

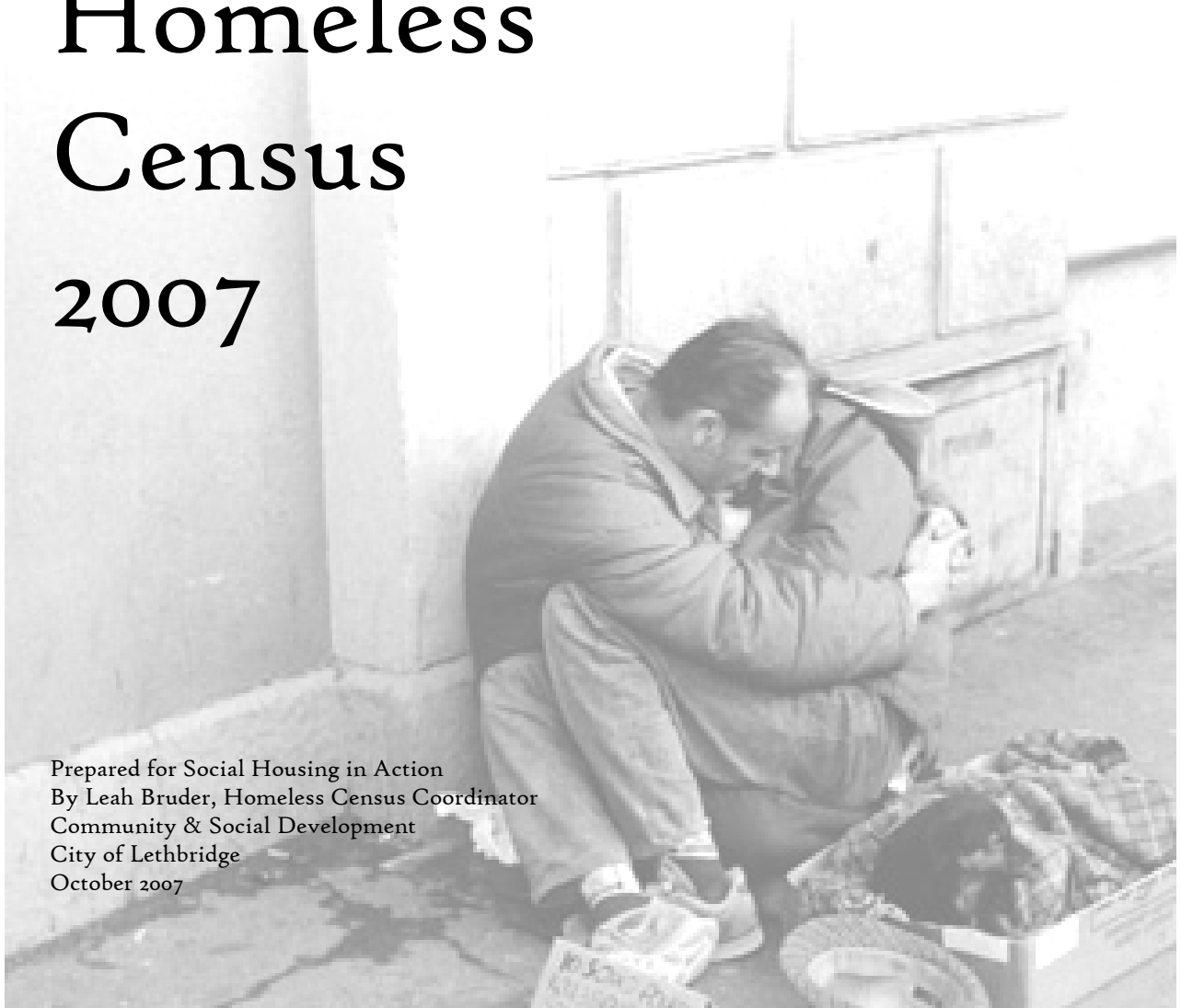
S.H.I.A.
SOCIAL HOUSING IN ACTION



• "Bringing
Lethbridge Home"

Lethbridge Homeless Census 2007

Prepared for Social Housing in Action
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Executive Summary

The 2007 Homeless Census was conducted on October 11, 2007. The purpose of the Census is to provide comparative data to the previous years Homeless Censuses, to understand possible service gaps, and provide current data for the planning of the City of Lethbridge homeless initiative.

Although this is the 4th annual Homeless Census, this report provides the first opportunity to conduct a comparative analysis over a three year period. Minor revisions were made to the methodology for 2007; however, these revisions are not significant enough to affect the ability to conduct a three year comparative analysis.

Key findings:

On the evening of October 11, 2007, 43 people were counted as homeless in the Street Census. Agencies that participated in the Census included the emergency shelters and transition homes. They reported serving a combined total of 120 individuals. Combined, in the Street and Agency Census, a total of 163 individuals reported living 'homeless'. In addition, the Street Census enumerators found increased evidence of people "sleeping rough" at 85 different locations throughout the city. There were 14 families, including 19 children, who were enumerated as 'homeless'. In addition, there were 5 youth enumerated at Wood's Homes, the emergency youth shelter.

In the Homeless Counts' of 2004, 2005 and 2006 research used in the analysis of the data collected hypothesized 80% of the homeless population is not visible, and therefore not accessible to the Census enumerators (Raising the Roofs, 2004). Stemming from this hypothesis, an additional 652 "hidden homeless" individuals would not have been counted in either the Street or the Agency Census. These totals represent a total estimated homeless population of 815 in Lethbridge. There was a 74% increase in evidence of sleeping rough from 2005. Included once again in the Census is a question pertaining to an individual's ability to secure housing. The data collected from this question revealed 21% of respondents cited their inability to pay rent as their main reason for not securing a permanent, affordable residence. 20% respondents stated the lack of rental availability as a major barrier to securing affordable housing.

Supporting evidence for these findings was gained by examining the ratio of people on waiting lists compared to the number of units available for the subsidized housing agencies (Lethbridge Housing Authority and Treaty 7 Urban Indian Housing Authority). The Lethbridge Housing Authority (LHA) currently has 542 households on the waiting list, and currently provides subsidies to 1048 households. LHA provides subsidies to parents with dependant children, seniors, and individuals in need of subsidized housing (Personal communication, October 17, 2007). Treaty 7 Urban Indian Housing Authority currently owns and maintains a total of 165 rental properties within the Treaty 7 area (Calgary-43, Lethbridge-115, and Cardston-7). Currently, Treaty 7 Urban Indian Housing Authority has a waitlist of 98 complete applicants (Personal communication, Jackie Blackwater, October 25, 2007).

QUICK CENSUS FACTS for OCTOBER 11, 2007

- 163 people were counted as being homeless
- Estimated homeless population in Lethbridge is 815
- 74% increase in evidence of sleeping rough from 2005,
- 14 families were counted as being homeless.
- 24 children were counted as being homeless

Introduction

The issue of homelessness is one that cannot be ignored in Lethbridge. Homeless Census' conducted over the past four years have shown an ever increasing population of people in Lethbridge who are living in places that are not permanent, healthy and/or sustainable. The complexity of this issue requires a comprehensive approach to 'end homelessness'. This approach should focus not only on charitable volunteerism, but also on support and contributions from every facet of society: all levels of government, citizens, as well as the public and private sectors.

The 2007 Homeless Census is a tool used to assist Social Housing in Action (SHIA) in to further implement Bringing Lethbridge Home, a Strategic Plan to 'end homelessness' in Lethbridge. The study provides a "snapshot in time" of the homeless situation in Lethbridge. In this effort, SHIA can continue to use a comprehensive approach to eliminating, not managing, homelessness in our community, as outlined in "Bringing Lethbridge Home" (2007).

"Bringing Lethbridge Home" outlines the strategy SHIA and the City of Lethbridge are undertaking to end homelessness in Lethbridge. SHIA is charged with the duty of implementing this plan, and in response to this duty, has created a housing continuum to create a better understand the process involved in ending homelessness:



Purpose

The fourth annual Homeless Census builds on the processes and recommendations acquired from the 2007 Homeless Census and the 2006 Homeless Census. It follows the general format of the Lethbridge Homeless Count 2004 (Fenton, 2004), the Lethbridge Homeless Count 2005 (Gail, 2005), the Lethbridge Homeless Census 2006 (Buchanan, 2006) and the 'Biennial Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary' (Stroick, 2004). Although similar, revisions have been made to provide more comprehensive information regarding where people may be 'sleeping rough' and why they are not able to access safe, affordable and sustainable housing.

