



**homeward trust**  
edmonton

opening doors. building hope.

## 2010 EDMONTON HOMELESS COUNT

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Homeward Trust is especially grateful to everyone who responded, especially the homeless individuals who took the time to willingly reveal their situation. This study would not have been possible without their participation.

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## ABOUT HOMEWARD TRUST

Homeward Trust is a community-based, comprehensive housing organization that provides leadership and resources towards ending homelessness in Edmonton. Our mandate is fulfilled by leading initiatives and programs, engaging community stakeholders and partners, conducting research, creating awareness and funding housing and support projects.

Since 2001, we have disbursed over \$100 million in funds for 80 capital and 75 support projects. We have been able to leverage those funds to attract an additional \$122 million in funds from other groups, and in total have created over 1900 new housing units.

Homeward Trust is one of seven community-based organizations in Alberta that work with the provincial Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to implement strategies set out in the Alberta government's ten year plan to end homelessness.

Homeward Trust embraces the principle of 'housing first' — that every person has the right to a safe, secure home. This principle is at the core of both the municipal and provincial ten year plans to end homelessness, and the housing first support program which Homeward Trust officially started on April 1, 2009.

In this program, the focus is on ending homelessness by providing permanent housing and follow-up support. Individuals who are experiencing homelessness are housed first and then given appropriate supports. The program is intended to last 12 months; clients are stabilized, then transitioned to a reduced level of support. The final stages of the program involve making plans to discharge the client, once they are able to be self-sufficient.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

As part of the research mandate and under the direction of the Homeless Count Committee, Homeward Trust Edmonton, and its predecessor organizations, has conducted a count of the number of homeless individuals in Edmonton since 1999. Counts were conducted in March and November of 1999, March and September of 2000, and biennially in October since 2002. This report presents the results of the 9<sup>th</sup> Edmonton Homeless Count, permitting trend analyses across an 11-year span.

## Methodology

Two key guiding principles inform the methods design for the Homeless Counts. First, to permit comparability across time, a concerted effort is made to ensure that the research design is replicated across count years. Second, since the count is a snapshot of the number of homeless on a given day, the overarching goal is to count as many homeless individuals and families in as inclusive yet efficient manner as possible.

Both a Street Count and a Shelter Count were used to capture as many homeless individuals as viable from as wide a range of circumstances as workable. The Street and Shelter Counts represent the absolute and sheltered homeless, respectively. Just under 300 volunteers were recruited to conduct the Street Count.

The Edmonton Homeless Counts also entail gathering and summarizing homelessness-related institutional data, including turnaways, registrations, and occupancy capacities from emergency shelters and discharges into homelessness from temporary residential institutions (e.g., transitional housing, group homes, half-way houses, correctional facilities, hospitals).

The 2010 Homeless Count was conducted on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010 between 5:00am and 10:00pm. The weather on this day was clear with temperatures in the city centre ranging throughout the count hours from a low of 8 degrees at 5:00am to a high of 16 degrees at 4:00pm.

## Major Findings

### Count Results

#### Total Number of Homeless

- On October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 2,421 homeless Edmontonians were counted. This is the first time a reduction in the number of homeless has occurred since the initial count conducted in 1999. Compared to 2008, 658 fewer homeless individuals were counted in 2010, for a reduction of 21%.
- Despite this significant recent decline, 1,585 more homeless were counted in 2010 than in 1999, putting the 2010 count at roughly three times higher than the 1999 count.

### **Absolute versus Sheltered Homeless**

- Of the total 2,421 homeless counted, 1,533 (63%) were 'absolute' homeless and 888 (37%) were 'sheltered' homeless. The number of absolute homeless declined at a lower rate than did the sheltered homeless between 2008 and 2010 and account for the majority (77%) of the increase in the total count between 1999 and 2010.

### **Family Structure and Characteristics**

- Of the total number of homeless individuals counted in 2010, 2,204 (91%) were single and 217 (9%) were in a family. Of the 71 families counted, 76% were headed by a single parent, with this type of family structure increasing to as high as 100% among the sheltered homeless.
- Between 2008 and 2010, the number of families counted declined by 47% and over the full 11 years of counts, increased by just 1%. Hence, the 1999 to 2010 increase in the number of homeless is almost entirely a function of an increase in the number of singles (accounting for 99% of the total 1,573 increase).

### **Demographic Characteristics of Adults (and non-dependent youth)**

- In 2010, of the total 2,269 homeless observable adults counted, 1,713 (75%) were male and 556 (25%) were female. Though the number of males and females declined at roughly the same rate between 2008 and 2010 (by about 20%), males accounted for 77% of the total 1999 to 2010 increase in the number of adult homeless.
- The Edmonton homeless adult population is most likely to be between the ages of 31 and 54 (comprising 61% of the total adult population). Between 2004 and 2010, a small aging trend is observed.
- In 2010, 921 (40%) of the homeless adults counted were Caucasian and 863 (38%) were Aboriginal (comparatively, just 5% of the total Edmonton population is Aboriginal). Over the full 11-year timeframe of counts, the increase in the Aboriginal population accounts for 36% of the total 1999 to 2010 total increase in adults while the increase in the number of Caucasians accounts for 35% of the increase in the adult population.

### **Street Count Geographic Location and Type of Location**

- Six in ten of the absolute homeless enumerated were counted in the downtown area and six in ten were counted at agencies and services.

### **Institutional Results**

- On October 5, 2010, 939 individuals were staying at shelters that had a combined capacity of 1,217 spaces for an overall occupancy rate of 77%.
- In 2010, there were fewer individuals than in previous years who were turned away from a shelter because of ineligibility, client behaviour, or because no spaces were available that night.
- The number of individuals discharged (or ready for discharge) into homeless from temporary residential institutions also decreased since 2006. This reduction may in part reflect a shift in discharge policies and procedures of these institutions that no longer permit residents to be released unless they have a place to go to.

**EDMONTON'S 2010 HOMELESS COUNT:**

**2,421**

## A. INTRODUCTION

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*“The primary goal is finding a permanent home for people who are without a place to live, regardless of their past or present issues.”*

A Place to Call Home: Edmonton's 10-year Plan to End Homelessness, Edmonton Committee to End Homelessness, p27

Homeward Trust (HTE) is a community-based, comprehensive housing organization that provides leadership and resources towards ending homelessness in Edmonton. Our mandate is fulfilled by leading initiatives and programs, engaging community stakeholders and partners, conducting research, creating awareness and funding housing and support projects. For further information about HTE please visit [www.homewardtrust.ca](http://www.homewardtrust.ca).

As part of the research mandate and under the direction of the Homeless Count Committee, Homeward Trust Edmonton, and its predecessor organizations, has conducted a count of the number of homeless individuals in Edmonton since 1999. Counts were conducted in March and November of 1999, March and September of 2000, and biennially in October since 2002. This report presents the results of the 9<sup>th</sup> Edmonton Homeless Count.

A point-in-time count of the number of Edmonton's homeless population is an essential starting framework from which to understand the experiences of each homeless individual and from which to develop policy directed towards specific demographic groups, while also showing the scope of the issue in Edmonton. Quantification of the number of homeless individuals and their demographic characteristics across time, moreover, provides one measure of the impact of the many housing initiatives that have been developed by HTE, by all three orders of government, and by other dedicated groups and individuals in the community. By conducting a street count (as opposed to just an agency or shelter count), this undertaking is also noteworthy since it attempts to enumerate the typically hard to reach “hidden homeless” who tend to not use shelters and other homelessness-related services.

All homeless counts have also included gathering information from institutions on count day. This includes occupancy and turnaway rates for shelters and the number of individuals discharged into homelessness from other temporary residential institutions (e.g. treatment centres, hospitals, and corrections facilities).

The methodology used to conduct the count and to gather institutional data is presented in the following section (B).

## B. METHODOLOGY

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### B.1 Homeless Count Guiding Principles

Two key guiding principles inform the methods design for the Homeless Counts. First, a concerted effort is made to ensure that the design is replicated across count years. This methodological consistency permits comparability of counts over time.<sup>1</sup> Such consistency also means that any problems with the design are replicated across count years as well, suggesting that if there are errors of under-representation (or duplication of counts), these are likely to be evident in every year. As a result, interpretation of the counts are best made relative to each other (e.g., as a time series).

Second, it is important to understand that since the Homeless Counts are a snapshot of the number of homeless on a given day, the overarching goal is to count as many homeless individuals and families in as inclusive yet efficient manner as possible. The goal of inclusiveness is met by counting the homeless at both the street and agency level and the goal of efficiency is met by keeping enumerators' questions to a minimum and by asking the questions in as simple a manner as possible.

Details of the methodology used to conduct the 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count and to collect the institutional data are outlined below. The section concludes with a list of definitions of terms used in this report.

### B.2 Homeless Count Methodology

The 2010 Homeless Count was conducted on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010 between 5:00am and 10:00pm. The weather on this day was clear with temperatures in the city centre ranging throughout the count hours from a low of 8 degrees at 5:00am to a high of 16 degrees at 4:00pm.

