A Quality Assurance Study of the Tampa-Hillsborough Homeless Initiative's 2017 Point-In-Time Count in Hillsborough County, Florida

Bryan Booth, *Geography and Environmental Science & Policy*

The annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count conducted by the Tampa-Hillsborough Homeless Initiative (THHI) is meant to be a census of the homeless population being serviced by THHI and area service providers. The PIT Count is a requirement laid upon the nation's Continuum-of-Care (CoC) organizations, such as THHI, since 2005. The PIT Count, as well as the creation and continuance of the CoC-system itself, is mandated by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A CoC is made of local government funders and public/private providers of homeless services and is meant to assume the leadership role over all public and private housing and homeless related activities in an area by controlling the flow of federal funds to local governments and service providers (HUD 2012). The PIT Count is important to Florida and other states because it is used to determine the apportionment of HUD funds to the nation's CoCs; if the homeless are undercounted there will be a lack of available funding for necessary shelter beds, food programs, homeless diversion programs, rapid rehousing, and other resources required for a CoC to service their homeless population (Brooks, et al. 2017). In the words of Sandra Murman, a Hillsborough County Commissioner who has a seat in the THHI Board of Directors, who participated in THHI's 2017 PIT Count, "This point in time count that we are doing, not just for youth but for all the homeless, paints us a picture so we know how much housing we need, how much rent assistance we need, how much services, what are the problems these people have" (THHI 2017).

It has long been known that it is difficult to obtain estimates of homeless populations that are statistically sound (NLCHP 2015; Markee 2008; Sewell 2007; Cordray and Pion 1991), yet failure to properly conduct a PIT Count may result in loss of HUD funding for the community and a lack of service availability for people in need. Therefore, it is important that a CoC obtains an accurate and valid PIT Count which is as precise as possible. This study reports a quality assurance study completed with the objective of developing data from post-PIT Count surveys to verify or improve the accuracy of current estimates of homeless populations resulting from THHI's most recent PIT Count that occurred on February 23, 2017.

A PIT Count is a sight survey conducted by use of one or a combination of three survey methods to assure accuracy and validity of the census. These methods are Complete Coverage Approach, Known Locations Count, and the Random Sample of Areas Count; it is also possible to conduct a service-based count in place of a single-day PIT Count. These survey methods were used by 91% of the nation's CoCs conducting past PIT Counts (HUD 2014). Service-based counts are used in some large cities in the US to supplement or supplant their regular PIT Counts because service-user counts are useful in urban zones and other areas with large mobile or 'hidden' populations - 'hidden' in the sense that census-takers miss counting these individuals (Agan, et al. 2014). Even when using comprehensive sight surveys or statistical sampling methods, early observational errors during a PIT Count bias the success of the PIT Count process. There are two errors that regularly occur during a PIT Count: first, individuals may not be counted because they are either unseen, or second, seen yet discounted by the surveyors. These errors are compounded by the logistical truth that during PIT Counts in large metropolitan areas, such as Tampa or New York, it is impossible to survey in a single day all the areas where the homeless might be present; there just are not enough volunteers to conduct the PIT Count.

Some large metropolitan CoCs have adopted further methods in their PIT Counts to compensate for these inevitable errors in census-taking and population estimation. Three of the primary methods used to gauge PIT Count effectiveness are service user analysis, agent-capture, and post-survey techniques (Hopper et al. 2008). In this study, it was not possible for a third party investigator to gather confidential information from service providers concerning their users' shelter status, thus negating use of the service user analysis method. The agent-capture method was also eliminated for use in this

study since it requires close coordination with PIT Count processes both negating the objectiveness of this study, and requiring significant amounts of manpower to implement. The third method, that of conducting post-surveys of the homeless in order to gather data about PIT Count effectiveness was the method chosen for this quality assurance study. The large metropolitan area encompassed by the THHI (Figure 1) fits all the criteria for the type of CoC that would benefit from the use of a quality assurance study; those criteria include THHI's use of a public places count, reliance on volunteers, the fact that the Tampa-Hillsborough area is a large and ecologically complex environment, enumerators that are instructed to avoid unsafe areas and situations, and the known presence of a portion of the homeless population not being surveyed (Hopper et al. 2008).

METHODS

Two methods were used to gather information from the homeless population to gauge the effectiveness of the PIT Count; a Post-count Sight Survey of Major Streets and a Post-count Survey of Service Users. Since the objective of the survey was simply to determine whether a respondent was a) homeless and b) had either been counted or missed in the just completed PIT Count the survey methods

follow a simple model. As there is no need to gather personal information an abbreviated informed consent statement facilitates the survey process. The use of a single survey team allows for a strict following of census protocols and prevents repeat respondents, but does reduce possible sample size. This was a 'blind' study and at no point did the study interact with THHI personnel or research THHI plans for the 2017 Pit Count. Survey assumptions were based on 2016 PIT Count procedures used by THHI.