Using the information gained from the 2006 Homeless Census (Buchanan, 2006), the Structure and Research Committee (a sub-committee of SHIA) identified a need to further determine the extent of homelessness in Lethbridge. This research is built upon the results of the 2005 and

2006 Censuses and provided data that can be comparatively analyzed in relation to the data from the previous two years.

The 2007 Homeless Census was conducted on October 11th between the hours of 7 and 9 p.m. to provide a 'snapshot' in time of the extent of homelessness in Lethbridge. The Census is undertaken, not only to document the existence of this issue, but to also create community awareness and to provide some of the necessary data to plan and develop policy for future community responses to the homeless crisis.

The focus of the study is to gain quantitative data from individuals interviewed 'on the street' and 'individuals accessing agency support' about their personal experience of homelessness. Qualitative volunteer observations on demographic characteristics of the interviewed population were also incorporated into the study. Included in this years study was once again the question concerning the respondents' reasons for not being able to secure affordable and sustainable housing. Information regarding community housing options and the accessibility of subsidized housing was also collected. The Lethbridge Housing Authority and Treaty 7 Urban Indian Housing Authority were contacted regarding the number of subsidized housing units as well as the number of individuals on waitlists for these units. Local churches and religious organizations known to serve the homeless population were also asked to participate in the Census.

Definitions

The definitions used in the 2007 Homeless Census are:

- Homeless - An individual who is: living on the street; staying in places not meant for human habitation; moving continuously among temporary housing arrangements provided by strangers, friends, or family; staying overnight in temporary shelters, or; has a permanent address but is not able to stay there on the evening of [October 11th] (Fenton, 2004)
- Unable to find affordable housing – An individual who is unable to find affordable housing that is within their means, and sustainable.
- Hidden Homeless – The individuals who are not visible. They are either improperly housed, or temporarily staying with relatives or friend, they constitute approximately 80% of the homeless population (Raising the Roof, 2004).
- Emergency Shelters – Provide temporary accommodation for homeless individuals and families who would otherwise sleep in the streets, generally including supports such as food, clothing and counselling. Included in this definition are transitional housing agencies, as the people accessing this type of housing would be fundamentally homeless, if not for these services.

These definitions have been used with intent in creating a more inclusive term for "Homelessness". This is done while methodological constraints require specification around the types of agencies that provide services to these people. The definition of homeless has also been created in an attempt to incorporate the 2004 Homeless Count (Fenton, 2004), the First Report Card on Homelessness in Ottawa (Evaluation Working Group, 2005), the Biennial Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary (Stroick, 2004), and those used by SHIA (Indesol, 2003).

Census Methodology

The Homeless Census was conducted on October 11th, 2007 between the hours of 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. On the evening of the Census, the temperature was between 5 and 7 degrees Celsius. This date was chosen in order to maintain consistency and to provide a comparison with the previous year's census conducted on October 6, 2005 and October 12, 2006.

The Lethbridge Homeless Census was modeled after the Calgary Biennial Homeless Count and further refined to meet local needs and conditions. A dual focus including a 'Street Census' and 'Agency Census' was employed. Engaging these two areas concurrently optimized the use of available resources while decreasing the likelihood of double counting.

The main purpose of the Census is to determine how many individuals in the City of Lethbridge are currently living without a home, be that in one of the shelters, on the streets, in the coulees, parks, etc. In addition to actual counted numerical data, this study also attempts to determine reasons that may undermine an individual's ability to obtain affordable housing by those experiencing homelessness.

Three minor revisions in methodology in the 2007 Homeless Census from the 2006 Homeless Census were made:

1. In order to minimize potential risk and to ensure volunteer safety, enumerators did not investigate the coulees the evening of the census. This was due to the low visibility and potential risk of injuries from falls, sprains etc.
2. A revision to the data collection sheets (Appendix A and B) included enumerators more accurately tracking respondents ages using the following four age categories (18 and under, 19-30, 31-59 and 60+).
3. In order to track demographic information the Agency Data Collection sheet included a component on Ethnicity. Respondents were asked to indicate if they were of Aboriginal Ancestry, Other Visible Minority or Caucasian. Street enumerators were not asked to track this information.

The sections below describe the methodologies for both the Street and Agency Censuses for the 2007 Homeless Census.

Street Census

Due to limited time and resources, areas most frequented by homeless people were targeted. Although these basic areas were already established in previous Censuses, the services of the Lethbridge Regional Police Service, Emergency Medical Services, the Mobile Urban Street Team (MUST), the Lethbridge Emergency Shelter and the City of Lethbridge Parks department were accessed to confirm existing areas and determine any new key areas. These individuals' expertise and familiarity with the homeless population assisted in renewing and adding to the areas of focus. These areas were then divided up and assigned to teams. (Appendix I)

Teams were designed to have four members: two male and two female. Each team was also assigned, based on volunteer turnout, an experienced Team Leader. The teams were instructed to cover their assigned areas, to the best of their abilities, within the two-hour period allotted. Teams were assigned one clipboard and instructed to follow a set protocol when

interviewing individuals they encountered; this included a few brief questions and some observations, (Appendix F). The team leaders were given a map of their focus area, screening questions, data collection sheets, emergency contact numbers, and the contact information for the Lethbridge Shelter & Resource Centre, YWCA harbour House, the Mobile Urban Street Team and the Youth Emergency Shelter. In addition to these responsibilities, teams were given disposable cameras and asked to take photos of areas that showed evidence of people “sleeping rough” and to demarcate these areas on the maps (i.e. lean-to shelters, blankets, evidence of a fire, etc). Granola bars were provided as a thank you to participants.

For safety, the teams were instructed to stay together at all times and to bring flashlights and cell phones. Flashing beacons, (with whistles), and emergency contact numbers were provided. Every team was to report every 30 minutes to the Census Coordinator and an experienced Census volunteer acting as area rover.

All of the volunteers participated in a mandatory orientation (Appendix E). The orientation provided instructions on how to conduct the census and a Lethbridge Regional Police Officer instructed the volunteers in safety precautions. Prior to this, a detailed Hazard Assessment was presented to and approved by the City of Lethbridge Risk Management Team. Every volunteer was required to provide personal contact information and required to sign an Oath of Confidentiality (Appendix D). The volunteer contact information was recorded to provide Workers Compensation coverage. Volunteers were required to sign in, indicating the time they arrived, and sign out, indicating the time they returned from conducting the census. Volunteers were also given the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience by completing a Volunteer Evaluation Form.

Agency Census

In order to ensure validity and that the data collected could be generally applied to the population being studied, the 2007 Homeless Census provided the participating agencies with instructions and the associated data collection sheets for conducting the Census.

In a meeting between the participating agencies and the Census coordinator, agencies were provided with written instructions, including definitions, instructions on how to complete the data collection forms, (Appendix C). These instructions were explained in the meeting, and those agencies not in attendance were contacted and the instructions and forms were forwarded. The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss and elaborate upon the purposes and roles of the study, and to receive constructive input on how to improve the Census process from an agency standpoint.

