



Media Release

November 29, 2016

Preliminary Homeless Count Numbers Show a Decrease in Edmonton

Edmonton – Despite low oil prices and the province’s economic downturn, Edmonton’s homeless numbers are decreasing.

The 2016 Homeless Count found 1752 people without a home, a 24% decrease from 2014, and a 43% decrease from 2008 when the highest number of homeless Edmontonians was recorded. Edmonton’s overall population has increased 2.5% from 2014 to 2016.

“We see that we are making a difference for those experiencing homelessness in our city,” said Susan McGee, Chief Executive Officer of Homeward Trust Edmonton. “With the release of the preliminary Homeless Count numbers, we can say for certain we are on the right track, but we cannot become complacent. Despite the numbers dropping, there are still 1752 Edmontonians without a home, with 70% of those identified as chronically homeless. We know this count does not reflect the growing number of people and families are struggling to make ends meet, and to keep a roof over their heads.”

Of those counted:

- 48% identified as Indigenous. 5.4% of Edmonton’s overall population identifies as Indigenous.
- 3% were recent immigrants or refugees.
- 70 people were veterans of the military or RCMP.

The 2016 Count found an 11% decrease in the number of people using emergency shelters and a decrease in the number of those sleeping outdoors. Fewer people who were provisionally housed – or couch surfing – were counted.

“In 2014, we identified a shocking number of families experiencing homelessness,” said McGee. “We took action with the province and created the Urgent Families Initiative. That number has now dropped by 51%. We must continue to work together to bring an end to homelessness and to address the need of affordable housing in our city and in our province.”

This year was the first that Alberta’s seven largest cities – 7 Cities on Housing and Homelessness - conducted their point in time count on the same day, October 19. Across Alberta, 5373 people were counted as experiencing homelessness. That number represents a 19.2% decrease in the number of people without a home from 2014 to 2016, and a 31% decrease in homelessness across the province since 2008.

A full report, including analysis, will be available in the new year.

Homeward Trust is a community based organization that provides leadership and resources toward ending homelessness in Edmonton. We fulfill our mandate by leading initiatives and programs, engaging community stakeholders and partners, conducting research, creating awareness, and funding housing and support projects.



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Homeward Trust is holding a Community Update Wednesday, November 30 to delve deeper into these preliminary numbers as well as to provide updates on progress towards the goals of Edmonton's 10 Year Plan and our community's participation in the national 20,000 Homes Campaign. It will be happening at "The Heart" in the Robbins Health Learning Centre at MacEwan University from 5:30 to 6:30 pm.

For more information, please contact:

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