An important factor that may also have facilitated the survey process in this study was the decision to provide some form of real compensation to survey respondents for their time, inconvenience, and cooperation during the survey. Monies were procured so that each respondent could receive a small cash fee for participation; all respondents answering affirmatively to the qualifying question, 'Are you homeless?' during the sight survey were offered this compensatory fee. This is in contrast to the service-user survey component of the study where all service-users were compensated upon agreeing to respond to both qualifying and survey questions. Participants in the service center-based survey received one dollar ($1) each and respondents who were approached in public were compensated with a two dollar ($2) fee. This was felt necessary due to the level of

basic needs being addressed by homeless individuals. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, persons without basic shelter do not have the time or energy to contribute to social and societal needs because they are focused instead on basic subsistence and shelter needs (Plotnik and Kouyoumdjian 2013). Expecting full and honest participation from these individuals with only the esoteric reward of improving future services can be considered unequitable for the participants and may bias their responses to survey questions.

Methods for Post-Count Sight Survey of Major Streets and Transit Centers

Two days is the established critical time factor for conducting a post-count survey (Hopper, et al. 2008), so this survey was conducted during daylight hours on February 24-25, 2017. On the first day following the PIT Count a 'castral' type survey of major streets was conducted. This 'single-cast' castral survey followed major East-West streets cutting through the portions of Tampa with high population densities (Fletcher Ave., Fowler Ave., Busch Ave., Hillsborough, Ave. MLK Ave.); also included were the North-South connectors used (56th St., Rt. 92, Florida Ave.) as well as two Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority transfer stations which were adjacent to the East-West survey corridors. The University HART transfer center area, which is just off Fletcher Avenue was surveyed as well as its immediate perimeter of surrounding streets (131st Ave., Livingston Ave., 132nd Ave., and 27th St.). The Yukon St. HART transfer center property was surveyed as well as the adjacent Yukon St. between US92 and Taliaferro Ave. This territory had been thoroughly covered by THHI PIT Count teams in the 2016 count and it was expected that THHI's 2017 count would also include these high density areas. Thirty-five miles of streets were surveyed spanning the city boundaries of Tampa and the City of Temple Terrace to touch portions of the northern and southern parts of unincorporated Hillsborough County, just a small portion of THHI's area of responsibility. Possible participants were identified using the following criteria: 1) Panhandlers and unlicensed street vendors, 2) People carrying possessions such as bedding/ suitcases, 3) Isolated individuals unengaged in society (sitting in at abandoned stores or sleeping on benches, and 4) Individuals who are visibly begrimed and unwashed. Surveyors elaborate and explain the meaning and processes of a PIT Count, if necessary, to get a rational response to the survey question; surveyors had red THHI PIT Count tee-shirts, which were worn by all THHI participants in their PIT Count, to act as a visual reference to the survey question. Surveyors would sometimes ask clarifying questions to

assure the accuracy of a response. A note field was provided in each survey entry to denote sex of respondent and provide space for optional comments/notes (Table 1). This is the only qualitative information that resulted from this study.

Methods for the Post-Count Survey of Service Users

The second day of the study concentrated on capturing service user responses. Since the count had occurred on Thursday there was a limited number of service providers operating on Saturday. Only a single service site was visited (Trinity Café); however, the site is reportedly crowded on Saturdays (perhaps due to the lack of other available services on weekends). Permission was obtained to conduct the survey in the entrance area to the site. The survey interview process was conducted following the same format as the sight survey. All service users were asked the qualifying question, 'Are you homeless?' and if so, the survey question of 'Did you participate in the PIT Count on Thursday?' was then asked. All service users had an opportunity to participate in the survey. Duplicate responses from the previous day's sight survey were identified and eliminated from the study analysis. The survey was administered a half hour before the opening of the service center and lasted until the breakfast meal was ended to assure the capture of all users.

RESULTS

There were thirty-two (n=32) respondents to the Post-Count Sight Survey of Major Streets and Transit Centers. The survey recorded the response as to whether or not the person had been counted by THHI volunteers, noted the sex of respondent, and added some of the comments made by survey participants (Table 1, Items 1-12). The sight survey had a total of 32 respondents, 2 being female, (Table 2). Only 11 of the males reported participating in the count (Table 3) for a percentage participation in the THHI PIT Count of 40% (Table 4).