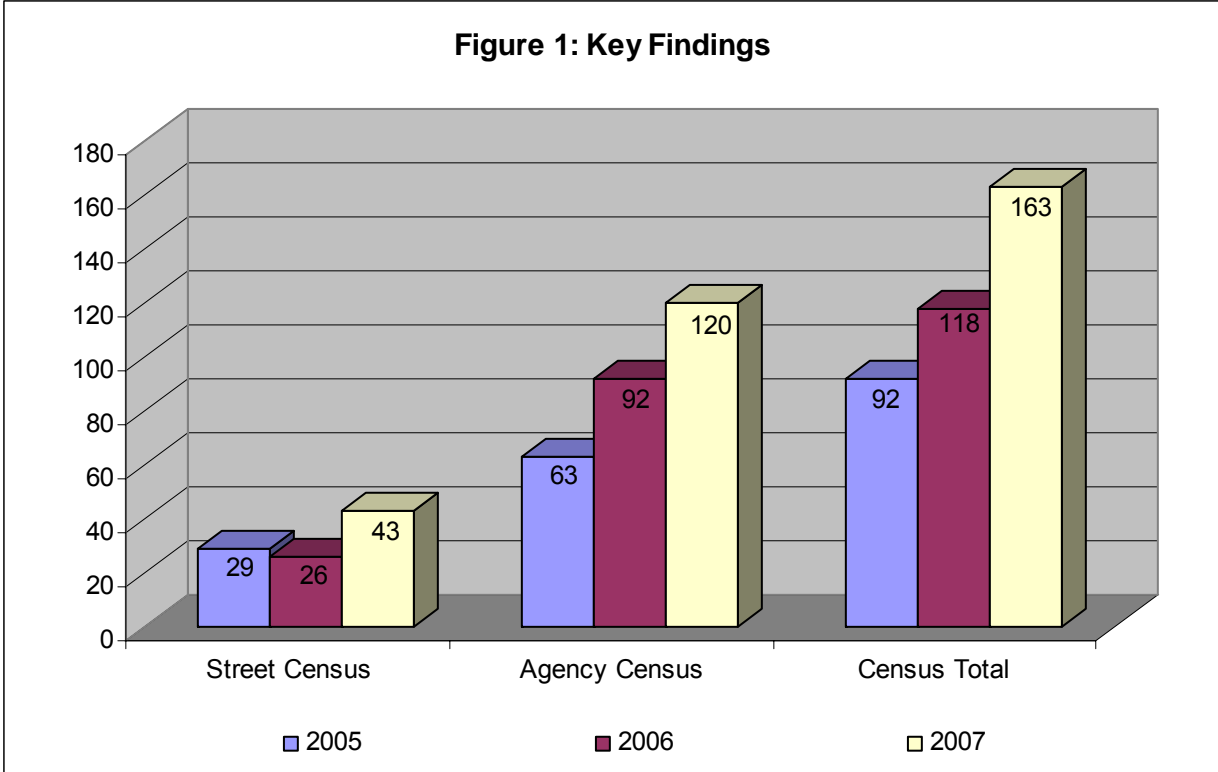
The agencies, included for their community involvement as either Emergency Shelters or temporary housing providers, were given data collection forms (Appendix B) and were instructed to interview their clients on the evening of October 11th. They were also provided with contact information in case of further inquiry.

As in the 2006 Homeless Census, individuals who received transitional housing services were defined as homeless, based on the belief that without these services they would have no other place to live.

2007 Census Results and Comparative Analysis

The data collected from the 2007 Homeless Census shows a significant increase in the number of people identified as “Homeless” in our community. The Street Census found 43 people defined as “homeless”, a 40% increase from 2006 (Buchanan, 2006). 163 people were defined as “Homeless” this year, a 44% increase from 2005 and 28% increase from 2006.

As in previous years a team of four volunteers assisted the Lethbridge Shelter & Resource Centre with the Agency Census. However, due to an incident at the Shelter the volunteers, to ensure their safety, left the premises early. This resulted in incomplete data from the agency. However, the Shelter staff reported 82 people stayed at the Shelter on the evening of the 11th. 36 individuals were enumerated by the volunteers at the Shelter. 24 people enumerated in the Street Census stated they would be staying at the Shelter on the evening of the 11th. Based on this information we can assume the remaining 22 Shelter clients would have been enumerated by the volunteers at the Shelter had they been able to stay. As a result there were 120 people enumerated by the agencies, this is a 23% increase from 2006 and a 48% increase from 2005. Figure 1, below, indicates the increasing trends in homelessness over the past three years.



Evidence of Sleeping Rough

The incidents of evidence of people “sleeping rough” increased significantly from 43 sightings in 2006 (Buchanan, 2006), to 85 sightings in this years study. 62 of the incidences were identified by the volunteers and a service provider informed us of an additional 23 sites in the coulees. This represents a 74% increase from 2005. The images on the next page were captured by the volunteers on the evening of the Census as well as additional images taken on October 16th of one of the sites identified during the Census.



Photos taken by Census Volunteers on October 11, 2007



Below are additional images taken the afternoon of October 16th at one of the sites identified by the enumerators the evening of the Census.

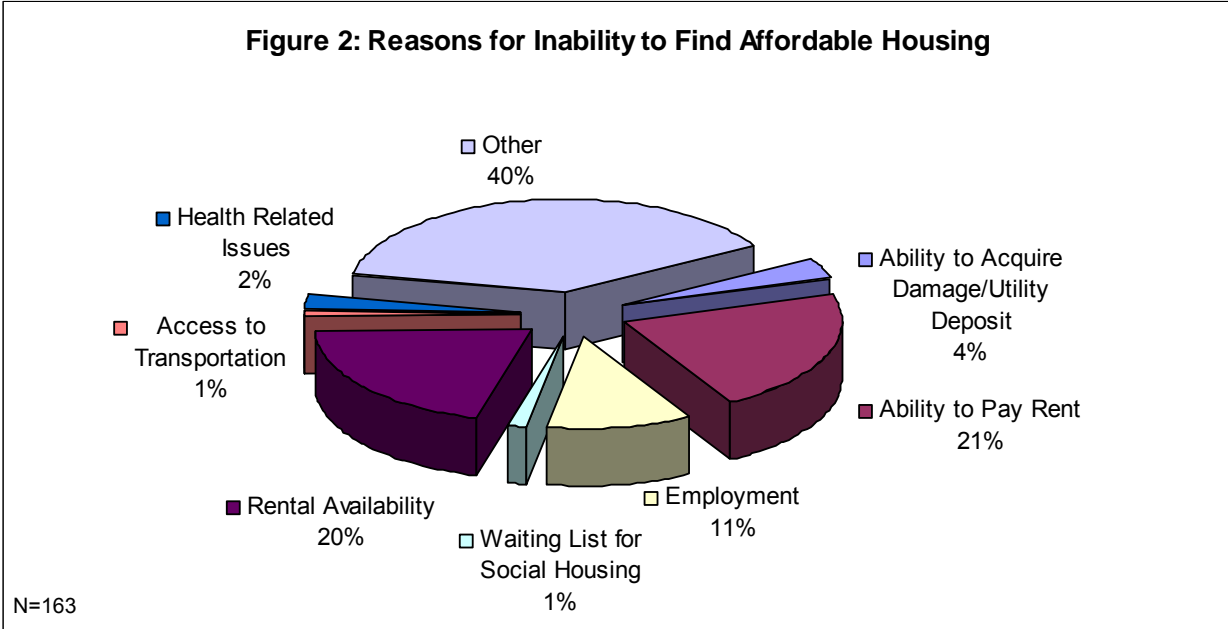


Photos Courtesy of Dawn Vickers

Unable to Find Affordable Housing

This year, every respondent who fell under the definition of homeless, either in the Street or Agency Census, were considered “Unable to Find Affordable Housing”. As such, the 2007 Census shows that 163 people that provided data in the questionnaire fell in this category.

Once again the 2007 Homeless Census expanded on the information gathered regarding affordable housing issues by asking respondents why they were experiencing housing barriers. The qualitative answers were categorized according to what option provided on the questionnaire sheet best suited the respondents answer. Figure 2, below, illustrates the options listed on the questionnaire, and the wide range of responses. Of the 120 respondents, 21% stated “the ability to pay rent” as their main barrier in obtaining permanent affordable housing. An additional 20% of respondents claimed that the availability of rental units was the major reason for not securing affordable housing.



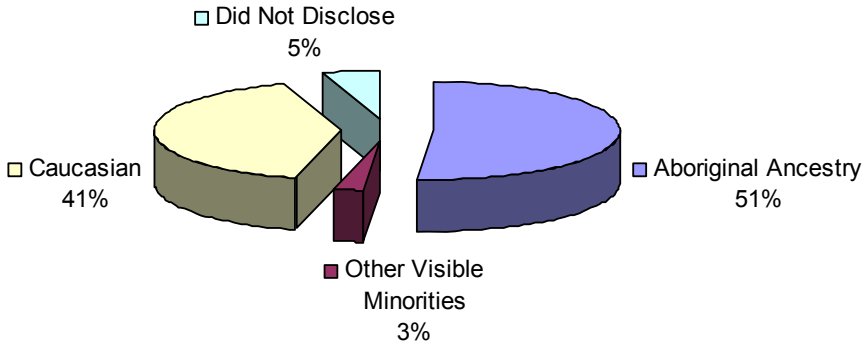
NOTE: Respondents were able to select as many categories as they felt their situation required.

