2018 Joint PiT Count & Registry Week
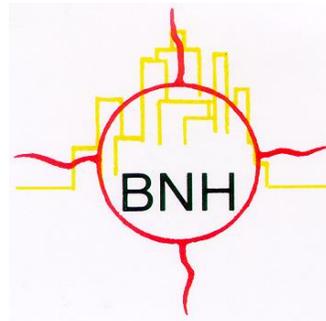
Brantford and Brant County

Brantford Native Housing

in partnership with the **City of Brantford**

and the **County of Brant**

Final Report

June 28, 2018

Submitted by:	Victoria Watson - PiT Count Coordinator Kayla Ripley - Indigenous Engagement Coordinator Pete Doolittle – Community Relations Administrator

PiT Count Enumeration		
Population	**Data Source**	**Count**
Unsheltered – Surveyed	Number of unsheltered responses*	137
Unsheltered – Observed	Number observed homeless from tally	30
Emergency Shelter and VAW	Systems data/Occupancy	58
Transitional Housing	Systems data/Occupancy	15
Systems (Health and/or Corrections)	Systems data	9*
Unknown (likely homeless)	Number of "Respondent doesn't know" responses**	11
Total		260

*Refers to the number of people who responded with an **unsheltered location** to the question, "Where are you staying tonight?"

**Refers to the number of responses of "Respondent doesn't know (likely homeless)" to "Where are you staying tonight?"

Demographics	
Population	**Percent**
Male	59.12%
Female	38.68%
Aboriginal identity	35.77%
Veterans	2.92%
Chronic (6+ months/ past year)	47.01%
Episodic (3+ times/ past year)	20.90%
Child (0 – 14)	1.46%
Youth (15 – 24)	10.95%
Adult (25 – 64)	79.56%
Senior (65+)	8.03%

Surveys Completed	
Population	**Count**
Unsheltered	18
Emergency Shelter and VAW	58
Transitional Housing	15
Systems (Health / Corrections)**	0
Hidden Homeless	46
Total	137

*Please Note: These statistics do not include those who did not complete a survey but were observed homeless. Those individuals were tallied on the tally sheet which hold seperate statistics. For example, The Brantford General Hospital agreed to complete a tally sheet which included those who were observed homeless, or would be released to "no fixed address". Due to privacy reasons, they were unable to conduct surveys within the hospital. **On the night of March 19th, there were 9 individuals staying in the hospital that were homeless. By looking at these statistics, it appears that there were 0 individuals staying in "systems" but that wasn't the case.

1. PiT Count Overview		
Date(s)	Monday, March 19, 2018	
Time	**Unsheltered Count**	**Sheltered Count**
	5-9pm	7am-11pm
	Magnet Event(s)	**Other:**
	5-9pm	
Weather	Cloudy but not raining; approximately 0-5 degrees Celsius and windy.	
Ice Breaker/Honoraria Provided	People were approached and given a tobacco tie. Survey participants were provided with a $5 bill and bag with survival items (i.e. hygiene items, non-perishable food). Participants were also given cigarettes if they asked for it.	

Did you conduct a joint Registry Week or Period Prevalence Count?	☒	☐

How did you adapt the methodology to conduct the survey on subsequent days?

The registry week VI-SPDAT surveys were conducted on the same day as the PiT Count. Survey participants completed the VI-SPDAT immediately following the PiT survey, if they wanted to.

2. Key Findings

What were the key findings of your PiT Count? Did results confirm your expectations, or were there any surprises in your findings? If you conducted a previous count, what changes did you observe?

Key findings – In relation to the overall demographics for Brantford/Brant the Indigenous population is over-represented in the population of people experiencing homelessness. We expected and we found the City of Brantford has a large homeless population. There were no surprises that have been indicated to date. Due to the success of the 2016 PiT Count we experienced more social service like agencies getting involved and participating.

3. Project Structure

	Yes	No
Did your community have a dedicated PiT Count Coordinator?	☒	☐
Did your community use an Assistant Coordinator? (e.g., Volunteer Coordinator, Night of the Count Assistant, etc.)	☒	☐

Describe:

We used two coordinators: PiT Count Coordinator, and Indigenous Engagement Coordinator. Both coordinators worked closely on almost every task as well as individual responsibilities.

