

Date: March 22, 2017

To: City of Fort Collins, Office of Social Sustainability
Homeward 2020

From: 2017 Point-in-Time Planning Group

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Re: 2017 Point-in-Time Count Results

The 2017 Point-in-Time was conducted on the night of Tuesday, January 24, 2017; 331 individuals were counted for the 2017 PIT. Key findings of the 2017 PIT are included as Attachment A. Overall, the 2017 findings did not differ substantially from previous years.

Purpose and Scope

The PIT count is administered as part of a nationwide effort of HUD Continuums of Care (CoC) to collect regular data on estimates of homelessness across the country. In addition to being required by HUD to receive funding for homeless services and housing, the PIT provides a local snapshot of homelessness each January, serving as one potential data source to use for system planning. In Fort Collins, an annual PIT has been conducted since 2013 and was coordinated by Homeward 2020 from 2013 to 2016.

In 2017, the PIT was coordinated by a collaborative of service, shelter, and housing providers, all who had been involved in previous years' administrations of the PIT. A full list of those agencies participating in the 2017 PIT is included as Attachment B. While the logistics were comparable to last year, individual agencies carried more responsibility for identifying individuals who could conduct the PIT at their respective locations. Some agencies opted to use existing staff, interns, and volunteers. Community volunteers were recruited for those sites requiring additional support to administer the surveys, as well as for data entry. In addition, this year's unsheltered count relied more heavily on staff and volunteers trained in street outreach. As such, volunteers from Homeless Gear and staff from Outreach Fort Collins collected surveys in unsheltered areas. The planning group also relied on partners serving youth including the Matthews House and Poudre School District's McKinney-Vento liaisons to collect survey data from unaccompanied youth and families sleeping outside. Because of these efforts, Fort Collins was able to collect information from a few unaccompanied children (those under the age of 18 and living on their own), a population that had not been successfully contacted in previous years' PIT counts.

Survey Process

HUD requires minimal data elements to be collected during the PIT, including household type, veteran status, disability status, and basic demographics. As the PIT is a requirement of CoC's, the Colorado Balance of State CoC (in which Fort Collins is included) provides all required forms to use for the PIT. All data from the PIT is reported back to HUD through the Balance of State CoC. In 2017, the City of Fort Collins requested additional,

supplemental questions be added to the PIT, similarly to previous years. Those questions included were worded identically to the 2016 survey questions, providing comparable data from 2016 to 2017.

Volunteers, staff, and interns conducting the PIT surveys were trained on the survey tool prior to the PIT. Rather than hosting a single volunteer training event, multiple trainings were held at each survey location. Staff at survey locations were responsible for determining the set up for the PIT at their agency, including where and exactly when surveying could occur. For example, Catholic Charities utilized internal staff to administer all PIT surveys. Lead staff at Catholic Charities were responsible for crafting a plan to provide adequate staff coverage at the appropriate times to ensure every person staying at the shelter that evening was offered the opportunity to be surveyed.

The PIT was administered with a total of 15 survey locations/agencies:

- Catholic Charities
- Homeless Gear
- Poudre School District
- Outreach Fort Collins
- Outreach at Linden/Old Town
- Fort Collins Rescue Mission
- Faith Family Hospitality night shelter
- Old Town Library
- Crossroads Safehouse
- Matthews House CLC
- Murphy Center for Hope
- Faith Family Hospitality day center
- Salvation Army
- Outreach along the MAX
- Matthews House Youth Services

Over 65 staff members, interns, and volunteers, including Councilmembers Overbeck and Stephens, contributed their time to completing the PIT.

At the conclusion of the PIT, all paper surveys were returned to Housing Catalyst. Survey forms were checked for legibility and duplication, in preparation of the data entry occurring the morning of Friday, January 27. Nine volunteers completed all data entry, utilizing space and computers provided in-kind by the City of Fort Collins.

Data Analysis

In accordance with HUD guidance, shelter and transitional housing providers also relayed information about the number of individuals and families staying at their respective locations the night of January 24 as part of the Housing Inventory Count (HIC). This information allowed for those tabulating the PIT data to understand how many people and in which settings had refused the survey or otherwise had been missed. These figures were used to tabulate the Fort Collins PIT count, an extrapolated count.