Demographics

The 2007 Homeless Census included volunteer observations on the demographic profile of the individuals responding to the Census questionnaire. These observations included: gender and familial presence. The Agency and Street enumerators asked respondents to disclose their age using four broad age ranges. The Agency enumerates also asked respondents to disclose their ethnicity.

Figure 3, next page, illustrates the responses from those enumerated by the agency volunteers regarding their ethnicity.

Figure 3: 2007 Homeless Census Respondent Ethnicity (Agency Data)



N=78

The 2007 Homeless Census had agency enumerators ask respondents to disclose their ethnicity. This reflects a change in methodology from previous years. During the 2006 Homeless Census enumerators were asked to classify respondents (by observation) as 'Visible Minority' or 'Not a Visible Minority'. This difference reflects a change in methodology, and the results from year-to-year cannot be directly compared. However, in 2005, the 'Aboriginal' and 'Visible Minority' categories contained 50 individuals, with only 3 of these being of a 'Visible Minority'. A combination of these two categories can be compared to the 'Visible Minority' category that was used in 2006. An additional 37 people were recorded as being Caucasian in 2005, which can also be conditionally compared to the 'Not a Visible Minority' category in 2006. Although the methodology was changed, interpretation of the results provides a 'picture' of trends shown in this specific demographic category. Figure 4, below, provides a three year comparison of respondents ethnicity based on observations made by volunteers of the respondents during the 2005 Homeless Count and the 2006 Homeless Census and the actual data collected by the Agency enumerators during 2007 Homeless Census.

Figure 4: Three Year Comparison of Respondent Ethnicity

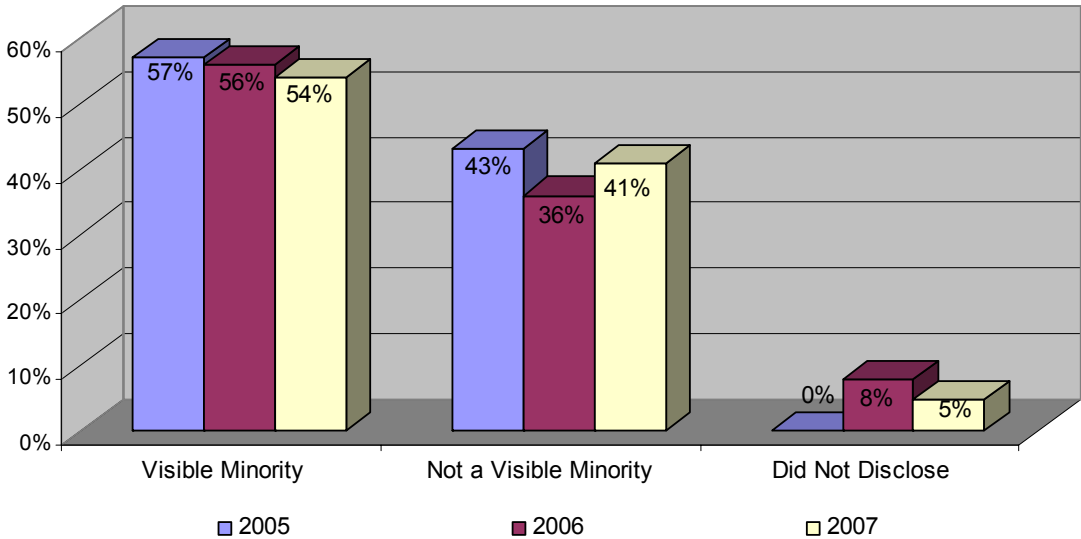


Figure 5, right, illustrates the age distribution of the respondents. The 2007 Homeless Census had enumerators asked respondents to indicate which age category best described them, in order to obtain a 'picture' of the age demographics of the homeless population in Lethbridge.

This reflects a change in methodology from the 2006 Homeless Census. During the 2006 Homeless Census enumerators were asked to make generalized observations regarding the age of respondents. Due to the change in methodology the results cannot be directly compared however, interpretation of the results can provide an indication of trends.

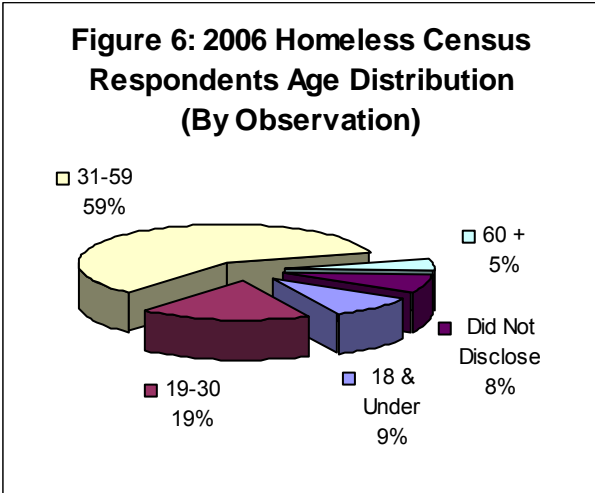
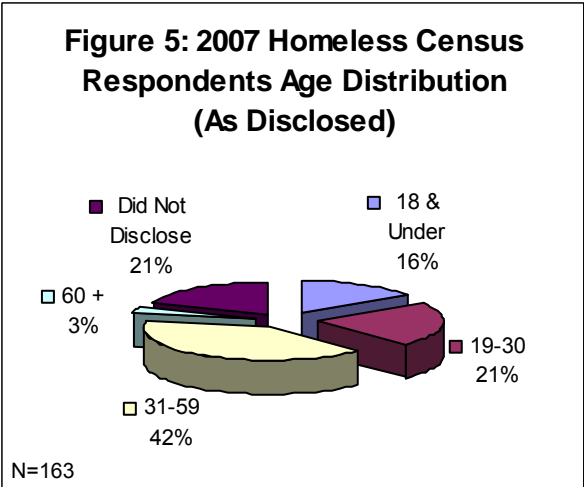
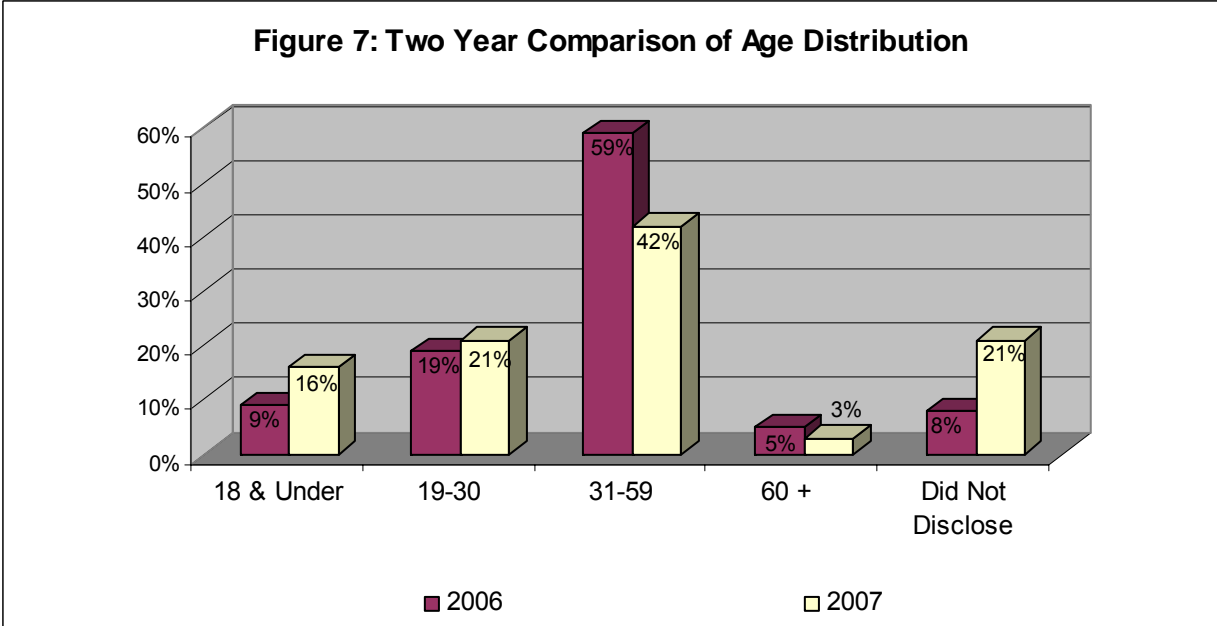
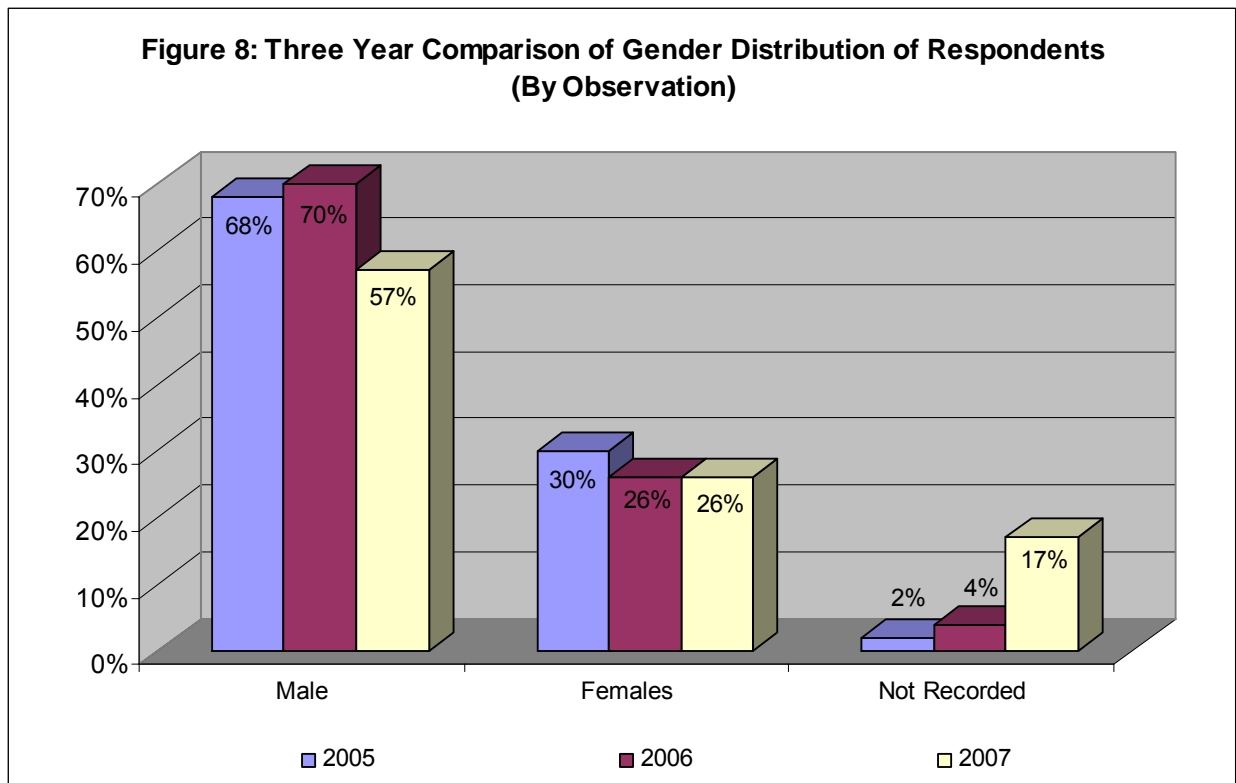