Did your community use sub-committees? (eg., Survey Committee, Volunteer Committee, Aboriginal Engagement Committee, etc.)	☒	☐

Describe:

During the planning stages there were a number of sub-committees, hiring, training, media and process. The overall PiT Count planning committee started to meet in November 2017 and continued meeting every week up to the end of March 2018. These meeting included the Coordinators to discuss and offer feedback on all aspects of the Joint PiT Count and Registry Week. Other sub-committees consisted of mapping and community engagement.

Did your organization involve community partners?	☒	☐

How many partners and what sectors did they come from?
Describe:

Brantford Native Housing partnered with and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with The City of Brantford, Homelessness Department. While Brantford Native Housing was responsible for all planning and organization the City of Brantford was in charge of the Registry Week component. We worked together to ensure a smooth survey process and event.

Key partners included Indigenous organizations from housing, employment, health and education, the ACAB the City of Brantford CAB and numerous businesses that provided items for the survival kits that were distributed to survey participants and services at the community wide Magnet Event.

Did your organization develop new partnerships during the count?	☒	☐

Describe:
The Registry Week component with The City of Brantford developed during the planning stages of the PiT Count.

4. Methodology: Survey Development

	Yes	No
Did you use Canadian Observatory on Homelessness questions?	☒	☐

Describe:
The PiT Count survey as provided by Service Canada and COH was used without changes.

Did you include the VI SPDAT or another acuity assessment tool?	☒	☐

Describe:
We used the Single Adult VI-SPDAT, Family VI-SPDAT, and Youth TAY-VI-SPDAT. There were screening questions to determine which survey was appropriate.

Did you add local questions?	☐	☒

Describe:
We did not add local questions because we felt that the questions asked were already quite thorough between the PiT survey and VI-SPDAT. We also did not want to add more time to an already long survey.

What was the process used to develop your survey?
Describe:
The survey was discussed at our weekly meetings with the coordinators and committee. The survey was practiced with committee members to measure timing and flow. In addition, we gathered feedback from volunteer training sessions, and adapted the script before the PiT Count to make it flow more easily.

Please include the final version of the survey used in your community.

5. Methodology: Sheltered Count

	Yes	No
Were surveys conducted in all shelters in your community? (e.g., Emergency shelters, transitional housing , and VAW shelters)	☒	☐

Describe:
Surveys were conducted at The Welcome Inn, Nova Vita, Salvation Army, Youth Resource Centre, Ojistoh House, Karahkwa House, Sally Laidlaw House, and Renwick House. Rosewood was not included this year because it is defined as an assisted living house, rather than a transitional home.

How many shelters were:	**Emergency or VAW:**	4	**Transitional:**	4

How did you define Transitional housing (e.g., is there a maximum length of stay?): In consultation with Jesse Donaldson, transitional housing was defined as a housing service where people could stay up to three years. However, Ojistoh House and Karahkwa House residents can only stay for less than one year.

Were surveys conducted by volunteers in the shelters?	☒	☐

If not, describe who conducted surveys:
Sheltered surveys were conducted by both volunteers and shelter staff. Some shelters were able to use their own staff. Two of the larger shelters requested volunteer assistance due to the volume of surveys they would need to complete.

How many surveyors conducted the sheltered surveys?	13 surveyors total

Other comments:
Welcome Inn used 4 volunteers and 2 staff members. Nova Vita used 1 staff member. Youth Resource Centre used 1 staff member. Salvation Army used 2 volunteers. Ojistoh and Karahkwa House used 2 staff members. Sally Laidlaw and Renwick House used 1 staff member.

6. Methodology: Unsheltered Count

How many surveyors conducted the unsheltered surveys?	72

How did you organize your survey teams?
 There were 3 people on each survey team. Of the 3, one person was a designated Team Leader. The Team Leader was someone with more social service work experience, and they were also in charge of returning the completed surveys at the end of the night. Teams were also arranged so that each team had a person who could drive the team to their survey location, and had one person who had completed the additional online VI-SPDAT training.
In addition, we did our best to arrange teams so that each team had a person who identified as Indigenous and/or had lived experience of homelessness.

How did you determine the walking routes and known locations?
 We held consultations with community shelters and service providers, to get an accurate picture of where people who are experiencing homelessness generally like to stay. These consultations included staff from Welcome Inn, Salvation Army, Why Not Youth Resource Centre, Grand River Community Health Centre, Brantford Native Housing, and the Brantford Police. Brant County Staff assisted with the creation of walking routes in Paris and driving routes in other communities of Ban County.

Other comments:
 We did our best to reach out to different kinds of service providers, to account for the diverse population.