As stated in the 2014 Point-in-Time Count Methodology Guide¹, “HUD requires CoCs to collect reliable data on the total number and characteristics of all people (i.e., sheltered and unsheltered) residing in the CoCs’ geographic area who are homeless on a single night...CoCs often do not have complete data on everyone who is homeless and so must estimate some data. Therefore, HUD allows CoCs to use multiple approaches to complete their count...” (p.11). Furthermore, HUD requires that the number of individuals reported to be staying in emergency shelters and transitional housing programs in the HIC matches the number of sheltered individuals reported in the PIT Count².

Fort Collins has used a consistent process to arrive at the total extrapolated PIT count since 2013. The number of individuals surveyed in shelters and transitional housing programs is divided by the total number of individuals known to be staying in shelters and transitional housing the night of the PIT (taken from the HIC). This provides a response rate that can be broken down by household type (i.e., individual or family) and other demographics, such as gender. These population-specific response rates are applied to those unsheltered households who were

¹ Accessible at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/PIT-Count-Methodology-Guide.pdf>

² See p. 17 of the 2017 Notice for Housing Inventory Count (HIC) and Point-in-Time (PIT) Data Collection for Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program, accessible at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Notice-CPD-16-060-2017-HIC-PIT-Data-Collection-Notice.pdf>

surveyed to provide an estimate of the number of individuals and families likely staying outside on the night of the PIT who were not surveyed. Three numbers – the HIC count of people in shelters, the number of unsheltered people surveyed, and the estimate of unsheltered people missed in surveying – are combined to form the PIT extrapolated count.

Given this process, the Fort Collins 2017 PIT was calculated as follows:

258 people counted in the HIC in emergency shelters and transitional housing programs

52 people staying outside, in unsheltered locations, surveyed

21 additional people estimated staying outside, in unsheltered surveys

258 + 52 + 21 = 331 individuals

Specific findings from the PIT (Attachment A) including demographic breakdowns and responses to supplemental questions are provided as percentages among those who responded to each question. A total of 224 unduplicated individuals were surveyed as part of the PIT. However, the number of total responses for each question may differ; as such, an “n” of the number of total responses is included where applicable.

Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: Collaboration is critical for the sustainability of the PIT

The 2017 PIT was only possible because of the extraordinary willingness of multiple partners to help coordinate and administer the count. By sharing responsibility throughout the community, the administrative burden of planning, coordinating, and conducting the PIT was lessened.

In addition, utilizing the staff time and resources available within the community reduced the actual costs of administering the PIT. A total of \$53 was spent on materials and supplies for the PIT. All other supplies were provided in-kind from participating agencies. Agencies participating in the PIT also provided staff time to help coordinate and conduct the survey at their respective locations. One Housing Catalyst staff member and one United Way contractor oversaw the coordination of the 2017. In total, these two coordinators contributed approximately 140 hours of work over a four-month (November – February) period of time, averaging to around four hours of work per week per coordinator.

Lesson 2: Child and youth homelessness exists, but is difficult to capture

While the PIT does not capture the full extent of youth homelessness given it excludes youth who are couch-surfing, this year’s count does shed light on the reality of children and youth living on their own and experiencing homelessness in Fort Collins. The Matthews House and the Poudre School District McKinney-Vento liaisons were diligent in contacting those children and youth who may have been experiencing homelessness the night of the PIT, providing a better account of unaccompanied youth homelessness than in previous years. Engaging youth providers, even earlier in next year’s planning will help to develop an even stronger youth count.

Lesson 3: Relationships are key in collecting reliable PIT data

In an effort to create a more sustainable plan for conducting the PIT, the planning team opted to forego using gift cards as an incentive for individuals to complete the survey. Volunteers and staff administering the survey noted that few people asked about the gift cards or declined taking the survey specifically because there was no gift card offered. The relationships established between staff or volunteers and clients were, however, useful in encouraging people to complete the survey. These relationships especially facilitated a stronger unsheltered count than in years before. Previously, volunteers without knowledge of who may be experiencing homelessness may try to approach people as they were settling down for the night or getting up in the morning. This sometimes created an uncomfortable situation for both volunteers and survey respondents. Outreach

volunteers and staff, already known to individuals staying in their cars or campsites, could more easily offer the survey to individuals they work with and are known to be experiencing homelessness.