Figure 6, left, illustrates the results of the observations from the 2006 Census. The information has been reorganized to reflect the age categories used in the 2007 Homeless Census.

Figure 7, below, provides a comparison of the age distribution based on observations made by the enumerators during the 2006 Homeless Census and the information provided by respondents during the 2007 Homeless Census.



Enumerators were, by observation, to track the gender of the respondents. Figure 8, below, compares the gender distributions from the 2005 Homeless Count, the 2006 Homeless Census and the 2007 Homeless Census.

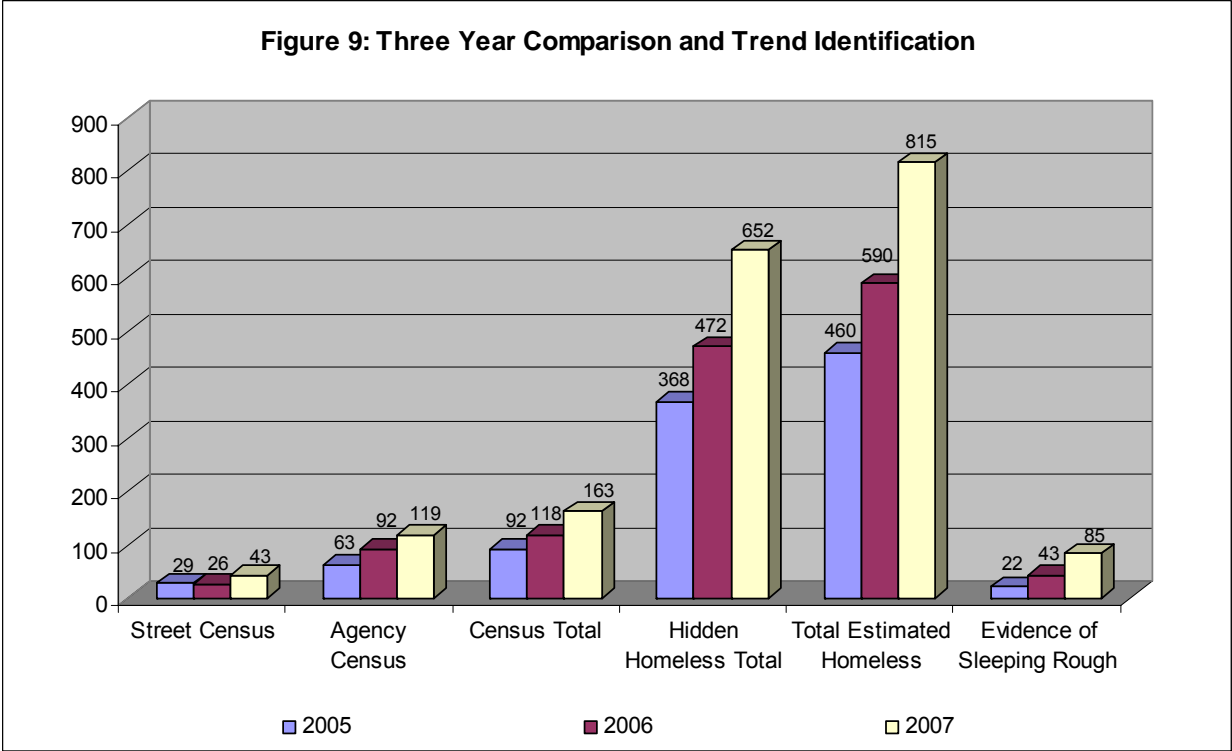


Discussion

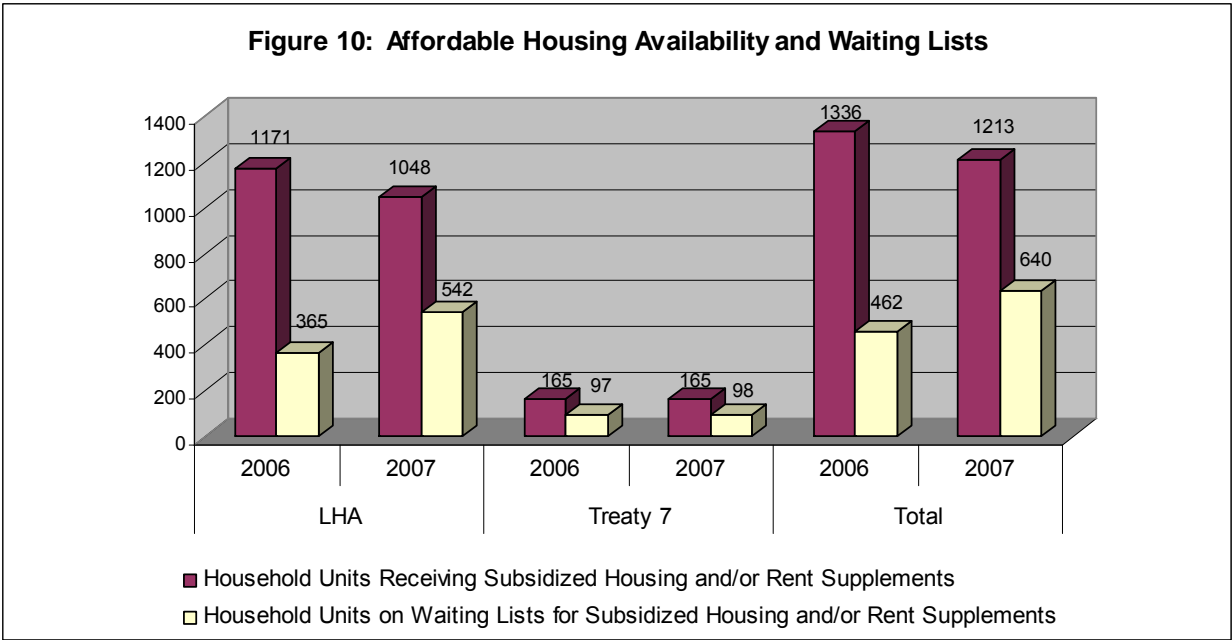
The assertion that Lethbridge has an increasing homeless population is certainly proven by the 2007 Homeless Census. The results outlined in this report provide evidence of the increase, but it is assumed that these numbers are actually quite low. This comes as the result of the inherent nature of the Census being unable to account for every homeless person, in every location at the exact time that the 2007 Homeless Census was conducted. However, the results indicate there is an increased population accessing the Emergency Shelters in Lethbridge, an increase homeless population on the streets, as well and an increased use of agencies providing services to this population.

Research indicates that a census using a similar methodology to capture an accurate number of people living homeless in a given location can presuppose the results will only represent 20% of the actual homeless population for that area (Raising the Roofs, 2004). According to this hypothesis 80% of people that are 'homeless' are "invisible" members of the population. Application of this formula to the 2007 Homeless Census would indicate the 163 people enumerated in the Census comprise 20% of the actual estimated homeless population of 815. The estimated number of "invisible homeless" individuals, based on this formula is 652.

Figure 9, next page, not only illustrates the increase in "actual" homeless population between the 2005, 2006 and 2007 study, but the significant increase in estimated homeless individuals in the City of Lethbridge, as well as a 74% rise in the sightings of evidence of individuals "sleeping rough".



Continued in the 2007 Homeless Census was the research highlighting some of the major barriers faced by the homeless population of Lethbridge in their attempts to secure housing. The answers provided (see Figure 2) indicate that a majority of this population either cannot afford to pay rent in Lethbridge, or cannot find a suitable and affordable place to live. The waiting lists for two subsidized housing agencies in Lethbridge (the Treaty 7 Urban Indian Housing Authority and the Lethbridge Housing Authority) indicate the severity of the issue, revealing 640 households were waiting for subsidy services. Figure 10, shown below, illustrates the amount of subsidized housing that is currently being provided, and the waiting lists to access this type of service in Lethbridge.