7. Methodology: Service Count (e.g., food banks, drop-in centres)

	Yes	No
Did your community conduct surveys at service locations?	☒	☐

Which service locations were included and when did you conduct the surveys?
 Surveys were conducted at the St. Andrew's United Church meal program, and at the Why Not Youth Drop in Centre.

Other comments:		

8. Methodology: Magnet Events

	Yes	No
Did your community conduct surveys during magnet events?	☒	☐

Please describe the events and the populations surveyed in these locations:
 The Magnet Event was held in a downtown central location, and had free food, Indigenous drumming, free clothing, and resource stations where people could access things like free haircuts, free vision screening, and free hearing tests. We had 6 designated volunteers to survey at the Magnet Event.

Other comments:
 Because of all the free services, the Magnet Event was a huge success! In future, more volunteers are needed at the Magnet Event to conduct surveys.

9. Methodology: Indigenous Engagement

How did you engage the Indigenous community?:
Fortunately, Brantford Native Housing is an Indigenous organization. This made it easy to collaborate with other departments to help engage the Indigenous community. For example, a presentation about the PiT Count was made at one of Brantford Native Housing's women's circle meetings.
In addition, advertisements were placed in the Two Row Times, a local Six Nations newspaper, and posters were placed at the Aboriginal Health Centre.
The Magnet Event had an Indigenous focus, with traditional singing, dancing, and drumming, and Indigenous foods. Tobacco ties (medicine pouches) were given out to everyone as a thank you and acknowledgement of the knowledge that they shared with us.

Other comments:

10. Methodology: Public Systems (e.g., hospitals, corrections, and/or detox facilities)

	Yes	No
Did you include public systems?	☒	☐

Which systems did you include and how were they engaged?
 The Brantford General Hospital was included, and contact was made early on in the planning process. There are two community housing programs for people on parole who have nowhere else to go. In consultation with Jesse Donaldson, we reached out to these programs to include anyone who would be released within 30 days of the PiT Count and who also had no fixed address. Ultimately no one fit this criteria, so no one from these programs was included.

How did you enumerate homelessness in these systems?:
 For patient confidentiality reasons, people experiencing homelessness at the Brantford General Hospital could not be surveyed. However, hospital staff provided us with a tally sheet of people experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, so that these individuals could still be enumerated.

Other comments:		

11. Methodology: Hidden Homeless			
		Yes	**No**
Did you survey people experiencing hidden homelessness?		☒	☐

How did you engage this population?
 In consultation with Why Not and Youth Resource Centre, we learned that youth make up much of the core population of people experiencing hidden homelessness. Therefore, we made sure that a staff member at the Why Not drop-in program could engage and survey youth during the PiT Count.

What was the screening process that your community used?
 We included C1 and C2 questions in the screening process of the PiT Survey, to include people that were experiencing hidden homelessness. When someone indicated that they were staying at someone else's place, it prompted asking these questions which asked if they could stay there as long as they wanted or if it was temporary, and if temporary, if they had their own place to return to after.

Other comments:

12. Methodology: Data Entry and Analysis

Please describe your data entry, cleaning and analysis::
 Unsheltered surveys were conducted on the night of the count, and sheltered surveys were picked up from shelters on Wednesday, March 21. Data was organized into piles of PiT surveys, tally sheets, and VI-SPDAT surveys. The coordinators entered all of the PiT data into HIFIS 3, and then the City of Brantford staff entered the VI-SPDAT surveys.
There were only a few ambiguous answers, but they were able to be figured out easily.

Other comments:

13. Methodology: Honoraria and Ice Breakers

How did you decide on the honoraria and/or ice breaker?
 For the 2016 PiT Count, Tim Horton's cards were given out. However, we learned that some people are banned from entering Tim Horton's. Therefore, it was decided that $5 bills were more useful to the community because they could be used wherever the person wanted to go.
Care packages were created with items that a person experiencing homelessness may need, and included things like hygiene items, gloves, a hat, socks, and some non-perishable food items.

At what stage in the survey process were they provided?
If the person did not want to participate in the VI-SPDAT survey, then these items were given after completing the PiT survey. If they did want to complete the VI-SPDAT as well, then these items were given at the end.

Cigarettes were only given out if a person asked for them.

Other comments:

14. Methodology: Reporting Back

How will the results be reported back to the community?

Results were shared with volunteers at a volunteer appreciation event. Detailed results and an infographic summary has been shared with the Emergency Shelter and Service Providers (for example meal programs and drop-ins) so that it can be shared with clients.