In addition, removing the gift card incentives almost completely eliminated duplication of surveys. In previous years, largely because of the incentive offered, some individuals would take the survey multiple times. People would usually use the same name and information for each survey, so it was possible to identify and pull duplicate surveys. It was not uncommon to pull around 50 duplicated surveys or more each year. In 2017, without the incentive offered, only three surveys were duplicates.

Lesson 4: Street outreach is invaluable to the PIT

Homeless Gear and Outreach Fort Collins were vital partners for this year's PIT. Volunteers were able to accompany the Homeless Gear street outreach team the night of January 24. The trust already built between Homeless Gear and the community of people sleeping outside helped facilitate the data collection among those individuals and families. Homeless Gear interns and volunteers also surveyed in the Old Town area early in the morning of January 25 to identify people as they were beginning to wake up and move from their sleeping locations. Outreach Fort Collins then integrated the PIT into their daily outreach work on January 25. As Outreach Fort Collins is designed to proactively build relationships with people experiencing homelessness, their involvement was key in ensuring even those who would not visit a traditional service provider could still be surveyed.

Lesson 5: Services are not drawing people to Fort Collins from out of state

There is a portion of the population experiencing homelessness in Fort Collins who last had a permanent residence out of state. Individuals who have moved here after becoming homeless most commonly report coming to Fort Collins because they have family or friends here. Those who last had a residence elsewhere in Larimer County (i.e., outside of Fort Collins) most commonly report coming here for resources.

Recommendations and Plans for Next Year

Coordination:

The PIT is a requirement by HUD for Continuums of Care. In future years, the Northern Colorado CoC (a planning region within the larger Balance of State CoC) will take full responsibility for conducting the PIT in Fort Collins, as well as throughout Larimer and Weld Counties. A member of the Northern Colorado CoC will be designated as the lead of the planning team for the Fort Collins PIT. The lead will reconvene the Fort Collins planning team by November 2017 to begin planning for the 2018 PIT. In addition to those agencies participating in the planning group for 2017, the Matthews House and Poudre School District will be engaged earlier in the planning process to further improve the child and youth count in 2018.

While this year's count has demonstrated the PIT can be conducted with few financial resources, funding could still be used to compensate organizations providing significant staff time to the PIT coordination. The United Way of Larimer County is serving as a fiscal agent of the Northern Colorado CoC and could accept and appropriately disseminate any funding contributed by the City of Fort Collins for future years' PIT counts.

Supplemental Questions:

HUD requires fairly minimal data collection for the PIT. Supplemental questions were added to this year's survey at the request of the City of Fort Collins. There were no substantial differences between the 2016 and 2017 data collected in the supplemental questions. As the PIT is a snapshot of homelessness taken only once a year in January, the applicability to the full population of people experiencing homelessness over the course of a year in Fort Collins is limited. In addition, including supplemental questions easily doubled the length of the PIT survey. The planning team suspects even more individuals may be willing to complete the PIT if the questions are as minimal and least intrusive as possible. If there are specific intended uses of the supplemental questions, it is

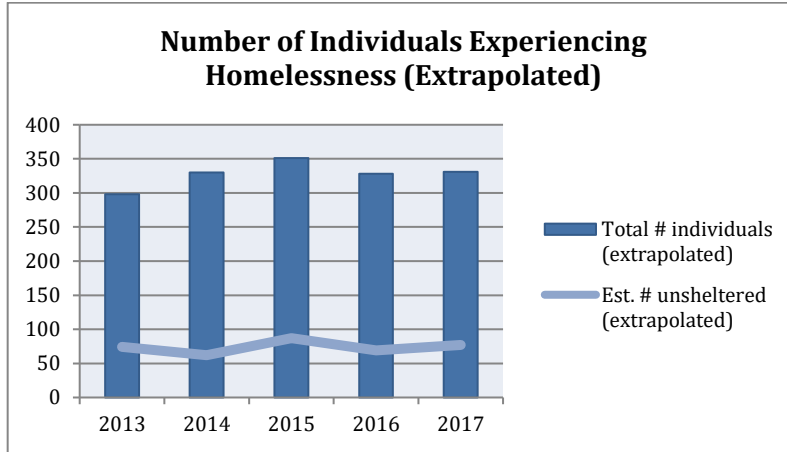
recommended to explore other options to collect these data, such as from service providers with regular contact of people experiencing homelessness.