A Street Count and Shelter Count were used to capture as many homeless individuals as possible from as wide a range of circumstances as workable. The Street and Shelter Counts represent the absolute and sheltered homeless, respectively, and draw upon the following two definitions of type of homelessness<sup>2</sup>:

*Absolute Homeless:* Individuals and families with no housing alternatives. They may be sleeping "rough" on the street, in a stairwell or campsite.

*Sheltered Homeless:* Individuals and families counted at an emergency accommodation and who expect to be on the street at the end of their stay.

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<sup>1</sup> That said, the Homeless Count Committee has endeavored to make minor adjustments to the count design each year. These improvements have likely resulted in an increase in the number of homeless enumerated across time.

<sup>2</sup> These definitions follow those used in the document *Homelessness in Edmonton: A Call to Action*; 1999

## **B.2.1 Street Count of 'Absolute' Homeless**

Preparations for the Street Count included recruiting and training volunteer enumerators, selecting and coordinating base sites and walking routes, and working with homelessness-related agencies and organizations to ensure that counts could be conducted at their locations on the specified date.

Just under 300 volunteer enumerators were recruited to conduct the Street Count, totaling over 350 shifts. This figure meets the volunteer target deemed to adequately cover the Edmonton region and exceeds the number of volunteers in 2008 by 80 individuals. Enumerators were not required to have any previous experience working with the homeless, but were encouraged to attend a 3-hour orientation session on September 28<sup>th</sup>. Enumerators who did not attend the orientation received methodological, safety, and sensitivity training at their base site on count day. Each of the 10 base sites were managed by a coordinator with previous experience working with the homeless or who had worked on earlier homeless counts. For safety purposes, enumerators traveled in groups (minimum of 2 people) and were strongly encouraged to stick together on their route. Protocols were also in place for debriefing volunteers after their 2-hour shift should they feel the need to talk about the effects of their count experience.

The Street Count involved approaching individuals along predetermined walking routes where the homeless are known to congregate. This method enables the enumeration of the typically hard to reach “hidden homeless” who tend to not use shelters and other homelessness-related services.<sup>3</sup> The Street Count also entailed enumerators visiting, at peak hours throughout the day, homeless-related agencies such as food banks, employment, drop-in, health, and crises centres, and bottle depots.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to reviewing the effectiveness of enumeration routes and sites that were used in previous counts, the Homeless Count Committee identified new routes and sites based on their own knowledge of the homeless community and in consultation with agencies. As a result of this review, 2 entirely new base sites, 4 new walking routes, and 1 bottle depot were added to the Street Count in 2010. Additionally, to capture individuals who do not tend to utilize services or who may be living in camps, walking routes were identified and enumerated through the river valley park system and in other undeveloped areas both in the urban core and on the perimeter of the city.<sup>5</sup> Please see Appendix A for a list of participating agencies and walking routes, including notations for which were new in 2010, and Appendix B for a map detailing the count sites.

To avoid double counting, each individual encountered by enumerators were asked if they had already been approached by a count volunteer, or if they had been asked about their housing situation that day. Determination of homelessness was done by asking individuals the question; “Do you have a permanent residence to return to tonight?” Those indicating that they did not have a permanent residence to return to that night were further asked if they had any children under the age of 16 staying with them that evening,

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<sup>3</sup> Other “hidden” homeless include those staying with friends or relatives (i.e., “couch surfers”) and these are an especially difficult group to locate and count.

<sup>4</sup> A few agencies volunteered to conduct their own count at their site over the course of the entire day (as oppose to having enumerators drop by throughout the day), thus adding to the comprehensiveness of the homeless count coverage.

<sup>5</sup> A few routes and sites were dropped in 2010 because they were no longer deemed as areas where the homeless congregate or, as in the case of two agencies, they opted to not participate in the count.

and if so, the number of children and the number of other adult caregivers, if applicable. Numerators also observed the gender, age category, and ethnicity of the adults counted as homeless.<sup>6</sup>

## **B.2.2 Emergency Shelter Count of ‘Sheltered’ Homeless**

Staff members of emergency shelters were asked to enumerate the number of homeless staying at the shelter on the night of October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

To reduce duplication of counts, shelter staff also noted if an individual staying at their shelter had already been asked about their housing situation on count day. Those who indicated that they had already been approached in the Street Count were not included in the Shelter Count since they were already included in the “absolute” homeless. This practice results in an under-count of sheltered individuals (and by extension, an over-count of the absolute homeless). Furthermore, while every effort was made to ensure that the same individuals were not counted more than once, it is not possible for us to determine if these protocols were consistently followed and there is therefore the possibility of some duplication in the data, especially between the sheltered and absolute homeless. Comparisons between the absolute and sheltered homeless over time, however, are still appropriate since the same methods were used in all previous counts. This approach does not result in the duplication of the number of registered individuals presented for the institutional data (discussed below) since they include all sheltered individuals, irrespective of whether they were counted at a shelter or elsewhere.

Two new shelters that had opened since 2008 were added to the Shelter Count data in 2010. These include Women in Need III (to accommodate homeless immigrant women) and Valeda House (to accommodate homeless women and children). A third shelter, E4C Crossroads which caters to youth and women who are homeless and want help to exit prostitution was also added to the 2010 Shelter Count data. However, three shelters that were included in the 2008 count were not included in the 2010 count. Two of these shelters had since changed their mandate to the provision of transitional housing and therefore no longer qualified as emergency shelters (WINGS and Inner City Youth Housing Project) and one shelter (Protective Safe House) did not participate in 2010. The net result of these changes in shelter participation between 2008 and 2010 is a reduction of 137 shelter spaces. Please see Appendix C for a list of participating shelters in 2010 compared to 2008.

## **B.3 Institutional Data**

As has been the practice in previous count years, emergency shelter staff were also asked to note the number of individuals turned away from the shelter because of ineligibility, client behaviour, or because no spaces were available that night. These data, along with the total number of registrations and the occupancy capacity of each shelter, are used to provide turnaway and occupancy rates for shelters.

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<sup>6</sup> Since homeless adult caregivers and children were not necessarily present at the point of contact with the main enumerated caregiver, the characteristics of these individuals were not observable and are therefore not presented in Section C.5. These individuals are, however, included in the total count of homeless.

In addition, temporary residential institutions (e.g., transitional housing, groups homes, half-way houses, correctional facilities, hospitals) were asked to report on the number of discharged individuals on count day. Discharges are defined as individuals who had either been discharged or were ready for discharge with no permanent residence to go to on count day. Both types of institutional data are presented and analyzed separately in Section D.

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

### Guiding Definitions

Homeless: Persons or families living on the streets or in other places that are not intended or suitable for permanent residence. (A Place to Call Home: Edmonton's 10-year Plan to End Homelessness, 2009)

Absolute Homeless: Individuals and families with no housing alternatives. They may be sleeping "rough" on the street, in a stairwell or campsite.

Sheltered Homeless: Individuals and families counted at an emergency accommodation and who expect to be on the street at the end of their stay.

### Count Definitions

Homeless Count: The total number of individuals approached who reported not having a permanent place to stay on the night of count day plus the total number of individuals staying at an emergency shelter on the night of the count. Both figures also include the number of children staying within an adult caregiver on the night of the count and other adult caregivers.

Absolute Homeless: The total number of homeless individuals counted on the street or at a service-agency.

Sheltered Homeless: The total number of homeless individuals counted at a shelter on the night of count day.

Adults: Individuals greater than 16 years of age and non-dependent youth.

Children: Individuals less than 17 years of age who were staying with an adult caregiver on the night of the count.

Caregivers: Adults with dependent children staying with them on the night of the count.

### Institutional Data Definitions

Turnaways: Individuals not provided with a bed in an emergency shelter because of ineligibility, client behaviour, or because no spaces were available that night.

Turnaway Rate: The ratio of the number of individuals not provided with a bed to the total number of available spaces.

Occupancy Rate: The ratio of the number of individuals registered in a shelter to the total number of available spaces at that shelter.

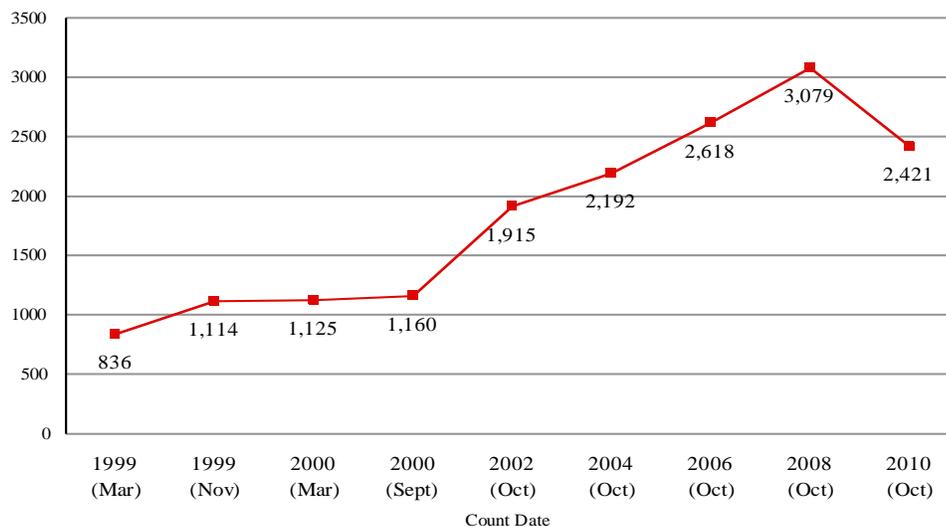
Discharges: Individuals who had either been discharged or were ready for discharge from a temporary residential institution (e.g., hospital, treatment centre or corrections facility) on count day and who had no permanent residence to go to.

