **Preliminary Report**

### Introduction

#### **About the 2014 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count**

The 2014 homeless count is a 24-hour snapshot of people who were homeless in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12, 2014. It included people staying overnight in homeless shelters including transition houses for women fleeing violence and youth safe houses, people with No Fixed Address (NFA) staying temporarily in hospitals, jails and detox facilities, homeless people living outside, and others who were staying temporarily with others (couch surfing) and using homelessness services on the day of the count.

The purpose of the homeless count is to estimate the number of people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region, obtain a demographic profile of this population, and identify trends compared to previous counts.

Since 2002, homeless counts have been conducted across Metro Vancouver every three years. Decision-makers, funders and community agencies have relied on the regional count to understand trends in the visible homeless population. Count numbers are understood to be the <u>minimum</u> number of people who are homeless on a given day in the Metro Vancouver region. We know the count underestimates the number of people who are actually homeless.

The Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH) and the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (AHSC) provided oversight for the count methodology. The Metro Vancouver Homelessness Secretariat conducted the count on behalf of the RSCH. As in previous years, InFocus Consulting served as the Aboriginal Coordinator and coordinated the count of Aboriginal people who were homeless in partnership with the AHSC and Aboriginal service agencies.

The 2014 Homeless Count was made possible through funding from: the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy, City of Vancouver, Vancouver Foundation, Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia, and Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society. Translink provided in-kind support.

#### What's New?

This year, at the request of the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, the Metro Vancouver Homelessness Secretariat provided overall project management to implement the count instead of engaging an external consulting agency as has been done for previous counts.

The Homelessness Secretariat was assisted by nine Community Homelessness Tables (CHTs) across the region as well as the City of Vancouver, and homeless-serving agencies throughout the region lent their expertise and knowledge. Local Count Coordinators were engaged in each community to assist in recruiting volunteers and map survey locations for Count Day. More than 17 training sessions were held for about 900 volunteers throughout the region.

The 2014 homeless count built on the youth strategy that was pioneered in 2011 to address undercount issues for youth who are homeless. A Youth Coordinator was engaged to implement this strategy and a Youth Steering Committee was created to identify ways to encourage youth to 'count themselves in'. Close to 40 agencies that work with youth participated in this year's count. They took an 'outreach' approach to identify youth on the street and hosted events within their organizations to encourage youth to participate in the count.

#### What's the Same?

The 2014 count included homeless people living on the street people, people staying in homeless shelters, transition houses for women fleeing violence, and youth safe houses, people with No Fixed Address who were staying temporarily in a hospital, jail, or detox facility on the night of March 11/12, and people who were couch surfing and using homelessness services on the day of the count.

# **Preliminary Regional Results**

The following results are preliminary based on our initial analysis and are subject to change upon completion of our analysis and final report in July.

### **Total Homeless Population**

- A total of **2,770** people in the Metro Vancouver region were identified as homeless on March 12.
- The sheltered homeless population included 1,613 people staying overnight in homeless shelters, transition houses, and safe houses and 200 people with no fixed address.
- The unsheltered homeless population included 957 people living outside or staying temporarily with others (couch surfing) and using homelessness services on the day of the count.

Table 1. Total Unsheltered and Sheltered Homeless Populations in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2014)

		Shelf	Sheltered		
		Emergency			
Sub-Region	Unsheltered	Facilities/Shelters	No Fixed Address	Total	
Burnaby	44	13	1	58	
Delta/White Rock	5	10	4	19	
Langley	54	35	3	92	
Ridge Meadows	39	43	2	84	
New Westminster	32	70	2	104	
North Shore	60	54	5	119	
Richmond	22	11	5	38	
Surrey	140	210	53	403	
Tri-Cities	23	31	1	55	
Vancouver	538	1,136	124	1,798	
Total	957	1,613	200	2,770	

- Region-wide, 120 more people were identified as homeless in 2014 compared to 2011, representing a 5% increase.
- The number of homeless people identified in homeless counts in the region has not changed significantly since 2008.

Table 2. Changes in the Total Homeless Population in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2005 to 2014)

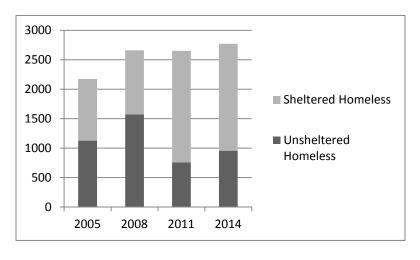
Sub-Region	2005 Total	2008 Total	2011 Total	2014 Total
	Homeless	Homeless	Homeless	Homeless
Burnaby	42	86	78	58
Delta/White Rock	12	17	14	19
Langley	57	86	103	92
Ridge Meadows	44	90	110	84
New Westminster	97	124	132	104
North Shore	90	127	122	119
Richmond	35	56	49	38
Surrey	392	402	400	403
Tri-Cities	40	94	48	55
Vancouver	1,364	1,576	1,581	1,798
Unspecified	1	2	13	0
Total	2,174	2,660	2,650	2,770

• A higher proportion of the homeless population were sheltered in 2014 and 2011 compared to 2008 and 2005 as shown in Table 3 and Figure 1.

