
For Information

REPORT TITLE: 2021 Homelessness Point-In-Time Count Results

FROM: Sean Baird, Commissioner of Human Services

OBJECTIVE

To inform Regional Council of the results of the 2021 Homelessness Point-In-Time Count

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Region is mandated by both the Federal and Provincial government to conduct a Point-In-Time Count once every two years.
 - The Region of Peel conducted a modified Point-in-Time Count in collaboration with the Peel Alliance to End Homelessness Committee and select homelessness serving agencies.
 - 866 individuals were found to be experiencing homelessness on the night of October 13, 2021.
 - 519 households participated in the anonymous Housing Needs Survey on October 14th and 15th, 2021.
 - Results from previous Point-In-Time Counts were analyzed and compared to provide a snapshot of homelessness in Peel to help target resources, enhance system planning, and measure progress in reducing homelessness.
 - The Region is required to report results of the Point-in-Time Count to the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario and to the community.
 - A detailed report of the 2021 Point-in-Time Count results is accompanied with this council report and will be posted on the Region of Peel's website.
-

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The Region of Peel, as the Service Manager for the housing and homelessness system is mandated by both the Federal and Provincial Government to conduct a Point-In-Time Count ("Count") once every two years.

The Region of Peel conducted its last Count in 2018. The 2020 Count was planned for April 2020, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic and both provincial and local health restrictions, the count was postponed to 2021.

A Count is one of the strategies communities use to understand the extent of homelessness on a given night. The Count consists of two components (1) an administrative occupancy count for those who are unsheltered or residing in an emergency

2021 Homelessness Point-In-Time Count Results

shelter or a transitional housing facility and (2) the administration of an anonymous housing needs survey for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Communities use the results of the Count to increase their understanding of the characteristics of homelessness and to direct resources to where they are needed most. When conducted consistently over time, the results of the Count assist communities with assessing their progress in reducing homelessness. The Count is intended to:

- Identify how many individuals in a community experience homelessness on a given night or a single point-in-time.
- Gather information on demographic and service needs of people and families experiencing homelessness through an anonymous survey.

This report provides Council with the findings from Count conducted in October 2021.

2. 2021 Point-In-Time Count Modified Approach

Due to the pandemic, the Region conducted a modified Count over a 24-hour period on October 13th, 2021, followed by the administration of a voluntary housing needs survey on October 14th and 15th, 2021.

While every effort was made to ensure methodologies were in place to conduct a thorough Count, staff had to modify processes to safely conduct the count, while maintaining COVID guidelines set by both the federal and provincial governments. A planning committee with representatives from the Region and homeless-serving agencies across the community was instrumental in planning and implementing all aspects of the Count.

Peel's modified 2021 Count:

- Used only Regional Staff and community service providers already delivering client-facing homelessness services.
- Counted and surveyed only in unsheltered spaces (sleeping rough on the street, in parks, camps, vehicles or abandoned buildings and other outdoor locations where people experiencing homelessness were known to sleep), sheltered facilities (emergency shelters, violence against women shelters, human sex trafficking shelter), transitional housing facilities, and homeless drop-in centers.
- Included a one-night count and the administration of the housing needs survey which were conducted separately to minimize the impact on staff.
- Did not use community volunteers or host large public magnet events.

3. Findings

A total of 866 people were found to be experiencing homelessness on the night of the count and 519 households completed the PiT Count Housing Needs Survey.

Despite conducting a modified PiT Count, the numbers for the administrative count and the homelessness survey have increased in 2021 when compared to previous Counts, showing homelessness continues to be a growing concern in Peel.

Below are some key findings and highlights from the 2021 Count:

2021 Homelessness Point-In-Time Count Results

2021 Count Key Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 866 individuals were found to be experiencing homelessness the night of October 13, 2021.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 519 households participated in an anonymous Housing Needs Survey on October 14th and 15th, 2021.

Demographics
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 56% of survey respondents identified as male.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 28% of survey respondents identified as female.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1.1% of survey respondents identified as LGBTQ2IA+.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 83% of survey respondents reported as being single.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12% of respondents reported as a family with one or more dependents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5% of respondents reported as a family with no dependents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 53% of respondents were aged 25-54.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17% of respondents were aged 55+.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 16% of respondents were aged 16-24.

Factors in Housing Loss
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 76% of women reported abuse and conflict with a partner, spouse, parent as the top reason for their housing loss.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 34% of men reported substance use and mental health concerns as reasons for their housing loss.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 23% of respondents indicated they needed first and last month’s rent to secure housing.

Chronic Homelessness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 39% of respondents reported they were chronically homeless.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Men were more likely to experience chronic homelessness at 56%.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Of those chronically homeless, 41% were first homeless as a youth (16-24) and 47% were first homeless as an adult (25-54).

A comprehensive final report with the results from the 2021 Count is attached which provides an overview of the Count, methodology, data analysis and recommendations (see appendix I). The final report also includes data from the previous counts conducted in 2016 and 2018.

Although a direct comparison cannot be completed due to the modified count and changing variables, the report provides a snapshot of homelessness in Peel across the years to help target resources, enhance system planning, and measure our progress in reducing homelessness.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Although the Count provides valuable information regarding extent of homelessness in a community, there are limitations to the Count. The Count cannot:

2021 Homelessness Point-In-Time Count Results

- Measure everyone who experiences homelessness. The Count is administered on a single day; therefore, the count will not capture those cycling in and out of homelessness.
- Measure those experiencing hidden homelessness (e.g., couch-surfing, provisionally accommodated).

Therefore, the findings of the Count should be interpreted with caution, as the numbers most likely represent the minimum number of people who may be experiencing homelessness on any given night in Peel.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

The Region of Peel, as the Service Manager for the housing and homelessness system is mandated by both the Federal and Provincial Government to conduct a Point-In-Time Count (“Count”) once every two years.

Together with community agencies, the Region conducted the Count in October 2021. Information collected will be used to help guide local-level planning, resource allocation and be used to inform Peel’s Housing and Homelessness Plan 2018-2028, as we work towards helping residents get and keep housing and our collective goal of preventing homelessness in Peel.

APPENDICES

Appendix I - 2021 Everyone Counts Peel Community Report

*Authored By: Marina Biesenthal, Housing Program Analyst
Jessica Batres Villagran, Housing Program Analyst*



Sean Baird, Commissioner of Human Services