Attachment A: Key Findings and Prior Year Comparisons

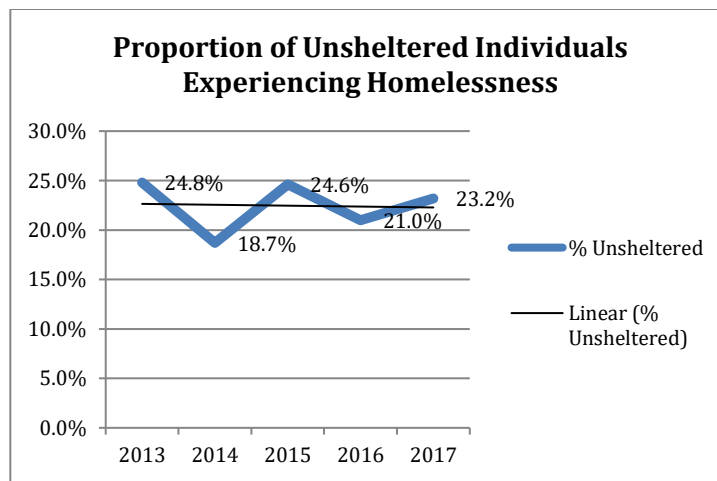
March 2017

On a single night in January, an estimated 331 individuals³ were sleeping outside, in emergency shelters, and in transitional housing in Fort Collins.

Overview, Sheltered and Unsheltered Status



- Similar to previous years, the majority of households were adults only (i.e., no youth or children)⁴
 - 81% of households were singles or couples of adults only
 - 11% of households were unaccompanied children or youth
 - 9% of households were families with at least one child under the age of 18; heads of households could be either adults or youth
- Around 23% of respondents were sleeping outside, in unsheltered locations, comparable to previous years' counts

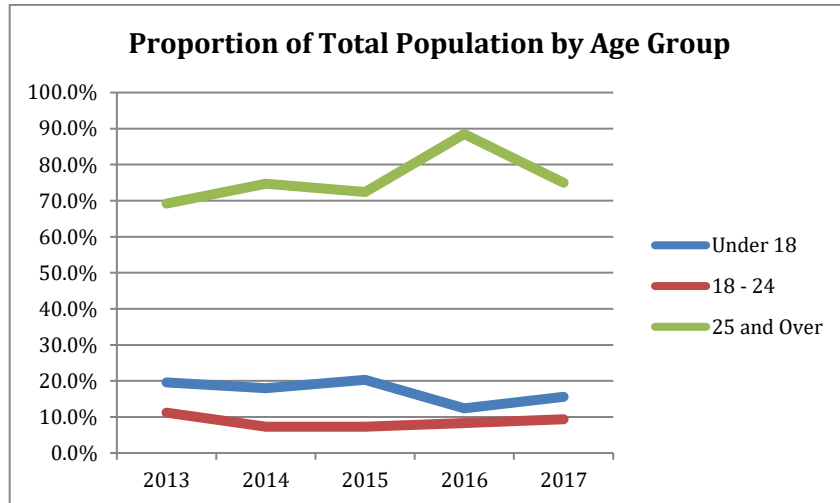


³ Survey information was collected on 224 individuals; percentage breakdowns are taken from those survey responses collected.

⁴ Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding

Basic Demographics (Age, Gender, Race, and Ethnicity)

- The majority of respondents were adults, over the age of 25
 - 75% of respondents were over the age of 25
 - 9% of respondents were youth, ages 18 – 24
 - 16% of respondents were children, under the age of 18



- The majority of the respondents (65%) identified as male; as a comparison, 70% of respondents in 2016 identified as male
- The majority (76%) of respondents are white; the majority (75%) of respondents are also non-Hispanic/non-Latino

Special Populations

- Almost 14% of respondents identified as veterans (or 31 respondents); in 2016, just under 13% of respondents were veterans
- 36% of respondents are survivors of domestic violence; in 2016, around 47% of respondents were survivors of domestic violence
- Almost 28% of all respondents qualified as chronically homeless (62 people total among those surveyed), with the majority of chronically homeless respondents being single individuals (i.e., not living in a family); given changing definitions around chronic homelessness, comparisons to previous years' data are not recommended
- 48% of respondents reported having a disability
 - The most commonly reported type of disability was a physical disability or illness (46% of respondents with a disability)
 - The second most commonly reported type of disability was PTSD (40% of respondents with a disability)