# C. COUNT RESULTS

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## C.1 Total Number of Homeless

Figure 1: Total Number of Homeless<sup>1</sup> by Count Date



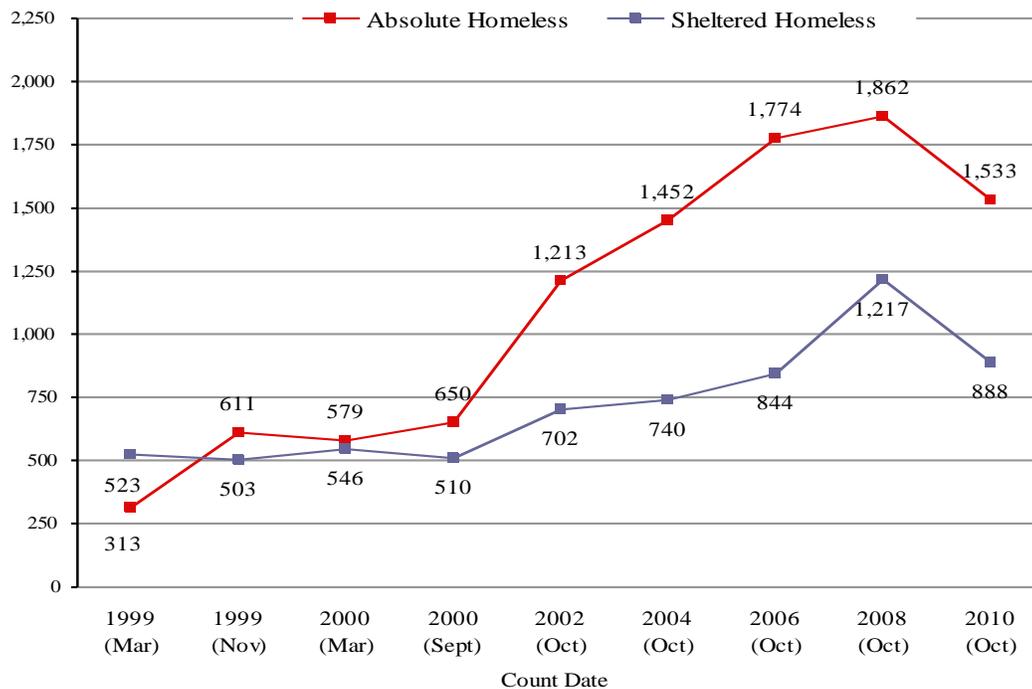
Source: Edmonton Homeless Counts

<sup>1</sup> The number of homeless is defined as the total number of individuals approached who reported not having a permanent place to stay on the night of count day.

- On October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 2,421 homeless Edmontonians were counted. This is the first time a reduction in the number of homeless has occurred since the initial count conducted in 1999.
- Compared to 2008, 658 fewer homeless individuals were counted in 2010, for a reduction of 21%.
- Despite this significant recent decline, 1,585 more homeless were counted in 2010 than in 1999. In other words, the 2010 count is still approximately three times higher (2.9) than the 1999 count of homeless.

## C.2 Absolute versus Sheltered Homeless

Figure 2: Type of Homelessness<sup>1</sup> by Count Date



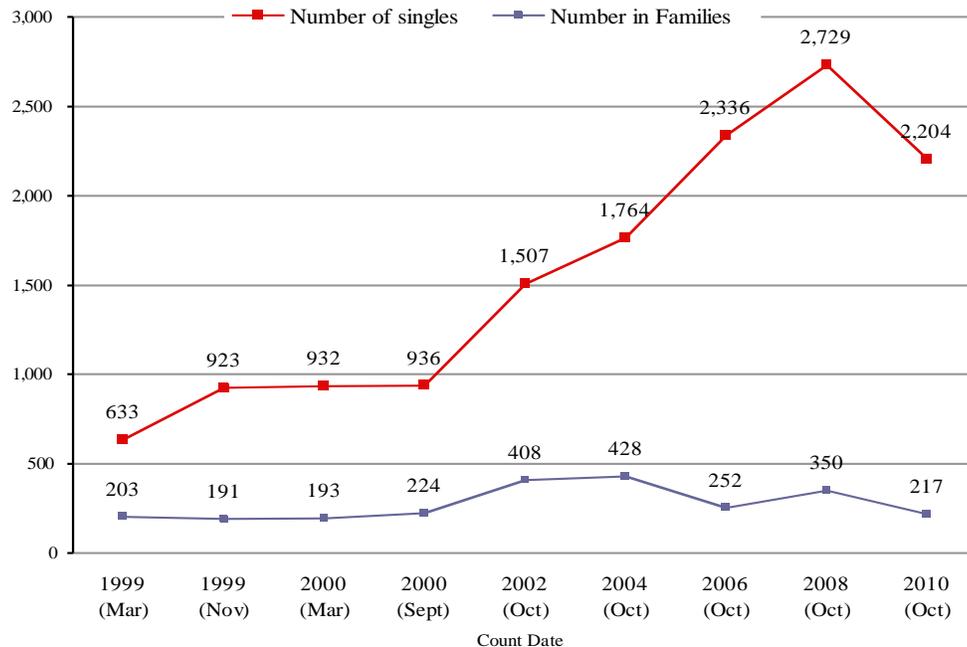
Source: Edmonton Homeless Counts

<sup>1</sup> Absolute Homeless includes homeless individuals counted on the street or at service agencies. Sheltered Homeless includes homeless individuals counted at an emergency shelter.

- Of the total number of homeless in 2010, 1,533 (63%) were absolutely homeless and 888 (37%) were sheltered homeless.
- Between 2008 and 2010, the sheltered homeless declined by a larger proportion than the absolute homeless (27% compared to 18%).
- Between the full 1999 to 2008 time period, the number of absolute homeless increased at a much higher rate than did the number of sheltered homeless: The 2010 absolute count is roughly five times higher than it was in 1999, while the 2010 shelter count is less than two times higher. As a result, the increase in the absolute homeless accounts for the vast majority of the total 1999 to 2010 increase in the number of homeless displayed in Figure 1 (accounting for 1,220 or 77% of the total 1,585 increase).

## C.3 Family Structure

Figure 3: Family Structure<sup>1</sup> by Count Date



Source: Edmonton Homeless Counts

<sup>1</sup> Families are defined as adult individuals who have children staying with them on the evening of count day. The number of homeless individuals in a family is calculated as the combined total number of adult caregivers (94) plus the total number of children (123).

- In 2010, there were 2,204 single homeless (91%) and 217 individuals in families (9%, including 94 adult caregivers and 123 children).
- Between 2008 and 2010, the number of single homeless decreased by 19% (525), while the number of individuals in families decreased by 38% (133).
- Once again, the 2010 counts are still higher than the 1999 counts, though the number of singles increased at a much greater rate over the 11-year period than did the number of individuals in families (by 248% for singles compared to 7% for caregivers and their children). As a result, the increase in singles accounts for 99% (1,571 out of 1,585) of the total 1999 to 2010 increase in the number of homeless.

## C.4 Characteristics of Homeless Families

**Table 1: Homeless Family Characteristics by Type of Homelessness<sup>1</sup>, 2010**

Type of Homelessness	Families <sup>2</sup>			Number of Children <sup>4</sup>
	Number of Families	Single Caregiver Families	Dual (or more) Caregiver Families	
<b>Total Families</b>	<b>71<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>54</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>123</b>
(Percent)	(100%)	(76%)	(24%)	(100%)
Absolute Homeless Families	38	21	17	62
(Percent)	(54%)	(55%)	(45%)	(50%)
Sheltered Homeless Families	33	33	0	61
(Percent)	(46%)	(100%)	(0%)	(50%)

Source: 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count

<sup>1</sup> Absolute Homeless includes homeless individuals counted on the street or at service agencies. Sheltered Homeless includes homeless individuals counted at an emergency shelter.

<sup>2</sup> Families are defined as adult individuals who have children staying with them on the evening of count day.