There were eighty-eight (n=88) respondents to the post-count survey of service users. The survey recorded the response of self-qualified homeless individuals as to whether the person had been counted by THHI volunteers; some of the comments made by these survey participants are noted in Table 1, Items 13-20). The survey had a total of 88 respondents, 13 being female, (Table 2). A majority of the males, 40 out of 75, reported being included in the PIT Count while only one of the females reported participation (Table 3). This gave a percentage participation score of 8% for females and 53% for males (Table 4).

The combined total indicating participation in the PIT Count for the first day's sight survey was 12 out of 32 (38%) with 41 out of 88 (47%) on the second

day's survey of service users. Both methods combined together tallied one female (1 out of 15) who participated in PIT Count and fifty-two males (52 out of 105) who similarly participated; this leads to a combined percentage count of 53 out of 120 (44%).

During the course of the survey the following observations were made that highlight the shortcomings of this and other attempts to count homeless populations: 1) No data on homeless youth was captured in study. 2) No family units were captured in study by the surveyors. 3) No data from unescorted females were captured in sight survey. 4) Time was seen to be an important factor at many sites for the survey process due to the high mobility of the homeless population. 5) Some possible participants were observed actively 'hiding' from the surveyors. It is possible that some of the people who were obviously homeless but refused to interact with this study may have been identified as homeless during the THHI-count, since PIT Count methodology allows for surveyor discretion in identifying non-respondents. The comments made by the participants and noted by the survey-taker support the contention of active avoidance of surveyors (Table 1).

DISCUSSION

The objective of this quality assurance study was to ascertain the approximate dimensions of the 'hidden' homeless population not captured by regular PIT Count measures and to use that data to adjust PIT Count figures to a greater accuracy and precision facilitating as increased validity to the PIT Count conclusions. That brings the focus of the ensuing discussion to two questions: 'How big is Tampa's hidden population?' and 'How can this study's data be applied to adjust PIT Count population estimates?' For the purposes of this discussion the PIT Count figures reported by THHI for 2016 will be used where it was reported that 1,817 homeless people had been in residence in the geographic area comprised of THHI on the day of the count.

A study of the homeless population estimates reported by Tampa-Hillsborough CoC over the past eight years show a sudden change in homeless populations not reflected in state averages or in adjacent counties (Table 5). Between 2009 and 2011 there was a reported decrease in homeless population on the order of that reported by other state CoCs. However, in 2013 no PIT Count figures were submitted to the state or federal authorities, not even a resubmittal of the previous year's reported figures (PIT Counts can be conducted biannually).

The next submitted population estimates from THHI showed a 68% reduction from previous homeless population estimates that was not mirrored in adjacent localities (13%) or state averages (4.9%), but since then has shown population declines similar to other reporting sources.

From the above analysis it is apparent that a sudden change occurred in Tampa area homeless populations, PIT Count procedures, or the reporting of PIT Count estimates in the two-year period between the 2012 and 2014 PIT Counts. A historical search of public records comes across three incidents that bear significant influence on the PIT Count process in this time period. First it was reported nationally that the City of Tampa had the highest homeless rate for a major city of its size (Hirschkorn 2012). The second occurrence of significance was the criminalization of the homeless caused by the enactment of Item #60 by the City of Tampa that made it illegal to sleep in public or to carry more than 60 lbs. in possessions (Keyes 2013) and the enactment of Ordinance 2013-95, Section 14-46 which made it illegal for homeless to approach others or speak to others in public for the purpose of seeking monetary or economic assistance (US District Court 2016). The third occurrence swiftly followed the first two when the Homeless Coalition for Hillsborough County was reorganized into the Tampa-Hillsborough Homeless Initiative by November of 2014 (THHIa 2017).

These three occurrences had three separate effects that acted to depress homeless population estimates produced by the Tampa-Hillsborough area coalition of care organization. The first occurrence, the national embarrassment of the City of Tampa combined with the massive publicity surrounding the upcoming Republican National Convention spurred the local government to take action. Government officials sought to fix the 'image' of Tampa which lead to a series of increasingly acrimonious public debates culminating in subsequent criminalization of homelessness in Tampa. This criminalization of the homeless forced them to avoid legal prosecution by abandoning the regular and safe areas, such as bus terminals, subways, and other publicly-accessed city property. The homeless population of Tampa has instead become adept at sleeping in hidden areas such as behind dumpsters, in abandoned buildings, or in overgrown areas to escape arrest. During the day they choose sites where they have multiple escape routes to avoid police interdiction; this behavior has been observed in other marginalized populations (Castañeda 2014). As a consequence of this environment many of the homeless in the Tampa area have become hesitant to communicate openly with city officials and representatives; this

includes PIT Count volunteers. The reorganization of the Homeless Coalition for Hillsborough County in 2014 combined with the repressive government climate in existence at the time allowed the discrepancies between current and past counts to go unremarked. However, in this historical research and analysis no occurrences were found that indicated that a 68% reduction in homeless population ever actually occurred in this time period. Instead it may be concluded that PIT Count estimations by THHI since 2014 have been serious underestimations of real population dimensions.