The 2007 Homeless Census also provides “a snapshot in time” of the characteristics of the homeless population in the City of Lethbridge. In order to develop new services, and evaluate the efficiency of the existing ones, there needs to be an understanding of whom these services are designed for, and how they need to be implemented. Demographical information for this study was gained through respondents disclosing their ethnicity and age as well as enumerator observations of gender and familial make up. The data collected indicated a generalized pattern of the homeless population that shows 57% of respondents are male, 54% of respondents belong to a visible minority and 41% of respondents are between the ages of 31 and 59. There is a historical belief in our community that the issue of homelessness belongs to the Aboriginal population, and people that belong to a ‘Visible Minority’ are definitely overrepresented in this study but responses indicate 41% of the respondents in the Agency Census were not a ‘Visible Minority’. This simply is not an issue that is exclusive to the Aboriginal population of Lethbridge.

The 2007 Homeless Census also revealed 14 families were, according to the definition used for the Census, homeless on the evening of October 11, 2007. These families had a combined total of 19 children that did not have a permanent place to sleep that night. In addition to this, Woods’ Homes, the Emergency Youth Shelter provided emergency shelter for 5 youth on the evening of October 11 for a total of 24 homeless children on the night of October 11, 2007. One respondent enumerated in the Street Census indicated she was pregnant.

Enumerators also indicated during the debriefing they encountered, 2 individuals who were non-compliant, 1 individual who was “rude” and 2 males drinking under the Stafford Bridge who were “aggressive”. These 5 individuals were not included in the results outline in the report as complete data was not gathered. However, if included the impact on the results would be significant. The results of the Street Census could increase to 48, resulting in a 40% increase in the Street Census between 2005 and 2007, with 45% increase in the estimated homeless population between 2005 and 2007.

Limitations

The 2007 Lethbridge Homeless Census provides invaluable data concerning the marginalized homeless population in Lethbridge. It provides a “temperature gauge” for the “climate” of homelessness in our community, by supplying some demographic characteristics about the population. However, it does not provide an extremely accurate temperature. The nature of this type of study imposes limitations in the data that is collected, in the means used to obtain it, and the amount of validity it holds in its applicability to the population of people experiencing homelessness in our community.

The actual collection of Census data on October 11, 2007 was subject to a variety of limitations that could have affected the outcome. This could include, but is not exclusive to:

- Weather conditions
- The date reflecting an irregularity in income for the homeless population of Lethbridge, resulting in “invisible homelessness”
- Individual being intimidated by the Street enumerators
- Perceived or actual threat to volunteer enumerators preventing them from approaching potential respondents
- Lack of support from agencies that provide services to the targeted population
- Inability to cover every location in Lethbridge, both outside and indoors

- Possibility of visual and/or spatial restriction causing people to be missed in a specific location

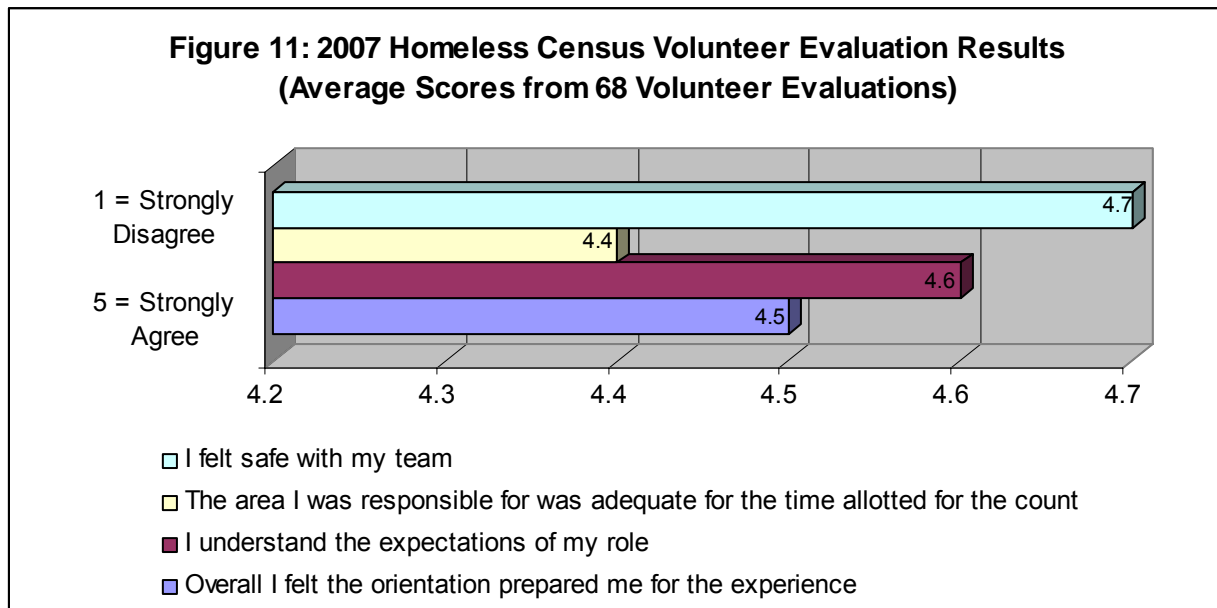
This list is not comprehensive, nor does it mean the listed limitations will necessarily occur. Nevertheless, they must be noted and accounted for, in order to understand the limitations of and best uses for the collected data.