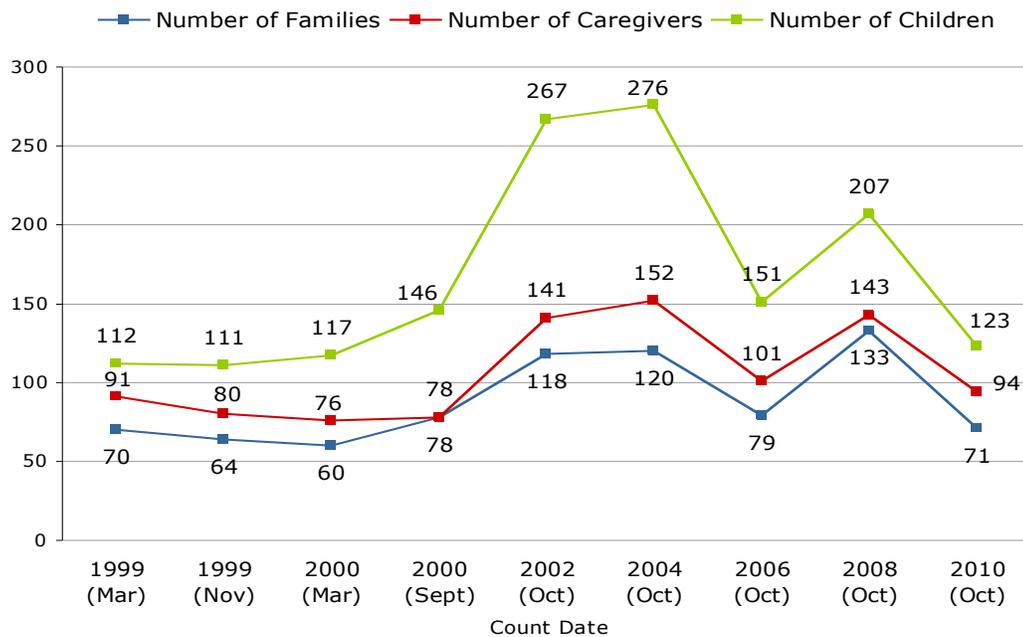
<sup>3</sup> The 71 families are comprised 94 individual caregivers, 54 of whom were single parent families and 40 of whom were part of the 17 dual (or more) caregiver families.

<sup>4</sup> Children are defined as those less than 17 years of age who were staying with an adult caregiver on the night of the count.

- In 2010, 71 homeless families were counted, 54 (76%) of which were headed by a single caregiver.
- The number of families is somewhat evenly distributed between the absolute and sheltered homeless (38 and 33, respectively). Proportionally speaking, however, shelters are more likely to be accommodating homeless families: though the absolute homeless comprise 64% of the total homeless (Figure 2), they make up 54% of the total number of families (Table 1). And while the sheltered homeless make up just 36% of the total homeless (Figure 2), they comprise 46% of the total number of families (Table 1).
- It is not surprising that all 33 sheltered families are headed by a single parent since all of these individuals were staying at women's shelters. Nonetheless, they are nearly twice as likely than the absolute homeless to be lone-parent families (100% compared to 55%). Though it is difficult to make direct comparisons to other indicators of lone parenthood (since our measurement only included respondents who had their children with them), it is notable that, as of 2006, just 18% of Edmonton families were headed by a single parent.<sup>7</sup>
- Though the number of children is also evenly distributed across type of homelessness (62 and 61), sheltered children comprise 7% of the 888 sheltered homeless, while absolute homeless children comprise 4% of the total 1,533 absolute homeless population.

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Population

**Figure 4: Homeless Family Characteristics<sup>1</sup> by Count Date**



Source: 2008 Edmonton Homeless Count

<sup>1</sup> Children are defined as those less than 17 years of age who were staying with an adult caregiver on the night of the count.

- Between 2008 and 2010, the number of families, caregivers, and children noticeably declined (by 47%, 34%, and 41%, respectively).
- The long-term trend in family characteristics has been somewhat volatile, though a pattern of fewer families (and their component caregivers and children) is generally observable since peaking in 2004. Otherwise, the number of families and caregivers in 2010 are only marginally higher than they were in 1999 (by 1% and 3%). At 10%, the 1999 to 2010 proportional increase in children is slightly more evident.

## C.5 Characteristics of Homeless Adults (and Non-Dependent Youth)

The following sections present the gender, age profile, and ethnicity of adults and non-dependent youth (individuals less than 17 years of age who were not with a caregiver). It is important to understand that these data represent the demographic characteristics observed by enumerators and were not self-reported by respondents. The data for the characteristics presented in the table and figures in this section do not include children and secondary adult caregivers for whom the demographic characteristics were not observable. For the 2010 count, 123 children and 23 secondary adult caregivers are not included in the data, thereby reducing the sub-population from the total number of 2,421 down to 2,275.

Furthermore, 6 additional cases are excluded from the gender data because enumerators were not able to determine the gender of these respondents (lowering the sub-population size for gender further down to 2,269).

### C.5.1 Gender

**Table 2: Gender by Type of Homelessness<sup>1</sup>, 2010  
(Adults and Non-Dependent Youth Only; n = 2,269)<sup>2</sup>**

Type of Homelessness	Total	Gender	
		Males	Females
<b>Total Homeless Adults (and non-dependent youth)</b>	<b>2,269</b>	<b>1,713</b>	<b>556</b>
(Percent)	(100%)	(75%)	(25%)
Absolute Homeless	1,442	1,050	392
(Percent)	(100%)	(73%)	(27%)
Sheltered Homeless	827	663	164
(Percent)	(100%)	(80%)	(20%)

Source: 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count

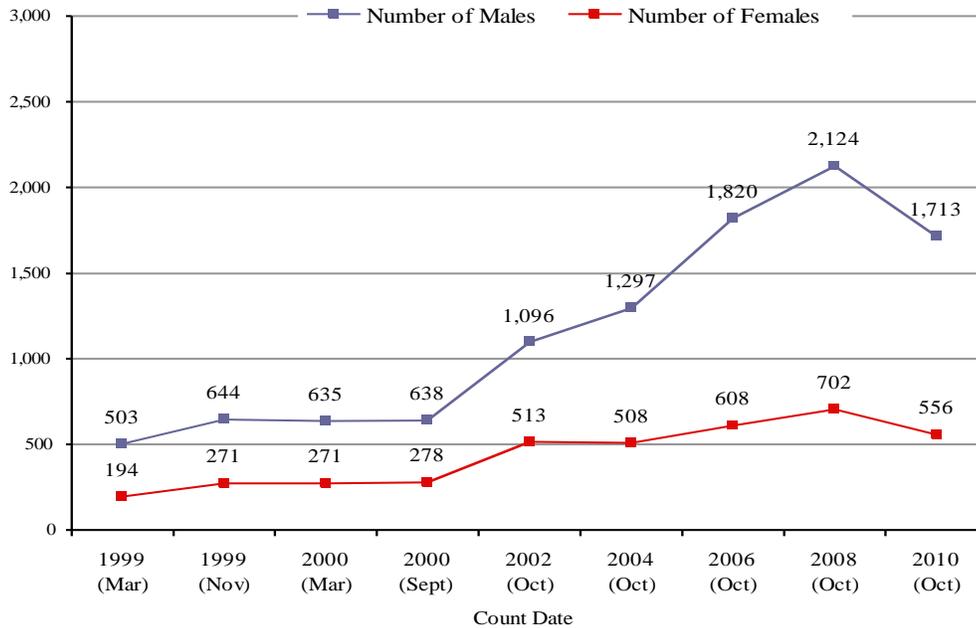
<sup>1</sup> Absolute Homeless includes homeless individuals counted on the street or at service agencies. Sheltered Homeless includes homeless individuals counted at an emergency shelter.

<sup>2</sup> Gender is presented for adults and non-dependent youth only. The data exclude 123 children and 23 secondary adult caregivers for whom gender was not observable and 6 cases for which gender was unknown, for a total reduction of 152 cases (2,421 – 152 = 2,269).

- In 2010, 1,713 (75%) of the homeless adults counted were male and 556 (25%) were female.
- Though males outnumber females by a large margin within both types of homelessness, females are somewhat less representative among the sheltered homeless than they are among the absolute homeless (20% of sheltered homeless were female compared to 27% of absolute homeless).
- Whereas gender parity is observed in the total Edmonton population, the gender distribution of the homeless is much more heavily weighted towards males.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Of the total population enumerated in the 2009 municipal census of Edmonton, 50% were male and 50% were female.

**Figure 5: Gender by Count Date  
(Adults and Non-Dependent Youth Only)<sup>1</sup>**



Source: 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count

<sup>1</sup>Gender is presented for adults and non-dependent youth only. The data exclude children and secondary adult caregivers for whom gender was not observable and respondents for whom gender was unknown.

- Between 2008 and 2010, the number of males and the number of females declined by approximately the same proportion (19% for males and 21% for females).
- Once again, despite the recent decline, the 2010 gender counts are still higher in 2010 than in 1999. Since the number of males increased more dramatically than the number of females (especially between September of 2000 and October of 2008), the current number of males is 3.4 times higher than the 1999 figure and the number of females just 2.9 times higher. Males, therefore, accounted for 77% of the total 1999 to 2010 increase in adults (1,210 of the total 1,572 increase in adults) and the gap between the number of males and females has widened over time.