THHI staff and programs act under the direction of the HUD-required Board of Directors of the CoC. THHI as it is currently organized has 13 directors on their Board of Directors; 2 homeless services providers from the City of Tampa, 2 Tampa officials, 2 statewide service providers, 3 county officials, and 4 representatives of industry (THHI, 2017b). There are no representatives for Plant City or Temple Terrace, nor is there representation for service providers outside of Tampa city limits. Also, unlike neighboring Pinellas County and the majority of Florida CoCs, THHI has not had a homeless or formerly homeless individual on their Board of Directors as required by HUD guidelines (HUD 2012). This person is meant to act as a stakeholder representing and advocating for the homeless population; such representation has been lacking on the THHI-Board for several years. These missing representatives would be the logical persons on the THHI Board of Directors to advocate for accurate PIT Counts and an increase in services for their constituents.

The preceding discussion on the output of historical Tampa area PIT Counts leads to discussion of this quality assurance study of the just completed PIT Count. An examination of methods used in THHI's 2016 count show serious conceptual flaws. Currently the PIT Count procedures are a combination of the Complete Coverage Approach and a Known Locations Count with both being applied in an incomplete fashion. First, the THHI PIT Count neglects to survey large portions of the county due to a lack of resources negating the power of the Complete-Coverage Approach. Secondly, there is not an organized geographic-temporal database of known locations. So this means that teams may not be at the correct locations at the requisite times to conduct a valid Known Locations Search. Also, the 'criminalization' of the homeless causes gathering places to change as authorities become aware of them, thus negating the Known Locations search. These flaws are in addition to the fact that these methods are not recommended for the use of a CoC such as THHI; it is recommended that a

Random Sample of Areas Count be used for cities as large and complex as Tampa (HUD 2008). Always to be remembered is that all these methods suffer from the expected observational errors even when properly conducted. For example, the problem of enumerating homeless youth is especially difficult (Ingram, et al. 2017). If THHI persists in using current methods under current conditions they need many more volunteers to conduct a successful PIT Count. Currently, the majority of 'volunteers' are employees of area service providers. THHI needs to facilitate partnerships within the community who will support future PIT Counts. Houston, Texas, is an example of a city that has successfully marketed and branded their PIT Count as community-wide, cooperative, humanitarian event and so garners much needed support from their community (Schneider, et al. 2016).

Having established that the present PIT Count population estimates are only representative of the homeless population and do not fully describe its size or scope there is a recognized need to improve these population estimates. There are many methods available for use in conducting thorough population estimations of homeless populations, although none are free from error (Culhane, et al. 2013). One method to improve homeless population estimates can be done by adjusting the PIT Count census to account for the 'hidden' portion of the population. In the case of NYC, in the past they have chosen to take a median figure between different levels of estimates for the 'hidden' proportion of their homeless populations and applying this percentage to adjust sight-survey results for a more accurate and realistic estimation of homeless populations (Schneider, et al. 2016; Hopper, et al. 2008). In this study the various percentage estimators for the 'hidden' component of the homeless population were 93% of females that were homeless failed to be counted, 50% of the males were not counted, and 56% of the overall population were 'hidden' from the 2017 THHI PIT Count. An average median score would be 66%, while a median score between males and females would be 71%. If these 'hidden' population estimates were used to adjust the figures of the 2016 PIT Count the following results would have obtained: the population estimates provided by the PIT Count would have risen from 1817 to 2725 using the 50% adjustment, to 2834 using 56% adjustment, to 3016 for the 66%, to 3107 for 71%, and 3506 using 93% for the 'hidden' estimate adjustment.