The Homeless Census also required only Agency volunteers to track ethnicity. For this Census, it was determined, by the coordinators, that the Agency data would be sufficient to provide a demographic profile of the ethnicity of respondents.

It is important that the use of the information obtained from this study be limited in its scope, as the data obtained might not accurately define the homeless population in Lethbridge. The Census provides a generalized description of the visible population, and highlights the existence of homelessness in our community.

Volunteer Evaluation Results and Recommendations

Immediately following the 2007 Homeless Census, volunteer Street Enumerators were asked to fill out an evaluation on their perceptions of the Census process and its organization (See Appendix G). Evaluations were made on a scale of one to five, with one indicating “Strongly Disagree” and five indicating “Strongly Agree”. Figure 11, below, shows the averaged score of



the 68 volunteer evaluations.

The three most frequent recommendations made by the volunteers were:

- Go out later in the evening
- Provide more granola bars, or more than just granola bars, to respondents.
- More experienced Team Leaders

Recommendations

One responsibility in coordinating the Homeless Census is to find the balance between ensuring volunteer safety and conducting 'pure research'. Every year, based on the volunteer and past coordinator's recommendations as well as service provider knowledge of the behavioural trends of the homeless population, improvements and adjustments are made to the Census process. As such, the following recommendations will be forwarded for considering when planning the next Homeless Census:

- Develop an agency evaluation
- Provide advance notification to the agencies and allow more time for their planned contribution to the Census
- Send out call for volunteers earlier
- Actively recruit experienced team leaders
- Recruit additional volunteers to conduct an investigation of the coulees the day of the Census
- Continue annual comparative analysis and trend identification
- Develop a methodology to gather additional information from the 'hidden homeless'. One option is to post a survey on the SHIA website (www.bringinglethbridgehome.ca) and use several different media outlets to inform potential respondents.

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Appendix C: Agency Instructions – Homeless Census Questionnaire

As part of a SHIA Initiative, the Structure and Research Committee wants to define the extent of homelessness in our community. To do this, SHIA is organizing the 4th annual Homeless Census on Thursday October 11, 2007. The data collected from this study will be used to further meet the needs of homeless persons in Lethbridge.

As an agency that provides services to homeless persons or persons at risk of being homeless you are invited to participate in the Homeless Census on October 11, 2007. This census will give us a snap shot in time of the Homeless situation in Lethbridge. As such we are requesting that on the evening of October 11th between the hours of **7 – 9 p.m.**, each agency count the number of persons who meet the criteria outlined in the data collection sheets. Attached to this correspondence is a procedural guide that we would like you to use in order to acquire information from the people(s) that your agency serves.

We would appreciate your assistance in this matter and would like to offer a volunteer to come to your facility and assist you with the Census that evening. In order to get as accurate of results as possible we need support from you. For further information or to request a volunteer please contact Leah Bruder at 320-3051. The data collection sheets can be returned through fax at 380-2512, or we will pick them up. Thank you.

Definitions for Data Collection Sheets

Homeless – An individual who is: living on the street; staying in places not meant for human habitation; moving continuously among temporary housing arrangements provided by strangers, friends, or family; staying overnight in temporary shelters, or; has a permanent address but is not able to stay there on the evening of October 11th

Unable to find affordable housing** – If your client is at your facility because she/he is unable to find affordable housing for any of the following reasons, please indicate on the count sheet what circumstance listed below best describes his/her experience (in his/her own words) by using the corresponding letter:

- Ability to pay rent
- financial resources
- Employment
- Waiting lists for social housing
- Rental availability
- Rental location
- Rental size
- Access to transportation
- Home ownership info
- Other.

** If a client is not homeless or has a permanent and sustainable housing situation for the evening of October 11, **DO NOT RECORD ANY INFORMATION.**

Gender: Indicate (F) for female or (M) for male
Age: Indicate age, as per age range
Ethnicity: Indicate ethnicity using one of the categories outlined in the instructions
Family: Indicate if you are serving a family unit
Children: If you are serving a family, please indicate how many children you are serving

Instructions

1. Introduce yourself as a Volunteer for Social Housing in Action. Explain that you are doing a count for people who don't have a place to sleep tonight and ask permission to talk with them. Inform them that it will take only a minute and that they have the right to quit at any time.
2. Ask... **“Have you already been counted tonight?”**
3. If **“yes”**, thank them and move on to the next person.
DO NOT RECORD ANY INFORMATION

4. Ask... **“Where you will sleep tonight?”** (Use following options as prompts)
 - Home
 - Shelter
 - Other agency
 - Relatives or family
 - Friend/Acquaintance
 - Hospital
 - Vehicle
 - Park/coulees
 - Street/doorway
 - Other

RECORD SLEEPING PLACE BY CHECKING CORRESPONDING BOX

If the answer is at **“home”** record response, thank them, and move on. Do not continue with the rest of the questionnaire.

5. Ask them... **“What has kept you from finding a place to live?”** (Use following options as prompts)
 - Ability to acquire damage/utility deposit
 - Ability to pay rent
 - Employment
 - Social programs wait list (LHA, Treaty 7, etc)
 - Rental availability
 - Rental location
 - Rental size (# of bedrooms, etc)
 - Access to transportation
 - Health related issues
 - Other

RECORD THE RESPONSE BY CHECKING THE CORRESPONDING BOX

6. Other information (Record on Count Sheet)

- Ask them which age range they fall into
 - 18 and under
 - 19-30
 - 31-59
 - 60 +
- Ask them if they are willing to disclose their ethnicity (use one of the following categories)
 - Of Aboriginal Ancestry
 - Other Visible Minority
 - Caucasian
- Record how many families you encounter (**observation only**)
- Record how many children either "on their own" or in a family (**observation only**)
- Record the gender of the individual (**observation only**)

7. Thank the person for their time, and present them with a **“Getting Connected”** booklet.

Appendix D: Oath of Confidentiality



CITY OF
Lethbridge

As a condition of my engagement as a volunteer I, _____,
agree to maintain confidentiality of all information of a personal, financial, or technical nature
disclosed to, or ascertained by me in the performance of my engagement, including any
information, policy or knowledge generated as a function of the homeless census conducted on
behalf of the City of Lethbridge.

Signature

Date

Witness

Date

Appendix E: 2007 Homeless Census Orientation Agenda

Team Leader Orientation: 5:00 – 5:30 p.m.

- Assign grids (hand out clip boards)
- Review Script
- Cell phones
- Hand out Grab bags (granola bars, getting connected booklets)
- Answer any questions

Volunteer Registration & Meal: 5:30-6:15 p.m.

- Sign In
- Sign Oath
- Provide Volunteers with flashing lanyards/nametags

Welcome & Orientation: Go to Council Chambers 6:15 – 6:45 p.m.

- Diane Randell (Introduce the Mayor)
- Mayor Tarleck (Thank volunteers)
- (Safety orientation)
- Diane Randell
 - Questionnaire/data collection sheet explanation
 - Emergency numbers and rover explanation/safety concerns
 - Respect and rights for the homeless AND volunteers
 - Check in every ½ hour
 - Announce teams and designated meeting areas

Meet with Team Leaders: 6:45- 7:00 p.m.

- Confirm team contact number with registration
- Decide who's driving

Conduct Homeless Census 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Debrief: 9:00 – 9:30 p.m.

Appendix F: 2007 Homeless Census Questionnaire

PROCEDURE

6. Introduce yourself as a Volunteer for Social Housing in Action. Explain that you are doing a count for people who don't have a place to sleep tonight and ask permission to talk with them. Inform them that it will take only a minute and that they have the right to quit at any time.

7. Ask... **"Have you already been counted tonight?"**

8. If **"yes"**, thank them and move on to the next person.

DO NOT RECORD ANY INFORMATION

9. Ask... **"Where you will sleep tonight?"** (Use following options as prompts)

- Home
- Shelter
- Other agency
- Relatives or family
- Friend/Acquaintance
- Hospital
- Vehicle
- Park/coulees
- Street/doorway
- Other

RECORD SLEEPING PLACE BY CHECKING CORRESPONDING BOX

If the answer is at **"home"** record response, thank them, and move on. Do not continue with the rest of the questionnaire.