## C.5.2 Age

**Table 3: Age Distribution by Type of Homelessness<sup>1</sup>, 2010  
(Adults and Non-Dependent Youth Only; n=2,275)<sup>2</sup>**

Type of Homelessness	Total	Age Distribution				
		0-16	17-30	31-54	55-65	66+
<b>Total Homeless Adults (and non-dependent youth)</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>1,398</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>63</b>
(Percent)	(100%)	(2%)	(22%)	(61%)	(12%)	(3%)
Absolute Homeless	1,448	33	334	887	157	37
(Percent)	(100%)	(2%)	(23%)	(61%)	(11%)	(3%)
Sheltered Homeless	827	10	157	511	123	26
(Percent)	(100%)	(1%)	(19%)	(62%)	(15%)	(3%)

Source: 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count

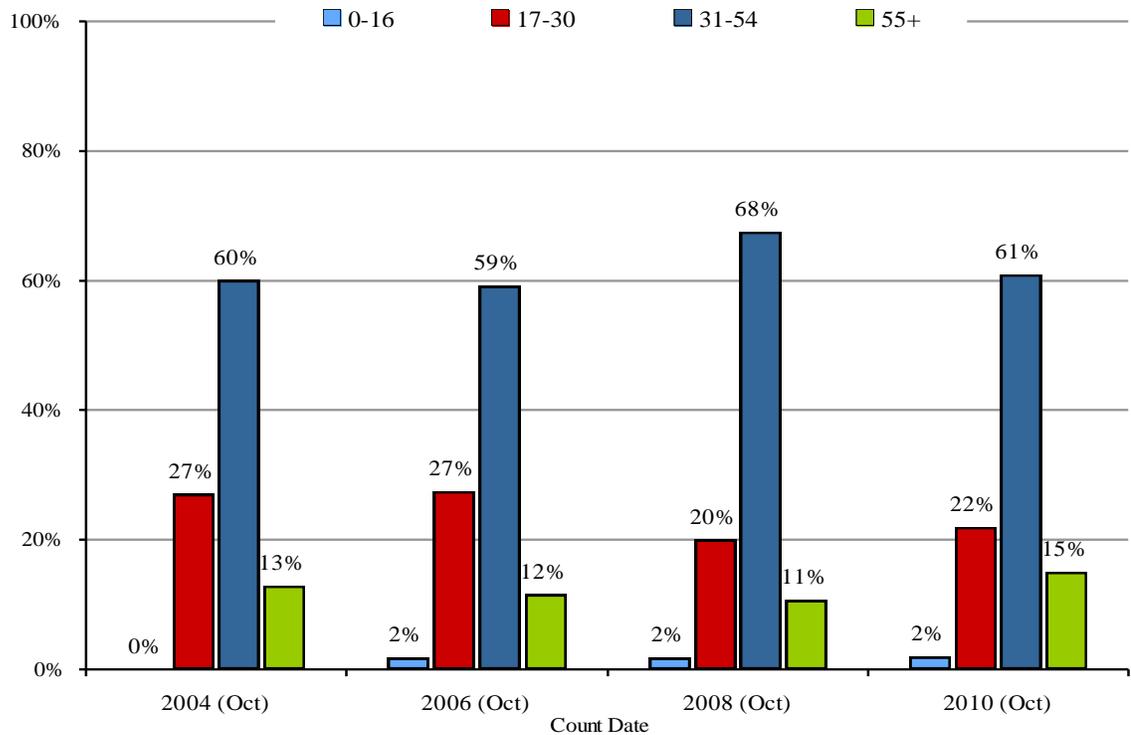
<sup>1</sup> Absolute Homeless includes homeless individuals counted on the street or at service agencies. Sheltered Homeless includes homeless individuals counted at an emergency shelter.

<sup>2</sup> Age is presented for adults and non-dependent youth only. The data exclude 123 children and 23 secondary adult caregivers for whom age was not observable, for a total reduction of 146 cases (2,421 – 146 = 2,275).

- The homeless adults (and non-dependent youth) counted in 2010 were the most likely to be between 31 and 54 years of age (61%).<sup>9</sup>
- Though the sheltered homeless are slightly more likely to be older than the absolute homeless, the differences in age distribution between the two types of homelessness are not really very large.
- When the 43 individuals who are less than 17 years of age (the non-dependent youth in Table 3) are combined with the 123 children who were with a caregiver on the night of the count (from Table 1), the total number of children and youth represent 7% (166) of the total 2,421 homeless counted.

<sup>9</sup> If the 123 children counted are included in the age calculations (assuming they are all less than 17 years of age), the distribution across age categories is 7% for 0-16, 20% for 17-30, 58% for 31 to 54, 12% for 55 to 65, and 3% for greater than 65 years of age.

**Figure 6: Age Percent Distribution by Count Date<sup>1</sup>  
(Adults and Non-Dependent Youth Only)<sup>2</sup>**



Source: Edmonton Homeless Counts

<sup>1</sup>Age data are not presented for counts conducted prior to 2004 since the age categories for these earlier years are significantly different and are therefore not comparable. In addition, the three most recent counts (2006, 2008, and 2010) include non-dependent youth who are defined as individuals less than 17 years of age but who were not accompanied by a caregiver on count day. In contrast, the 2004 data do not likely include independent youth due to differences in calculation methods and do not necessarily reflect the fact that there were no independent youth in that count year.

<sup>2</sup>Age is presented for adults and non-dependent youth only. The data exclude children and secondary adult caregivers for whom age was not observable.

- A shift in the age distribution of the homeless in 2008 does not appear to be a continuing trend, however, the longer term 2004 to 2010 pattern indicates a slight aging trend of Edmonton's homeless population: There has been small decline in the proportion of 17 to 30 year olds (from 27% to 22%) and a corresponding (and even smaller) increase in the proportion of those over 55 years of age (from 13% to 15%).

### C.5.3 Ethnicity

**Table 4: Ethnicity by Type of Homelessness<sup>1</sup>, 2010  
(Adults and Non-Dependent Youth Only; n=2,275)<sup>2</sup>**

Type of Homelessness	Ethnicity			
	Total	Caucasian	Aboriginal	Other / Unknown
<b>Total Homeless Adults (and non-dependent youth)</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>491</b>
(Percent)	(100%)	(40%)	(38%)	(22%)
Absolute Homeless Adults	1,448	578	685	185
(Percent)	(100%)	(40%)	(47%)	(13%)
Sheltered Homeless Adults	827	343	178	306
(Percent)	(100%)	(41%)	(22%)	(37%)

Source: 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count

<sup>1</sup> Absolute Homeless includes homeless individuals counted on the street or at service agencies. Sheltered Homeless includes homeless individuals counted at an emergency shelter.

<sup>2</sup> Ethnicity is presented for adults and non-dependent youth. The data exclude 123 children and 23 secondary adult caregivers for whom ethnicity was not observable, for a total reduction of 146 cases (2,421 – 146 = 2,275).

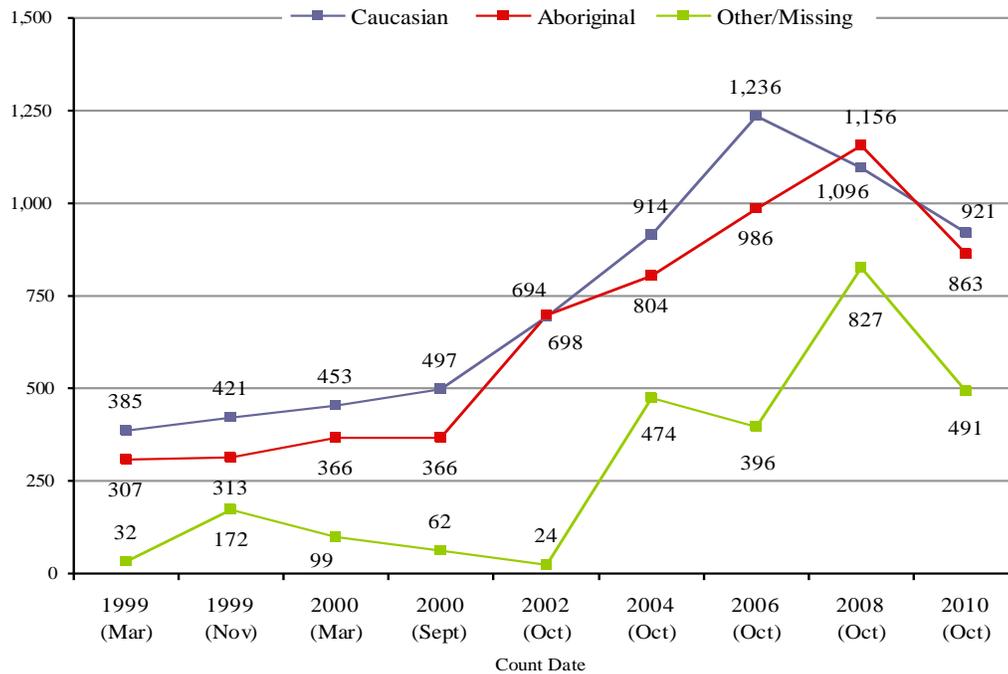
- In 2010, 921 (40%) of the homeless counted were Caucasian, 863 (38%) were Aboriginal, and 491 (22%) were an 'other' ethnicity or their ethnicity was not known.<sup>10</sup>
- About the same proportion of Caucasian homeless were absolutely homeless or sheltered homeless (40% and 41%, respectively).
- In contrast, the Aboriginal population was much more likely to be absolutely homeless than they were to be staying at a shelter (47% compared to 22%).<sup>11</sup>
- Whereas the Aboriginal population accounts for 38% of the homeless population counted in 2010, it comprises 5% of the total Edmonton population.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Since the "other/unknown" homeless were not distinguished at the point of contact, we have no way of knowing how many homeless were of an 'other' ethnicity.