Although THHI has yet to officially release the homeless population data from the 2017, they have made limited announcements of their results in discussions with a local media outlet

(O'Donnell and Danielson 2017) and at the July 2017 THHI CoC monthly meeting. It was announced there that only 1,549 homeless persons were counted in the THHI 2017 homeless census and of those, only 567 had no shelter. This is a decrease of 268 individuals from the 2016 PIT count, a 15% decrease. For reasons of verifying the accuracy of THHI reports, a comparison with the adjacent county's CoC, the Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board, shows a contrary trend with a slight increase of 1.9% in their homeless population (Santa Lucia, 2017). Also unlike THHI, the Pinellas County CoC PIT Counts in the past have been in general agreement with statewide trends (Table 5). Application of the statistical adjustment factors as determined by this quality assurance study to account for the portion of the homeless population that was 'hidden' from the THHI PIT Count will show 'truer' estimates of the actual homeless population of Tampa. Using these adjustment factors the population of homeless in Tampa on February 23, 2017 was a) 2323 homeless individuals using the low 50% adjustment, b) 2416 using the 56% adjustment, c) 2571 for the 66%, d) 2648 for 71%, and 2989 using study's overall 93% for the 'hidden' estimate adjustment. However, as noted this is only in the areas actually surveyed by THHI, so the actual population of homeless in the Tampa-Hillsborough area

in 2017 is certainly above 3000 individuals.

To judge the accuracy of these estimates they can be compared to projected population estimates based on the 2009 PIT Count which are created by adjusting them to align with general homeless population patterns. Overall, the State of Florida showed a 41.9% decrease in homeless populations from 2009 to 2016; Pinellas County, an adjoining county with similar demographics had a 33.3 % reduction in their homeless populations. Assuming that Tampa-Hillsborough area followed similar trends as the State of Florida then the projected population for 2016 would have been 4,341. Using the Pinellas County population as a benchmark the projected population for Tampa-Hillsborough in 2016 would have been 4,984. Seen in comparison to these population estimates the use of any of the discussed adjustment values to compensate PIT Count population estimates for the 'hidden' population is fully justified and defensible; even a doubling of PIT Count census figures would be below these possible factors. In addition, as this quality assurance study was a 'blind' study, the figures obtained by this study have added significance and value (Hopper, et al. 2008). It should be acknowledged in the metadata accompanying the PIT Count figures that

data on minorities, women and youth may be especially underestimated. This study was seriously flawed in its attempt to enumerate these populations and so could not produce adjustment factors for these populations. Underestimates of these populations thus would be in accord with findings of other studies (Castañeda, et al. 2014; Auerswald, et al. 2013).

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that the PIT Count process as conducted by THHI is highly flawed, an outcome which will cause a lack of funding and services for the homeless population of Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa. Until valid statistical survey methods are promulgated and regulated by HUD the PIT Count for any given area, not just THHI's count, needs to be considered as an invalid measure of population size unless verified by quality assurance studies conducted by independent parties. Unfortunately, there is also support for the contention that this flaw in THHI PIT Count efforts is the result of intentional neglect by city authorities acting to avoid the negative image of being the 'City With America's Highest Homeless Rate' (Garofalo 2012). It should be noted that THHI publicly rejected the findings of this report when it was first presented to them, prior to learning the contents of the report; THHI has not since acknowledged

or commented upon the study. As already recognized, PIT Count population estimates of homeless populations need to be combined with post-PIT Count quality assurance studies, Housing Inventory Counts, data from service providers, and then statistically adjusted in order to gain a valid estimation of homeless populations. The study has developed several specific recommendations that can be implemented in order to improve the accuracy of the current 2017 PIT Count, as well as to improve the validity of future PIT Counts conducted by THHI. Many of these suggested actions are commonly accepted practices and could have been adopted by THHI at any time in the past five years. The following are the recommendations for the THHI administration that were developed as a result of this quality assurance study of the THHI 2017 PIT Count.

(1) The accuracy of homeless population estimates resulting from the just completed 2017 PIT Count can be improved by accounting for the proportion of homeless that were not counted. The portion of the homeless population that was 'hidden' from PIT census-takers need to be taken into account. This study developed valid percentage estimates of this 'hidden' component and these values can be used to adjust PIT Count raw-data to reflect a more accurate population estimate. A fairer estimation of Tampa

homeless populations would be made if all values from the just completed count are increased by a factor ranging from 56% to 93% depending on the population. The 50% value might be most appropriate since it represents single men, the largest subpopulation of homeless. However, a 100% adjustment would also account for the large areas that went un-surveyed during THHI's 2017 PIT Count.

(2) In future PIT Counts THHI may choose to act as other COCs and use an agent-capture method or, as in this study, use post-count interviews/service-user surveys as quality assurance measures. These quality assurance measures can be used to improve PIT Count methods and execution by providing data as to the visibility or non-visibility status of the homeless on the day of the count, as well as building a known locations database or assigning density values for statistical analysis estimation methods (Agans, et al. 2014; Hopper, et al. 2008).