Proportion of All Respondents Reporting Disability Type (2015 - 2017)

Disability Type	2015	2016	2017
Physical Disability/ Chronic Illness	25.2%	29.7%	22.3%
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	11.6%	30.9%	19.2%
Mental health disorder	15.2%	33.8%	16.1%
Substance use disorder	7.6%	23.7%	11.2%
Developmental Disability	4.7%	9.6%	5.8%
Brain injury	6.6%	12.4%	5.4%

Population Rates

The actual number of surveys collected during the Point-in-Time as well as a count of individuals known to be staying in each shelter and transitional housing program are used to provide an extrapolated count, a more complete count than relying solely on the actual number of people surveyed (as there will always be individuals missed or who refuse to be surveyed). Additional insights can be gained from understanding homelessness as a rate of the total Fort Collins population. Population rates (using the extrapolated counts) are included for 2013 – 2017.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Fort Collins total population*	152,205	154,570	158,300	161,000	161,000**
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Extrapolated Count (Individuals)	298	330	351	328	331
Individuals as proportion of population	0.20%	0.21%	0.22%	0.20%	0.21%
Extrapolated Count Rate	1.96 people per 1,000	2.13 people per 1,000	2.22 people per 1,000	2.04 people per 1,000	2.06 people per 1,000

* http://www.fcgov.com/planning/pdf/population_estimates.pdf

** Population estimates have not been released for 2017 at the time of this report's release; therefore, the 2016 Fort Collins population estimate is used for 2017 PIT data.

Supplemental Questions⁵

Why people state they aren't staying in one of the shelters

Among those sleeping outside the night of the PIT, the most frequently cited reasons given for not staying in the shelter were the following (n=35):

- Avoiding illness/shelters unhealthy (20%)
- Bad experiences/bad conditions (e.g., crowded, smelly) (20%)
- Kicked out/left because of issues (11.4%)
- Preference/has better option (8.6%)
- Not old enough (e.g., under 18) (8.6%)

Other reasons given included wanting to help others who had to sleep out, had trouble getting in, doesn't like others staying in the shelter, doesn't like the lottery system, is restrictive, and isn't comfortable.

In 2016, the top three most commonly cited reasons for not staying in shelters were that they were too crowded (19%), people don't trust or don't get along with others at the shelter (12%), and people don't want to get sick (12%).

Foster Care and Homelessness

Of those who responded to the question (n=148), just over 1/5 of individuals had been in the foster care system at some point.

Among those experiencing chronic homelessness and who responded to the question (n=55), just over 30% of individuals had been in the foster care system.

Among those respondents who had been in the foster care system (n=31), almost 55% were now experiencing chronic homelessness.

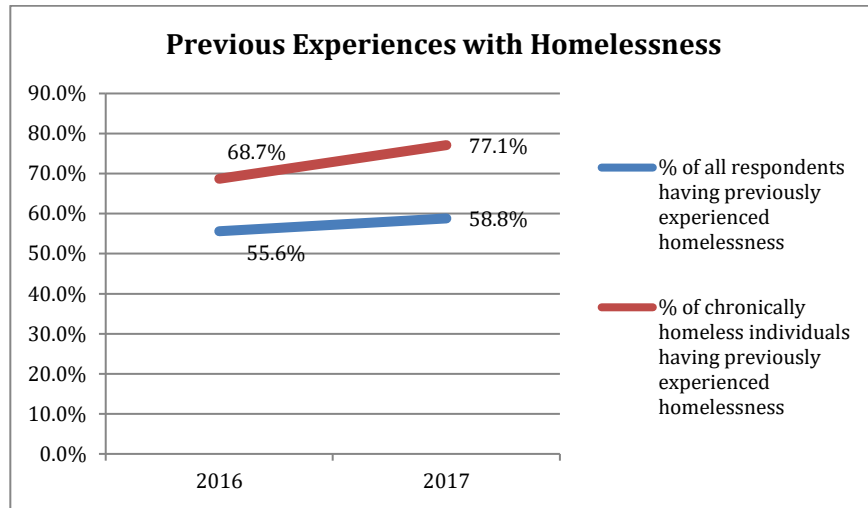
	2016	2017
% of all respondents who had been in the foster care system at some point	17.0%	21.0%
% of those respondents who had been in the foster care system who are now chronically homeless	43.2%	54.8%

The most common outcomes for people who had been in the foster care system (n=23) were being adopted (34.8%), reuniting with family (34.8%), and aging out (17.4%).