10. Ask them... **"What has kept you from finding a place to live?"** (Use following options as prompts)

- Ability to acquire damage/utility deposit
- Ability to pay rent
- Employment
- Social programs wait list (LHA, Treaty 7, etc)
- Rental availability
- Rental location
- Rental size (# of bedrooms, etc)
- Access to transportation
- Health related issues
- Other

RECORD THE RESPONSE BY CHECKING THE CORRESPONDING BOX

6. **Other information (Record on Count Sheet)**

- Ask them which age range they fall into
 - 18 and under
 - 19-30
 - 31-59
 - 60 +
- Record how many families you encounter (**observation only**)
- Record how many children either "on their own" or in a family (**observation only**)
- Record the gender of the individual (**observation only**)

8. **Thank the person for their time, and present give-away.**

Appendix G: Street Team Volunteer Evaluation Form



Homeless Census 2007 Volunteer Evaluation

1. Overall I felt the orientation prepared me for the experience.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

2. I understood the expectations of my role.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

3. The area I was responsible for was adequate for the time allotted for the count.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

4. I felt safe with my team.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

5. My recommendations for next year are: _____

If you have additional comments please contact:
 Diane Randell 320-3917 (drandell@lethbridge.ca)
 Leah Bruder 320-3051 (lbruder@lethbridge.ca)

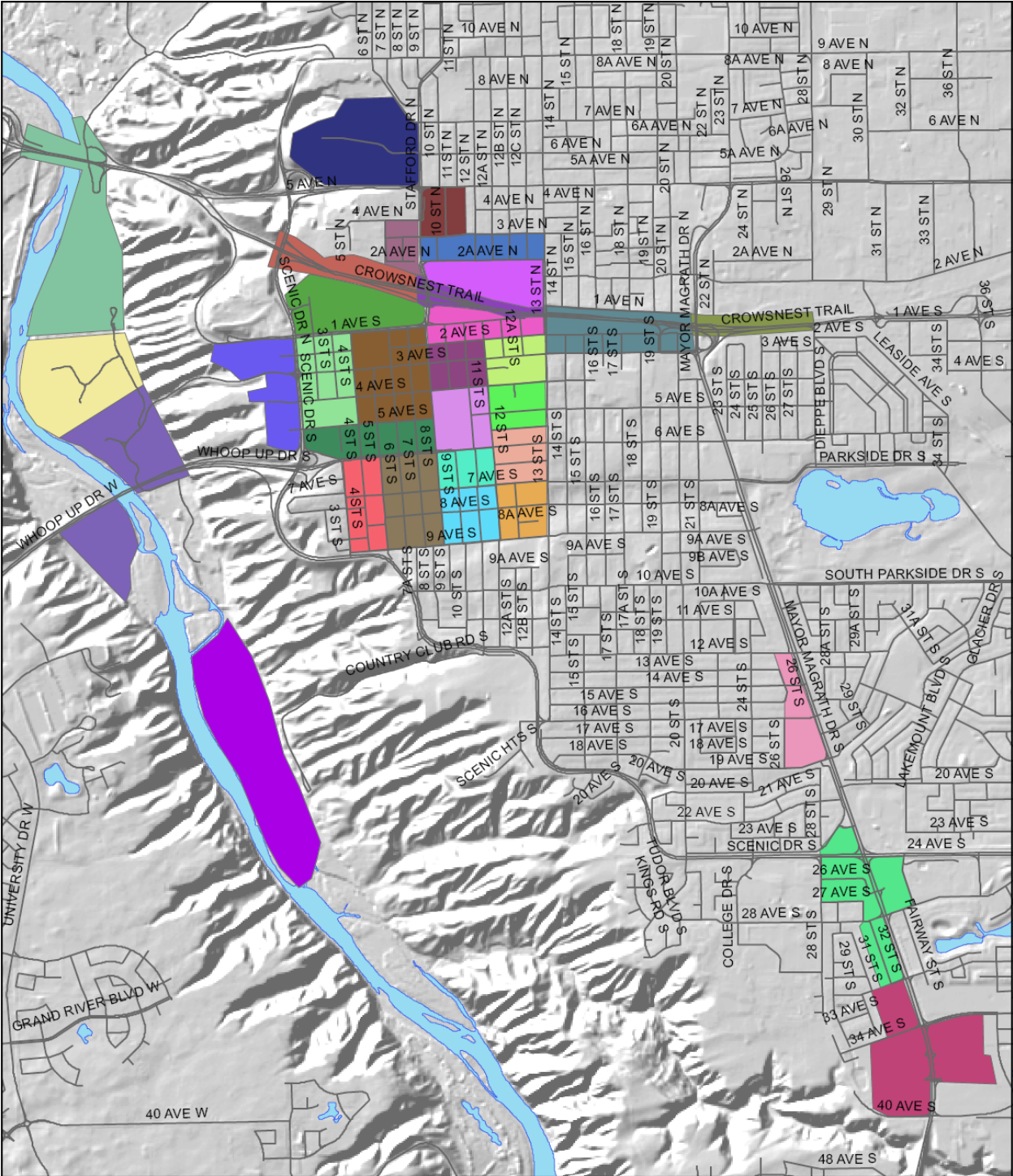
Appendix H: Qualitative Volunteer Recommendations

- I would have liked to be in a more active area
- Need flashlights! 1 is not enough. Need leaders who understand maps and know the area
- More experienced team leaders that know their areas
- Do the coulees at night: organize volunteers that are experienced and athletic to handle them. Earlier notice to bring flashlights and backpacks to census
- A little later start. Longer times.
- Start later and go later into the night
- Start later when people are sleeping
- Start a little later
- Split volunteers more equally between teams so teams don't have to double up
- More frequent research/surveys at various times for more accurate research
- Possibly have this event on a night when the malls/stores are closed (not a Thursday or Friday)
- Later count time. More granola bars. Organize camera distribution better for higher potential zones for housing areas.
- To better explain who to talk to and maybe role play a couple of scenarios
- Start earlier
- Assigned groups work better
- Having teams go out later at night so that we can talk to the people rather than take pictures of their bedding.
- Were the name tags dangerous? We were thinking they might be easy to choke us with. Just a thought.
- I appreciate being able to go with people I know. Volunteer tags were annoying and I felt it could have been a potential hazard
- That the survey is not conducted on a Thursday late night shopping night
- Send census email earlier requesting volunteers. It was nice to be able to be grouped with people I know this year.
- Very complex area could have used more light time. Please continue this
- Nothing, good work I had fun.
- More spice in the chilli ☺
- Maybe bigger zones
- More information for first timers, re: do we drive or just walk
- Provide one flashlight per team. Maybe later in the evening. Expected to see more folks than we saw.
- Do the count later in the evening as more homeless people may be encountered and counted on the streets. During hours when businesses and restaurants are still open, an accurate count may be hard to get.
- I've had the 1st street area, by the mall and old train station. I feel we would have found more people if it was later at night. It was not scary at all though. I felt safe. Very well organized. ☺
- Well I was hoping to meet on even have a count. However the area we were in was very upper class neighbourhood. I think we should focus on people that communicate more effectively with language to be assigned to designated areas' where they could speak the same language.
- I think that the volunteers need to be recruited earlier. Use your volunteers in the appropriate areas because some volunteers might have experience in certain areas. i.e.

Blackfoot speaking volunteers would be more appropriate in downtown core rather than isolated communities.

- To maybe have it later in the evening although I understand this may not be possible due to safety concerns. Otherwise it's good ☺
- More people go to more "busy areas" downtown, by shelter, etc.
- I would be more able to meet more people on a payday or during the weekend but it was worth while and a good experience
- Bigger area to search
- To have the census held on a Friday or busy pay day not enough people were encountered.
- None went well overall
- Do it earlier in the year and in the night
- Can have the maps earlier
- You would get a more accurate picture of the homeless population if the census was later in the evening around 11:00 – 12:00. I think this population is still doing other things at this time of the evening. I think the count would increase significantly if it were done later.
- I think that if the census started later, when the homeless started to settle for the night, around 11 p.m. the # would be more representative
- None I can think of good cause.
- Maybe do it a little later at night
- Well done!
- I have no recommendations it was very well done. Good Job!
- Group organization could be better
- Things seemed to run smoothly! It was well organized. I don't have any recommendations.
- We did our section twice in under an hour. We were right by City hall, Civic Centre area. We could have done a bigger area.

Appendix I: Key Area Identification Map



2007 Homeless Census Zones