(3) Future THHI PIT Counts should use the Random Sample of Areas Count method suggested and described by HUD manuals (HUD, 2008). This is the most appropriate method to conduct a valid homeless PIT Count survey in the Tampa-Hillsborough area.

(4) During PIT Count volunteer training emphasis should continue to be placed on avoiding the classical error of PIT Count surveyors, that of not questioning every person, but instead discounting persons due to their race, dress, or behavior as not fitting classic stereotypes of homelessness. Reduction of this error can vastly improve the validity of future PIT Counts conducted by THHI.

(5) THHI needs to market and brand their PIT Count to facilitate partnerships with non-service providers to increase community cooperation and participation in the PIT Count.

(6) THHI needs to allow other municipalities in Hillsborough County, such as Plant City and Temple Terrace, representation on the THHI Board of Directors to avoid the current neglect of the homeless populations that reside in areas of Hillsborough County outside of the Tampa city limits, as well as to place on the Board of Directors a homeless or formerly homeless individual to act as a stakeholder for the homeless population as required by HUD guidelines (HUD 2012).

WORKS CITED

Agans, Robert P., Malcolm T. Jefferson, James M. Bowling, Donglin Zeng, Jenny Yang, and Mark Silverbush. 2014. "Enumerating the hidden homeless: strategies to estimate the homeless gone missing from a point-in-time count." *Journal of Official Statistics* 30, no. 2. 215-229.

Auerswald, Colette L., Erin S. Ingram, John M. Bridgeland, Bruce Reed, and Matthew Atwell. 2013. "Hidden in Plain Sight: An Assessment of Youth Inclusion in Point-in-Time Counts of California's Unsheltered Homeless Population." *The California Homeless Youth Project*.

Brooks, Madeline, Cordelia Elaiho, and Karla Geisse. 2017. "On the Front-Line: Understanding Philadelphia's Homeless Populations Through the Point in Time Count." *Population Health Matters (Formerly Health Policy Newsletter)* 30. 2-3.

Castañeda, Ernesto, Jonathan D. Klassen, and Curtis Smith. 2014. "Hispanic and non-hispanic homeless populations in El Paso, Texas." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 36, no.4. 488-505.

Council on Homelessness-Florida State Department of Children and Families. 2017. "Appendix 1: Point in Time Counts by Continuum of Care 2011-2016" in "2016 Annual Report Council on Homelessness-Florida Department of Children and Families", *Florida State Department of Children and Families*, accessed March 1, 2017. http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs /homelessness/docs/2016AnnualReport.pdf.

Culhane, Dennis P., Stephen Metraux, Thomas Byrne, Magdi Stino, and Jay Bainbridge. 2013. "The age structure of contemporary homelessness: evidence and implications for public policy." *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 13, no. 1. 228-244. *The Homelessness Analytics Initiative*, accessed March 1, 2017. http://homelessnessanalytics.org/.

Garofalo, Pat. 2012. "Republican Convention Taking Place In City With America's Highest Homeless Rate". *ThinkProgress*, accessed October 6, 2017. https://thinkprogress.org/republican-convention-taking-place-in-city-with-americas-highest-homeless-rate-eb6ec53ac00f/0.

Hirschkorn, Phil (2012). 'Tampa area has nation's highest homelessness rate' CBS News/ August 26, 2012, 7:46 PM. Website accessed 28FEB17; [http://www.cbsnews.com/news/tampa-area-has-nations-highest-homelessness-rate/]

Hopper, Kim, Marybeth Shinn, Eugene Laska, Morris Meisner, and Joseph Wanderling. 2008. "Estimating numbers of unsheltered homeless people through plant-capture and postcount survey methods." *American Journal of Public Health* 98, no.8. 1438-1442.

HUD [US Department of Housing and Urban Development]. 2008. "A guide to counting people." *HUD, Office of Community Planning and Development*.

HUD [US Department of Housing and Urban Development]. 2012. "Establishing and Operating a Continuum of Care". *HUD*, accessed October 6, 2017. https://www.hudexchange.info/resour ces/documents/EstablishingandOperatingaCoC_CoCProgram.pdf.

Ingram, Erin S., John M. Bridgeland, Bruce Reed, and Matthew Atwell. 2017. "Hidden in Plain Sight: Homeless Students in America's Public Schools." *Civic Enterprises*. 1-64.