Table 3. Changes in the Unsheltered and Sheltered Homeless Population in Metro Vancouver (2005 to 2014)

Homeless Category	2005 Total Homeless	2008 Total Homeless	2011 Total Homeless	2014 Total Homeless
Unsheltered Homeless	1,127	1,574	758	957
Sheltered Homeless	1,047	1,086	1,892	1,813
<b>Total Homeless</b>	2,174	2,660	2,650	2,770

Figure 1. Proportion of the Unsheltered and Sheltered Homeless Population in Metro Vancouver (2005, 2008, 2011 and 2014)



### The **Unsheltered** Homeless Population

- A total of 957 homeless people were identified as unsheltered in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12. This was a 26% increase compared to 2011 when 758 unsheltered homeless people were counted.
- The largest number of unsheltered homeless people was found in the City of Vancouver with 538 people, followed by Surrey where 140 unsheltered people were identified.

Table 4. Changes in the Unsheltered Homeless Population in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2011 and 2014)

Sub-Region	2011 Unsheltered	2014 Unsheltered	Actual Change	% Change
Burnaby	70	44	-26	-37%
Delta/White Rock	13	5	-8	-62%
Langley	60	54	-6	-10%
Ridge Meadows	63	39	-24	-38%
New Westminster	41	32	-9	-22%
North Shore	55	60	5	9%
Richmond	34	22	-12	-35%
Surrey	230	140	-90	-39%
Tri-Cities	28	23	-5	-18%
Vancouver	154	538	384	249%
Unspecified	10	0	-10	-100%
Total	758	957	199	26%

## **The Sheltered Homeless Population**

- A total of 1,813 homeless people in the Metro Vancouver region were identified as sheltered on March 12. This was a 4% decrease compared to 2011 when 1,892 sheltered homeless people were counted.
- The largest number of sheltered homeless people was found in the City of Vancouver with 1,260 people, followed by Surrey with 263 people.

Table 5. Changes in the Sheltered Homeless Population in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2011 and 2014)

Sub-Region	2011 Sheltered	2014 Sheltered	Actual Change	% Change
Burnaby	8	14	6	75%
Delta/White Rock	1	14	13	1300%
Langley	43	38	-5	-12%
Ridge Meadows	47	45	-2	-4%
New Westminster	91	72	-19	-21%
North Shore	67	59	-8	-12%
Richmond	15	16	1	7%
Surrey	170	263	93	55%
Tri-Cities	20	32	12	60%
Vancouver	1,427	1,260	-167	-12%
Unspecified	3	0	-3	-100%
Total	1,892	1,813	-79	-4%

### **The Aboriginal Homeless Population**

- A total of 582 homeless people identified as Aboriginal in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12.
- Aboriginal people continue to represent about one-third of the homeless population in the region.
- 72% of homeless Aboriginal people were found in the City of Vancouver and 12% in Surrey.

Table 6. Changes in the Aboriginal Homeless Population in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2008 to 2014)

Aboriginal Identity	2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Aboriginal	688	32%	394	27%	582	31%
Non-Aboriginal	1,453	68%	1,074	73%	1,282	69%
Total Respondents	2,141	100%	1,468	100%	1,864	100%
No Answer	519		1,182		906	
Total	2,660		2,650		2,770	

Table 7. Number of Unsheltered and Sheltered Homeless Aboriginal People in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2014)

	Unsheltered		Shel	Sheltered		Total	
Sub-Region	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Burnaby	11	3%	2	1%	13	2%	
Delta/White Rock	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
Langley	13	4%	2	1%	15	3%	
Ridge Meadows	14	4%	7	3%	21	4%	
New Westminster	7	2%	7	3%	14	2%	
North Shore	13	4%	10	4%	23	4%	
Richmond	6	2%	0	0%	6	1%	
Surrey	40	12%	27	11%	67	12%	
Tri-Cities	4	1%	2	1%	6	1%	
Vancouver	239	69%	178	76%	417	72%	
Total	347	100%	235	100%	582 <sup>1</sup>	100%	