<sup>11</sup> The large proportion of sheltered homeless reported as being "other / unknown" (37%) may in part account for the unexpectedly low proportion of sheltered Aboriginals (22%).

<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Population

**Figure 7: Ethnicity<sup>1</sup> by Count Date  
(Adults and Non-Dependent Youth Only)**



Source: Edmonton Homeless Counts

<sup>1</sup>Ethnicity is presented for adults and non-dependent youth only. The data exclude children and secondary adult caregivers for whom ethnicity was not observable.

- Between 2008 and 2010, the number of Caucasian homeless counted declined by 175 (16%) and the Aboriginal population by 293 (25%).
- Both the Aboriginal and Caucasian homeless populations increased throughout the early to mid 2000s. However, whereas the Aboriginal population did not start to decline until after 2008, the Caucasian population began a downward trend as soon as 2006.
- Once again, these declines were insufficient to offset the longer term pattern of growth in these respective ethnicities with both Aboriginal and Caucasian homeless increasing by two and one half times between 1999 and 2010. The increase in the Aboriginal population accounts for 36% of the total 1999 to 2010 increase in adults while the increase in the number of Caucasians counted accounts for 35% of the increase in the adult homeless population.

## C.6 Street Count Geographic Location and Type of Location

The geographic location of individuals enumerated in the street portion of the count (representing the 'absolute' homeless) is presented below in Table 5. These data provide an indication of where, other than shelters, Edmonton's homeless population tend to congregate. Locations are provided for the broad geographical quadrant of the City and for each base site associated with a quadrant. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of walking routes, agencies, and bottle depots associated with each base site.

**Table 5: Geographic Location of Street Count  
(Main Absolute Homeless Respondent Only; n=1,435)<sup>1</sup>**

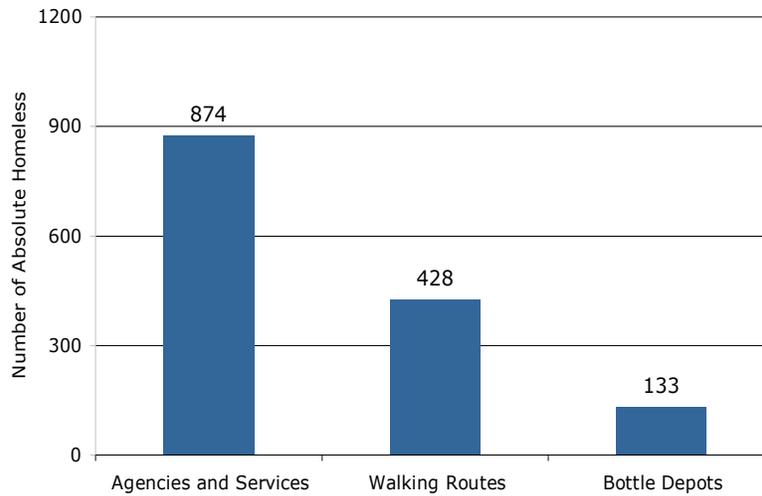
Geographical Quadrant and Base Site	Count	Percent
<b>Total Absolute Homeless</b>	<b>1,435</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Downtown Total</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>62%</b>
Native Counseling Services of Alberta - Cunningham Place	196	42%
Boyle Street Community Services	150	20%
<b>Northeast Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>16%</b>
Candora Society of Edmonton	26	2%
Mosaic Centre	48	3%
Edmonton Inner City Housing Society	111	8%
Landlord and Tennant's Advisory Board	42	3%
<b>South Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>10%</b>
Old Strathcona Youth Co-op & Strathcona Baptist Church	137	10%
<b>West End Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>4%</b>
Jasper Place Health and Wellness Centre	59	4%
<b>West Central Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>3%</b>
Eric Cormack Centre	39	3%
Native Counseling Services of Alberta - Head office	10	1%
<b>Northwest Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1%</b>
Amiskwacy Academy	14	1%
<b>Parkland Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>4%</b>

Source: 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count

<sup>1</sup> Location is presented for the main absolute homeless respondent only. The data do not include 62 children, 23 other caregiver adults, and 13 cases for which location was unknown, for a total reduction of 98 cases (1,533 – 98 = 1,435).

- The majority of absolute homeless individuals were counted in the downtown region of the City (62%), with the majority of these counted at and around NCSA Cunningham Place (42%).

**Figure 8: Type of Street Count Site**  
(Main Absolute Homeless Respondent Only; n=1,435)<sup>1</sup>



Source: 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count

<sup>1</sup> Type of count site is presented for the main absolute homeless respondent only. The data do not include 62 children, 23 other caregiver adults, and 13 cases for which type of site was unknown, for a total reduction of 98 cases (1,533 – 98 = 1,435).

- Six in ten (874) of the absolute homeless individuals were counted at an agency. Still, with three in ten (428) counted on a walking route and one in ten (133) at a bottle depot, the adoption of a methodology that includes enumerating the homeless on the street is clearly substantiated.

## D. INSTITUTIONAL RESULTS

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The following tables and figures present the results of the data collected from shelters on the number of available spaces (capacity) and the number of individuals turned away. Also examined are the number of individuals discharged into homeless from temporary residential institutions such as hospitals, treatment centres, and corrections facilities. These data also represent a 'snapshot' of information, as they were collected on count day only.

Table 6 (below) displays the number of registered individuals at each shelter, the shelter capacity, and the corresponding occupancy rate for each shelter participating in the 2010 count. For a summary of the shelters participating in the 2010 and 2008 counts, respectively, please see Appendix C.

- On October 5, 2010, 939 individuals were staying at shelters that had a combined capacity of 1,217 spaces for an overall occupancy rate of 77%.
- Youth shelters had the highest occupancy rate of 92%. Dedicated shelters for men and for women had roughly equivalent occupancy rates at 74% and 72%, respectively.

**Table 6: Shelter Occupancy Rates, 2010**  
(Ratio of Registrations to Capacity)

Shelter Name	Number Registered <sup>1</sup>	Capacity	Occupancy Rate
<b>TOTAL ALL SHELTERS</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>1,217</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>Total Men's Shelters</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>74%</b>
Hope Mission: Herb Jamieson Centre	191	250	76%
Hope Mission: Mat Program <sup>2</sup>	125	200	63%
Urban Manor Housing Society <sup>3</sup>	74	75	99%
<b>Total Women (and Children<sup>4</sup>) Shelters</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>72%</b>
Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre	46	75	61%
Hope Mission: Women's Emergency Shelter	43	70	61%
Women in Need I	33	30	110%
Women in Need II	27	30	90%
Women in Need III	6	10	60%
Lurana Shelter	14	32	44%
Elizabeth House	22	24	92%
La Salle	9	9	100%
Valeda House	6	6	100%
<b>Total Youth Shelters</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>92%</b>
Hope Mission: Youth Shelter	58	60	97%
YESS: Shelter Program / SkY	25	28	89%
YESS: START House	8	10	80%
Catholic Social Services Safe House	7	8	88%
<b>Total Addictions-Related Shelters</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>82%</b>
Salvation Army: Addictions & Residential Centre	107	154	69%
Hope Mission: Intox Centre	70	70	100%
George Spady Centre	57	60	95%
<b>Total Seniors Shelters</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>86%</b>
Seniors Safe House (SAGE)	6	7	86%
<b>Total Sex Trade Related Shelters</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>56%</b>
E4C: Crossroads House	5	9	56%