Keyes, Scott. 2013. "Tampa Passes New Law To Toss Homeless People In Jail For Sleeping In Public." *ThinkProgress.* July 22, 2013, accessed February 28, 2017. https://thinkprogress.org/ tampa-passes-new-law-to-toss-homeless-people-in-jail-for-sleeping-in-public-6acf50a87dc6#.xcwhgies4.

Markee, Patrick. 2004. "Undercounting the Homeless: How the Bloomberg Administration's Homeless Survey Undercounts the Street Homeless and Misleads the Public." *Coalition for the Homeless (NYC)*, May 24, 2004, accessed February 28, 2017. http://coalhome.3cdn.net/ f19c3af835b3b2a97f_jlm6iv6il.pdf.

NLCHP [National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty]. 2015. "Homelessness in America: An Overview of Data and Causes." *National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty*.

O'Donnell, Christopher and Richard Danielson. 2017. "Homelessness down by 15 percent in Hillsborough County, annual count finds." *Tampa Bay Times*, Tampa Edition July 10, 2017.

Plotnik, Rod, and Haig Kouyoumdjian. 2013. "Introduction to Psychology". *Cengage Learning*.

Santa Lucia, Ray C. 2017. "Analysis of Pinellas County Point-In-Time (PIT) Data from 2015 through 2017". *Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board*. 1-28. http://www.pinellashome less.org /Portals/0/FINAL%20PIT%203%20YEAR%20REPORT%20R%207%2025%2017.pdf.

Schneider, Monika, Daniel Brisson, and Donald Burnes. 2017. "Do We Really Know How Many Are Homeless?: An Analysis of the Point-In-Time Homelessness Count." *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services* 97, no. 4. 321-329.

Sewell, Chan. 2007. "New York's Annual Estimate of Homeless Is Challenged," *New York Times*, May 22, 2007.

THHI [Tampa Bay Hillsborough Homeless Initiative]. 2017. '2017 Pit Count'. THHI, accessed March 1, 2017. https://youtu.be/Ns-D8L42oGSs.

THHI [Tampa Bay Hillsborough Homeless Initiative]. 2017a. 'History'. THHI, accessed March 1, 2017. http://thhi.org/about-thhi/history/.

THHI [Tampa Bay Hillsborough Homeless Initiative]. 2017b. 'Board of Directors /Board Members'. THHI, accessed October 6, 2017. http://thhi.org/about-thhi/leadership/.

US District Court [United States District Court, Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division]. 2016. "Case No. 8:15-Cv-1219-T-23 Homeless Helping Homeless, Inc., Plaintiff, V. City of Tampa, Florida, Defendant." August 5, 2016". Public record.

APPENDIX OF TABLES AND FIGURES

	Comments in Survey's Note Field
1	Did not see anyone
2	Scared. Big group of people with red and yellow shirts -
3	Scared. Kept yelling 'Hey you' at us. We walked away fast.
4	Avoided:Red/yellow THHI shirts look like Obama-phone salesman uniform
5	Got a little bottle of hair conditioner (from PIT Count). Useless
6	PIT Count people show up after end of free breakfast- didn't talk to them
7	Saw PIT Count people but was not approached as they passed
8	The PIT Count people were real nice- I commend them.
9	Saw them but they did not come his way
10	Never saw any PIT Counters- but did see it on TV on Thursday night
11	In the emergency room on Thursday
12	Nobody's here now- you have to come back around dinner time
13	Didn't ask us-only asked the black people. We walked by them 3 times
14	Never saw them
15	Said 'Hi' as walked by them, but not asked any questions
16	Saw them but was not approached or asked questions
17	I was working- not here on Thursday.
18	You won't see me on the street. Stay out of sight- in the bushes
19	We live in an abandoned house and sneak out so nobody sees us
20	Out of town that day [this datum excluded from statistical analysis]

Table 1: Comments in survey's note field: In addition to noting sex of respondent the survey also noted these comments made by respondents. Items 1-12 were from street sight survey while items 13-20 were from service users' survey.

	Survey Respondents		
	Females	Males	Total
Sight Survey	2	30	32
Service Users	13	75	88
Combined Methods	15	105	120

Table 2: Sample Descriptors- Breakdown of male/female participants to the two post-count surveys conducted in study.

	Number Counted in PIT Count		
	Females	Males	Total
Sight Survey	0	12	12
Service Users	1	40	41
	1	52	53

Table 3: Raw scores from post-count surveys- number of respondents who indicated that they had participated with the THHI PIT Count on 23FEB17.