### **Youth and Seniors**

- A total of 410 youth (under the age of 25) were counted as homeless in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12.<sup>2</sup> This is a 3% increase compared to 2011 when 397 homeless youth were identified and a 13% increase compared to 2008 when 364 youth were identified. Youth represented 20% of the homeless population in 2014 compared to 24% in 2011 and 15% in 2008.
- A total of 371 seniors (55 years and older) were counted as homeless in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12. This is a 38% increase compared to 2011 when 268 seniors were identified

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This is the total number of people who responded 'yes' to the survey question: "Do you consider yourself to be an Aboriginal person".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This includes 88 children under the age of 19 with their parents who identified as homeless.

and a 75% increase compared to 2008 when 212 seniors were identified. Seniors represented 18% of the homeless population in 2014, compared to 16% in 2011 and 9% in 2008.

Table 8. Changes in the Total Homeless Population by Age Group in Metro Vancouver (2008 to 2014)

Age Groups	2008 Total Homeless		2011 Tota	l Homeless	2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 19 Years	153		102		191	
19-24 Years	211	15%	221	24%	219	20%
Youth - unknown age	0		<b>74</b> <sup>3</sup>		0	
25-34 Years	436	18%	275	17%	332	16%
35-44 Years	726	30%	328	20%	413	20%
45-54 Years	661	28%	397	24%	512	25%
55-64 Years	180	8%	210	13%	281	14%
65+ Years	32	1%	58	3%	90	4%
Total Respondents	2,399	100%	1,665	100%	2,038	100%
No Answer	261		985		732	
Total	2,660		2,650		2,770	

Table 9. Number of Unsheltered and Sheltered Homeless Youth (Under Age 25) in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2014)

	Unshe	eltered	Shelt	Sheltered		tal
Sub-Region	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	5	2%	4	2%	9	2%
Delta/White Rock	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Langley	18	8%	2	1%	20	5%
Ridge Meadows	8	4%	7	4%	15	4%
New Westminster	6	3%	16	8%	22	5%
North Shore	10	5%	14	7%	24	6%
Richmond	0	0%	2	1%	2	0%
Surrey	27	12%	25	13%	52	13%
Tri-Cities	3	1%	6	3%	9	2%
Vancouver	141	65%	116	60%	257	63%
Total	218	100%	192	100%	410	100%

### Women and Children

- 88 children under the age of 19 accompanied their parents who were identified as homeless in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12 compared to 74 children in the 2011 count and 94 children in the 2008 count.
- A total of 527 women were found to be homeless in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12.
- Women represented 27% of the homeless population compared to 31% of the homeless population during the 2011 count and 27% in the 2008 count.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In 2011, youth some responses provided that a person was under the age of 25 but did not specify the exact age.

Table 10. Total Homeless Population in Metro Vancouver showing Accompanied Children (2014)

Homeless category	Adults and Unaccompanied youth		Accompanied children		Total homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Unsheltered Homeless	948	35%	9	10%	957	35%
Sheltered Homeless	1,734	65%	79	90%	1,813	65%
Shelters/Safe Houses	1,458	54%	39	44%	1,497	54%
Transition houses	76	3%	40	45%	116	4%
No Fixed Address	200	7%	0	0%	200	7%
Total Homeless	2,682	100%	88	100%	2,770	100%

Table 11. Changes in the Total Homeless Population by Gender in Metro Vancouver (2008 to 2014)

Gender	2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
			#	%	#	%
Male	1,679	72%	1,452	69%	1,419	73%
Female	619	27%	652	31%	527	27%
Transgender	22	1%	8	0%	9	0%
Total Respondents	2,320	100%	2,112	100%	1,955	100%
No Answer	340		538		815	
Total	2,660		2,650		2,770	

# **Final Report**

The final report is scheduled for release in July 2014. It will provide a more complete analysis of the count data and survey questions, including how long people have been homeless, health issues, barriers to ending homelessness, sources of income, and services that people who are homeless tend to use.

### About The Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH):

Since 2000, the RSCH has brought together a range of people and organizations collaborating to reduce and prevent homelessness in Metro Vancouver. The RSCH mandate is to develop and implement a Regional Homelessness Plan, recommend projects in Metro Vancouver for funding through the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy, and develop a regional understanding of homelessness solutions. The RSCH includes more than 150 organizations and individual members. http://stophomelessness.ca

#### About the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (AHSC):

The vision of the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee is to reduce and prevent Aboriginal homelessness and improve the quality of life for people who are homeless. The Committee was established in September 2000 and includes over 25 members representing Aboriginal service providers and community-based organizations. The Committee agrees that the most effective means of addressing the vision is through Aboriginal best practices and culturally appropriate services.