Source: 2010 Edmonton Homeless Count

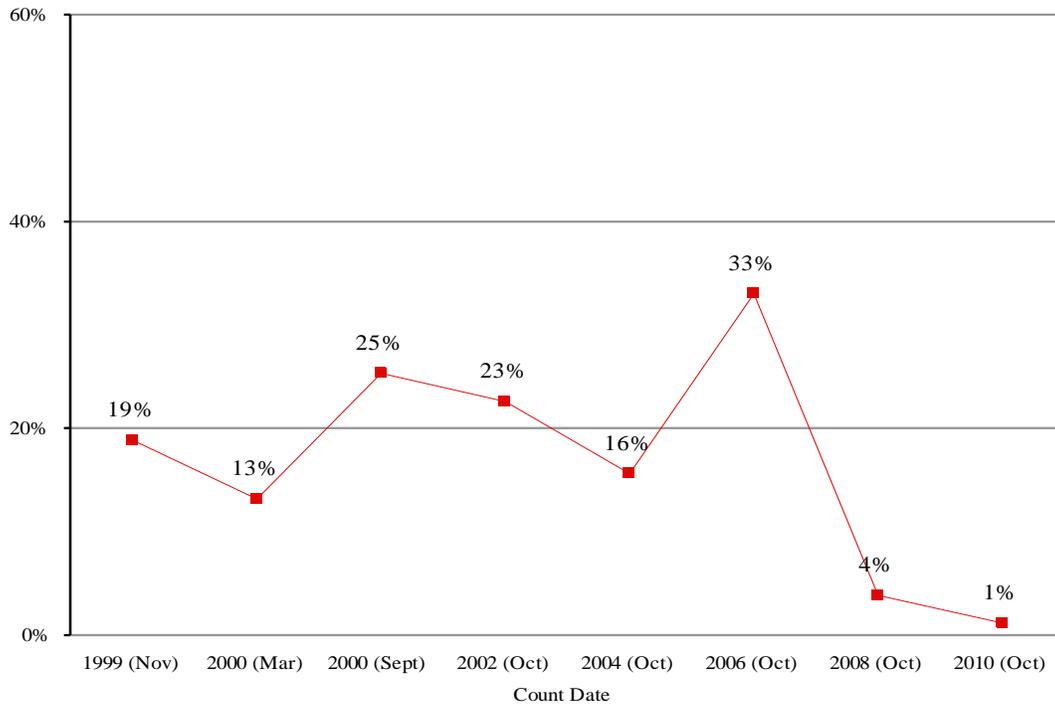
<sup>1</sup>The data for the total number of individuals registered at the shelters differ slightly from the Street Count of sheltered homeless total of 888 since the latter does not include individuals who had been already counted as absolutely homeless in the Street Count. The table also does not include 10 individuals staying at an emergency hotel on count day since there is no set capacity for this type of temporary accommodation.

<sup>2</sup>Provides shelter for men and couples.

<sup>3</sup>Capacity is provided for the entire facility, which includes the provision of both emergency sheltered and non-emergency sheltered accommodations (i.e., residents pay rent). There is no set number of beds assigned to emergency versus non-emergency shelter situations. If Urban Manor is excluded from the calculations, the occupancy rate for men's shelters decreases to 70%.

<sup>4</sup>All three Women in Need shelters, Lurana, and Valeda House include children in the registration and capacity figures. Children are not, however, included in the registrations at La Salle.

**Figure 9: Shelter Turnaway Rates by Count Date  
(Ratio of Turnaways to Capacity)**

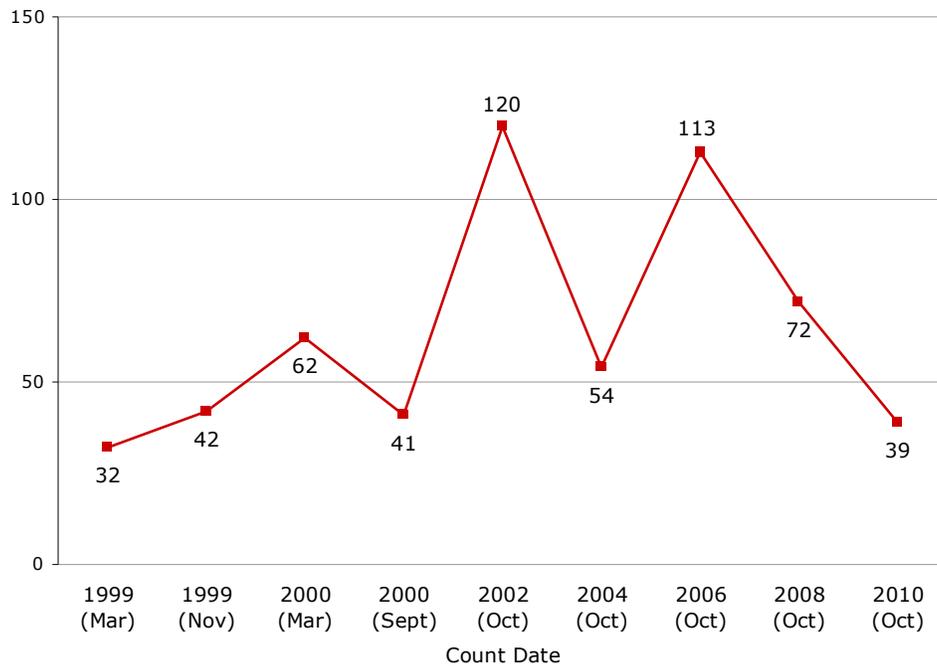


Source: Edmonton Homeless Counts

<sup>1</sup> Turnaways include the number of individuals not provided with a bed because of ineligibility, client behaviour, or because no spaces were available that night. Individuals turned away from a shelter are not included in the Homeless Count.

- In 2010, 14 individuals (1% of all shelter residents) were denied a bed because the shelter facility was full, the client did not meet the entrance criteria, or because of inappropriate client behaviour. Institutions reporting that they turned away individuals included 1 treatment centre and 2 shelters.
- There is a declining trend in turnaway rates since 2006.

**Figure 10: Number of Discharges from Temporary Residential Institutions<sup>1</sup> by Count Date**



Source: Edmonton Homeless Counts

<sup>1</sup>Discharges include the number of individuals who had either been discharged or were ready for discharge from a hospital, treatment centre, correctional facility, housing provider, or group home and who had no permanent residence to go to. In 2010 no data were provided from housing providers or group homes.

- Out of 11 temporary residential institutions reporting in 2010, there were 39 individuals discharged into homelessness. Of these, 10 individuals were discharged from treatment centres, 7 from corrections facilities, and 22 from hospitals.
- The historical pattern of declining discharges since 2006 shown in Figure 11 parallels the declining pattern of turnaway rates presented in Figure 9 above. Though some of this decline may be due to fewer agencies reporting on discharges in 2010 than in earlier count years, it may also reflect a shift in discharge policies and procedures of these institutions that are designed to prevent releasing individuals into homelessness. For example, one hospital reported that they did not discharge 3 individuals, despite being ready, because they had no place to go and another indicated that though they had 36 individuals ready to be discharged, they could not do so until they had found alternative placements for them elsewhere in the system.

## APPENDIX A: STREET COUNT COVERAGE

Region	Base Site	Type of Coverage	Details of Coverage
Downtown	NCSA Cunningham Place	Walking Routes	Jasper Ave. north on 97 St. to 103a Ave., east to 92 St and Jasper Ave., Jasper Ave. west
			Jasper Ave. 92 St. to 105A Ave., 93 St. from 103A Ave. north to 106 Ave. and back down 92 St.
			95 St. from 103a Ave. to 107a Ave.; east on 107a Ave. to 93 St.; 104 Ave.
			97 St. from Jasper Ave. north to 107 Ave., east on 107 Ave. to 96 St. down to Jasper
			Jasper Ave. from 97 St. to 109 St. (includes 104 St. south to 99 Ave.)
			Jasper Ave. from 97 St. to 109 St. (includes 104 St. south to 99 Ave.)
		Single Locations	Bissell Drop In Centre and Intake
			Boyle McCauley Health Centre
			Mustard Seed Church
			Operation Friendship Seniors Society
			Prime Staffing
			House of Refuge
			Quasar Bottle Depot
			Univer Bottle Depot
Boyle Street Community Services		Walking Routes	103a Ave. and 104 Ave. from 97 St. to 105 St.; 102 Ave. from 97 St. to 105 St.; and 105 St. from 102 to 104 Ave.
			107/107A Ave. from 97 St. to 109 St. (both sides of the Avenue)
		Single Locations	Labour Ready
			Stanley Milner Library

\*Denotes new site in 2010

Region	Base Site	Type of Coverage	Details of Coverage
Northeast	Candora Society of Edmonton	Walking Routes	118 Ave., 34 St. and 50 St. (both sides of the road) Abbottsfeld Mall Area
		Bottle Depot	Beverly Bottle Depot
	Mosaic Centre	Walking Routes	Fort Road-132 Ave. Fort Road to 62 St.-124 Ave.
		Single Locations	Clareview LRT
		Bottle Depots	Clareview Bottle Depot Fort Road Bottle Depot
	Edmonton Inner City Housing Society	Walking Routes	95 St. -- 111 Ave. to 107 Ave., 95 a Street 96 St. -- 111 Ave to 107 Ave, 96a Street 111 Ave. -- 92 to 97 St. & 112 Ave.
		Single Locations	Rock Lutheran InnerCity Breakfast Giovanni Caboto Park
	Landlords and Tenants Advisory Board*	Walking Routes	118 Ave., from 82 St. to Gretzky drive 118 Ave. from 82 St. to 94 St. 82 St. from 117 Ave. to 122 Ave. Night Walk- 118 Ave East to 66 <sup>th</sup> Street, and west to 97 <sup>th</sup> Street
Northwest	Amiskwaciy Academy*	Walking Routes	Kingsway Ave. between 124th street and 109th St.* 111 Ave. between 116th St. and 109 St. (both sides of the street)* Kingsway Ave between 109 <sup>th</sup> street and 106 <sup>th</sup> street, north to Princess Elizabeth Avenue and down 109 <sup>th</sup> street.