% Percentage Counted by THHI			
	Females	Males	Total
Sight Survey	0	40	38
Service Users	8	53	47
Combined Methods	7	50	44

Table 4: Percentage scores from post-count surveys- gives percentage of respondents who indicated that they had participated with the THHI PIT Count on 23FEB17.

.

Comparison of PIT Count Totals						
	Pinellas County		Hillsborough County		Florida Overall	
Year	PIT Count	Annual % Change	PIT Count	Annual % Change	PIT Count	Annual % Change
2009	4163	-	7473	-	57687	-
2010	3948	-5.2	7473	0.0	57751	0.1
2011	3890	-1.5	7336	-1.8	56771	-1.7
2012	3971	2.1	7336	0.0	54972	-3.2
2013	3913	-1.5	*	*	43455	-21.0
2014	3391	-13.3	2291	-68.8	41335	-4.9
2015	3387	-0.1	1931	-15.7	35964	-13.0
2016	2777	-18.0	1817	-5.9	33502	-6.8
			* no PIT Count data provided			

Table 5: Comparison of PIT Count Totals from Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Florida State with corresponding figures showing annual percentage change (Council on Homelessness-FDCF, 2017).
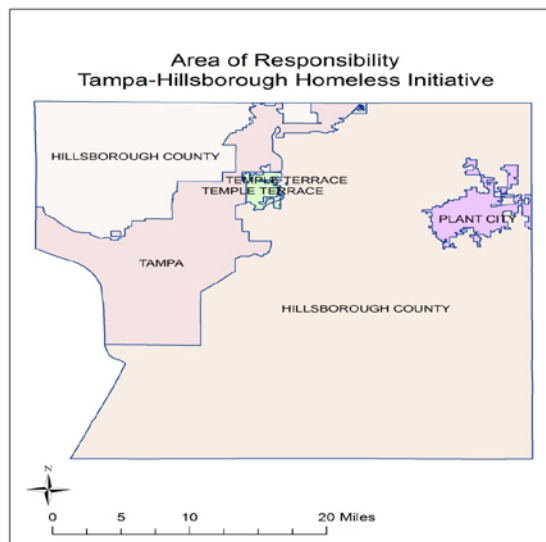

Figure 1: Area of Responsibility / Tampa-Hillsborough Homeless Initiative – Shows all of Hillsborough County including the incorporated cities of Plant City, Tampa, and Temple Terrace as well as the unincorporated northern and southern areas of Hillsborough County.
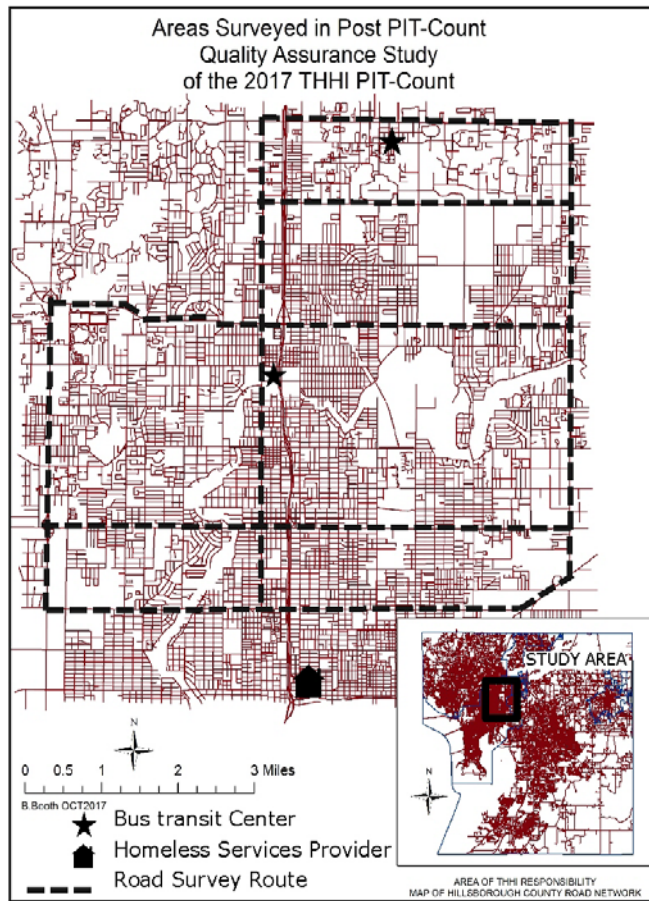
Figure 2: Areas Surveyed in Post PIT Count Quality Assurance Study of the 2017 THHI PIT Count- Shows castral survey route taken by the survey team as well as two transit centers surveyed on the first day and the site of a homeless services provider where the survey was completed on the second day of the study.