Brantford Native Housing has a website and a Facebook group and results will be posted appropriately. We recognize that transparency and results sharing is a crucial part of effective and fair community research, and every effort will be made to ensure that the results are accessible to all.

15. Volunteers: Volunteer Recruitment

	Yes	No
Did your count use volunteers?	☒	☐
How many volunteers were used?	85	

How did you recruit volunteers? Describe:

Volunteers were recruited through as many channels as possible. This included:
- Calls for volunteers sent out through city mailing lists, such as CityNet
- Advertising on community message boards in all city-run facilities
- Indeed.com volunteer postings
- Two Row Times (local Indigenous newspaper)
- Six Nations social service organizations mailing list
- Making presentations in Laurier Brantford classes
- Sending out calls for volunteers on Wilfrid Laurier University, Conestoga College, Six Nations Polytechnic, and Mohawk College email mailing lists
- Emailing high school principals to share with their older students
- Emailing organizations to share with their staff (i.e. United Way, local churches, food banks)
- Making a presentation during a service at Fairview United Church
- Participating in a CKPC radio show called 'In Conversation With", as well as running radio ads

What were the roles of the volunteers? Describe:

Survey Team- working in groups of 3, survey teams either walked or drove around the city on prescribed routes, and completed PiT and VI-SPDAT surveys with people they encountered who screened in and consented to participate

Survey Team Leader- this person was part of the 3-person survey team. Team Leaders were chosen because they had more experience in the social services field. Team leaders were responsible for arriving 30 minutes before their teammates to sign in and pick up clip boards with their survey supplies. Team leaders were put in charge of keeping track of the $5 bills used for honoraria, and for submitting the properly completed surveys to Headquarters at the end of the night

Specialized Survey Team- There were 2 specialized teams this year. Each had specific locations to visit. There was one police officer that was available on the night of the PiT Count. Before the PiT Count,

consultations were had with Brantford Police to determine which exact areas on each of the two specialized team routes needed a police presence. The areas where this was needed were staggered so that the police officer could go back and forth between the two teams. An addition volunteer rode in the police car, and acted as a liaison between each team and the officer. For example, if a team arrived at their location before the officer, then the team leader would text the liaison, and she would let the officer know that the other team needed them.

Response team- the response team was made up of 3 teams of 2 people. Each team had one person from the Housing Resource Centre at the city of Brantford. The other person on the team was someone who had significant mental health training. The purpose of the response team was to provide housing and non-emergency mental health assistance should any participant require it on the night of the count. If a team out on a route required assistance, they were trained to call Victoria Watson at headquarters, who then dispatched a response team. While not dispatched, response team members completed surveys with people at the magnet event.

Hotel Team- the hotel team was made up of a person from the housing resource centre, along with two other city staff members. They travelled to the different hotels in Brantford and Paris to conduct surveys with people who were experiencing homelessness.

County team- there were 2 county teams. One team covered Paris, and had the company of an OPP officer. The 2nd team drove to Burford, St. George, Oakland, Scotland, and Mount Pleasant.

In addition to these teams, we also had 2 people stationed at St. Andrew's United Church to survey meal program participants. Usually shelters survey their participants using their own staff, however 2 people were sent to Salvation Army and 4 to Welcome In to be additional surveyors because of the larger volume of people.

Event Team- volunteers were also used at the magnet event to serve food, monitor children's activities, monitor the prize table, and help set up and take down.

16. Volunteers: Volunteer Training

Describe the training offered to volunteers: (e.g., What topics were covered?)
Training was 3 hours in length, and covered many topics including:
- Purpose and outcome goals
- Discussing homelessness myths and facts
- Watching a video about homelessness and facilitating a discussion
- Homelessness definitions, statistics, and causes
- Indigenous experiences of homelessness
- The Seven Grandfather Teachings
- Volunteer roles and responsibilities
- Safety
- Dealing with the media
- Who and how to approach, how to screen, how to perform the PiT survey
- How to perform the VI-SPDAT survey
- Time to practice the surveys with a partner

When was the training offered? (ex. Night of the Count, Before the Count)
Volunteer training was offered 2 weeks before the PiT Count (to avoid having training sessions on

March Break, when people are more likely to be out of town)
Training sessions were as follows:
- Tuesday, March 6, 1-4pm
- Tuesday, March 6, 6-9pm
- Thursday, March 8, 9am-noon
- Thursday, March 8, 6-9pm
- Saturday, March 10, 9am-noon
- Saturday, March 17, 9am-noon

Before the PiT Count, all volunteers were sent an email reminder of important points covered in training, as well as logistical details and instructions for the night-of.