\*Denotes new site in 2010

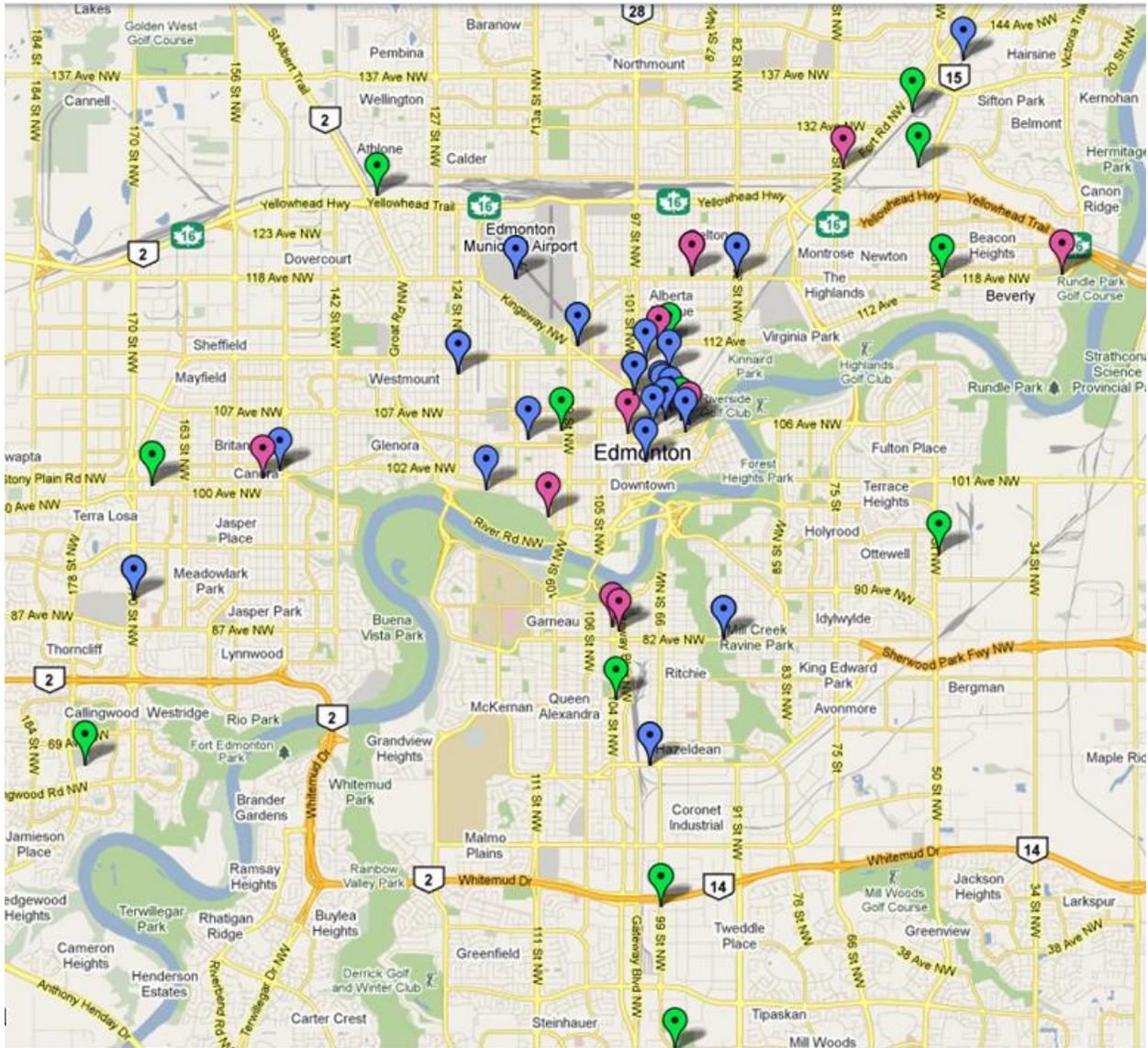
Region	Base Site	Type of Coverage	Details of Coverage		
South	Strathcona Baptist Church Old Strathcona Youth Co-op	Walking Routes	North Whyte Ave. to 84 Ave. 104 St. – 109 St.		
			South Whyte Ave. 79 Ave., gateway to 109 St.		
	112 St. NW-111 St., 84 Ave. NW - 82 Ave. NW				
	McIntyre Park				
	Garneau Park				
	Gateway east to 99 St., 81 Ave. to 83 Ave.				
	Single Locations		Labour Ready		
	Youth Emergency Shelter Society				
	Bottle Depots		Strathcona Bottle Depot		
			Millwoods Bottle Depot		
			Triple H Southside bottle		
			Capilano Bottle Depot		
	West End		Jasper Place Health & Wellness	Walking Routes	150 - 156 St., Stony Plain Rd
					150 -156 St., 100 Ave.
150 -156 St., 102 Ave.					
Single Locations		Christian Care Centre			
		West Edmonton Mall Transit Centre			
Bottle Depots		Bottle King			
		Callingwood Bottle Depot*			
		Centennial Bottle Depot			

\*Denotes new site in 2010

Region	Base Site	Type of Coverage	Details of Coverage
West Central	Eric Cormack Centre*	Walking Routes	109 - 116 St.; Jasper Ave. - 104 Ave. Jasper Ave. to 99 Ave., between 109 St., and 116 St. Jasper Ave. to Victoria Park Rd between 121 St. and 116 St.
		Bottle Depots	City Centre Bottle Depot
	Native Counseling Services of Alberta- Head office*	Walking Routes	Jasper to 104 Ave., 120 St.-116 St. 120 - 124 St.; Jasper - 104 Ave. 107 Ave.- 104 Ave., 116 St. to 109 St. 124th St. 104th Ave. to 111 Ave. both sides of the St.*
		Single Locations	Oliver Square
Park Land*	Boyle Street Community Services Outreach with assistance from Park Rangers	Walking Routes	Various park lands throughout the city, including the river valley and campsites.

\*Denotes new site in 2010

## APPENDIX B: MAP OF STREET COUNT COVERAGE<sup>1</sup>



### Legend:

Pink: Base Site Location

Blue: Single Location

Green: Bottle Depot Location

<sup>1</sup> Excludes walking routes and park land area coverage.

## APPENDIX C: LIST OF PARTICIPATING SHELTERS IN COUNT: 2010 AND 2008 COMPARISON

SHELTERS	2010	2008
Emergency Hotels	√	√
<b>Men's Shelters</b>		
Hope Mission: Herb Jamieson Centre	√	√
Hope Mission: Mat Program	√	√
Urban Manor Housing Society	√	√
<b>Women (and Children) Shelters</b>		
Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre	√	√
Hope Mission: Women's Emergency Shelter	√	√
Women in Need I	√	√
Women in Need II	√	√
Women in Need III <sup>1</sup>	√	
Lurana Shelter	√	√
Elizabeth House	√	√
La Salle	√	√
Valeda House <sup>2</sup>	√	
Wings of Providence <sup>3</sup>		√
<b>Youth Shelters</b>		
Hope Mission: Youth Shelter	√	√
YESS: Shelter Program / SkY	√	√
YESS: START House	√	√
Catholic Social Services Safe House	√	√
Inner City Youth Housing Project <sup>4</sup>		√
Protective Safe House <sup>5</sup>		√
E4C Crossroads	√	
<b>Addictions-Related Shelters</b>		
Salvation Army: Addictions & Residential Centre	√	√
Hope Mission: Intox Centre	√	√
George Spady Centre	√	√
<b>Seniors Shelters</b>		
Seniors Safe House (SAGE)	√	√

<sup>1</sup> Opened in April of 2010 to accommodate homeless immigrant women.

<sup>2</sup> Opened in September of 2010 to accommodate homeless women and children.

<sup>3</sup> Changed mandate to a transitional program that provides second-stage, long-term housing support and therefore no longer qualifies as an emergency shelter.

<sup>4</sup> Changed mandate to transitional housing program for youth and therefore no longer qualifies as an emergency shelter.

<sup>5</sup> Did not participate in 2010 Count.

Thank you to the following organizations for providing our volunteers with the materials and nutritional snacks for the count day and volunteer orientation. Your support is greatly appreciated.



*Upper Crust Cafe and Caterers*