⁵ Percentages provided for supplemental information are taken from the total number of responses for that question. When possible and applicable the total number of respondents (n) for that question is also provided.

First Time Experiencing Homelessness

Almost 59% of respondents (n=131) have been homeless before. Among those experiencing chronic homelessness that responded to the question (n=48), over 77% have experienced homelessness before.



Emergency Department Visits

Almost 65% of all respondents (n=146) had visited the emergency department at least once since the summer. Around 24% of all respondents had visited the emergency department more than three times since summer.

Among those experiencing chronic homelessness who answered the question (n=55), 80% of respondents had visited the emergency department at least once since summer. Just over 38% of chronically homeless respondents had visited the emergency department more than three times since summer.

	2016		2017	
	All respondents	Chronically homeless respondents	All respondents	Chronically homeless respondents
Any ED visits since summer	58.0%	64.9%	64.4%	80.0%
Three or more ED visits since summer	19.2%	19.2%	24.0%	38.2%

Employment

Among those reporting having a job (n=50), 30% report being employed part-time. Another 20% are employed full-time. Twenty-four percent of respondents report having seasonal or temporary employment.

	2016	2017
Of those employed, % working full-time	29.9%	20.0%
Of those employed, % working part-time	20.8%	30.0%
Of those employed, % working in seasonal/temporary positions	33.8%	24.0%

Connections to Case Managers or Counselors

Among all respondents on the question (n=148), just over 56% of respondents did not report having any regular contact with a case manager or counselor. This is an increase from 2016 when just over 42% of respondents did not report having any regular contact with a case manager or counselor.

Among those sleeping outside and responding to the question (n=38), almost 74% of respondents are not connected to any case manager or counselor.

Of those stating where their counselor/case manager worked (n=65), the most commonly cited response included multiple providers (27.7% of respondents). Just over 23% of respondents listed Catholic Charities as the agency they're connected to. All other singly-listed agencies had fewer than 10% of respondents stating the agency as their primary connection in town.

Moving to Fort Collins

Over 30% of respondents (n=159) claimed their last place of permanent residence was in Fort Collins. An additional 8.2% of respondents had come to Fort Collins from elsewhere in Larimer County. Around 37.7% of respondents reported having their last permanent residence somewhere out of state.

	2016	2017
Fort Collins	31.8%	30.8%
Elsewhere in Larimer County	11.5%	8.2%
Weld County	5.4%	6.9%
Elsewhere in CO (outside of Larimer or Weld Counties)	12.6%	16.4%
Out of State	38.7%	37.7%

The most commonly cited reasons (n=107) for coming to Fort Collins included the following:

- Have family or friends here/family brought them here (19.6%)
- Resources (16.8%)
- Lived here previously (12.2%)
- Job/employment/economy (10.3%)

Among those who report coming here for resources (n=18), only 3 respondents had their last residence out of state.

Of those relocating to Fort Collins from elsewhere in Larimer County (n=13), the most commonly cited reason for coming to Fort Collins was for resources. Among those coming from out of state (n=54), the most commonly cited reason for coming to Fort Collins was because friends or family were here. This is comparable to 2016 in which the most commonly cited reason for coming to Fort Collins from individuals who came from elsewhere in Larimer County was resources or services, but among those coming from out-of-state, having friends or family here or employment prospects were the top two reasons bringing people to Fort Collins.

Among those who have moved to Fort Collins since becoming homeless and who provided a length of time they have been in town (n=89), 53.9% of respondents have been here less than one year, with just over one-quarter having been here less than three months.

**Attachment B: List of Agencies Participating in the 2017 Point-in-Time (PIT) and Housing Inventory Count (HIC)
Planning and Administration**

Catholic Charities
City of Fort Collins
Crossroads Safehouse
Faith Family Hospitality
Fort Collins Rescue Mission
Homeless Gear
Housing Catalyst
Matthews House
Murphy Center for Hope
Outreach Fort Collins
Poudre River Public Library District – Old Town Library
Poudre School District
Rocky Mountain Human Services
Salvation Army
SummitStone Health Partners
United Way of Larimer County
Volunteers of America