	Yes	No
Did you have a post-Count volunteer survey?	☒	☐

Describe:
 Upon returning to Headquarters after completing their survey routes, volunteers completed a questionnaire about their volunteer experience.

Other comments:
 Most of the feedback was positive, however there were some suggestions for improvement.
Most notably:
- Volunteers found having to complete both the PiT survey and VI-SPDAT with people very daunting and confusing- perhaps more training is needed
- Volunteers wanted to know their mapping routes and team assignments earlier, so that should be sent out at least a week before the event next time
- Volunteers found the Headquarters space to be crowded

18. Recommendations for Future PiT Counts

Describe any recommendations you have for future PiT Counts.

Overall Project Management Recommendations (e.g., decision making, assistant coordinator roles, etc.):
 This year the coordinators worked very closely together on most tasks (they worked more separately in 2016). This was very useful, and we would highly recommend as much collaboration as possible to continue in the future.

Methodology Recommendations: (e.g., Survey Development, Sheltered and Unsheltered Count, etc.)
 The way the survey is set up now, the script is before the screening questions. Many people found this awkward because they would read this long script, only to find out that the person was screened out. Our suggestion is to go right to the screening questions after someone has agreed to participate, and then read them the script about how long it will take, being able to stop at any time, etc. if they are screened in.

Day of the Count Logistics Recommendations:
 Coordinators were at the Headquarters (same location as the Magnet Event) an hour before volunteers were to arrive, but many volunteers arrived quite early which made this process hectic. We recommend being completely ready and waiting at least 2 hours before volunteers arrive.
Since our Magnet Event and Headquarters were at the same location, community members arrived at the event early as well. In future, the entrances should be roped off and monitored so that only volunteers can enter before the designated time. This would make everything less confusing.
Many people arrived and urgently wanted to be surveyed at the event. In future, having food and entertainment arrive early would be beneficial so that people could eat food while they are waiting.

Volunteer Management and Training Recommendations:
Training generally went very well. In future, having more time to practice the surveys just between the PiT Count committee members would have probably helped to iron out issues before volunteer training, so that everything would be easier for the volunteers to understand.
Media and Communications Recommendations:
Our media and communications team was from The City of Brantford. Because we were not in the same office and not able to meet in person, the process for designing posters was drawn out. In future, we recommend having in-person meetings to make this process happen faster and more efficiently.
HIFIS PiT Count Module Recommendations:
The order with which the HIFIS 3 PiT Count module is set up is not the same order or layout as the PiT Count survey. This made data entry take longer than it could have taken because time was spent searching for each part. In addition, some of the questions were not the same or worded differently, which made data entry difficult. For example, PiT Count question number 15 (Ontario specific) asks "Have you ever been in foster care? If yes, how long ago was that?". On HIFIS, this question reads "Foster care? How long after foster care did you become homeless?" These questions are asking two completely different things.
What resources were most useful as you implemented the count?
We used several videos found online in the Workspace for Homelessness volunteer training section. These were very useful as they clearly explained important concepts such as how to screen and who to approach. The templates for both the interim and final report were very useful as they laid out exactly what information was needed.
Were there any additional resources that could have been developed to help your community implement the count?
19. Other Comments
Include any other comments your community has that weren't addressed in the questions above.
When meeting with a youth service provider about the PiT Count, they brought up the fact that there are many people under the age of 16 who are homeless, and that the way the tally sheet was currently set up, these youths would not be enumerated if they were screened out. In consultation with Jesse Donaldson, we added a new column to the tally sheet for "under 16". This allowed surveyors to tally those who were under 16 who could not participate. If the youth was observed homeless, then the surveyor could also fill out that section so that their data would not be lost in the count. Because surveyors were completing both PiT and VI-SPDAT surveys, we implemented a numbered sticker system. When a surveyor completed the surveys with someone, they put a numbered sticker on both surveys. Each survey participant had a different number. For example, "Joe" completed both surveys, so the surveyor put a "0247" sticker on both the PiT and VI-SPDAT. When "Mary" completed the surveys, the surveyor put "0248" on both her surveys. The idea being that the surveys are now able to be linked when entered into HIFIS.
Note: If your community would like to share training materials, promotional tools, or other developed materials. Please attach them to the report.