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Counting the Homeless: Volunteers Sought

Milpitas' homeless population doubled from about 70 to 138 in the past two years. A nonprofit coalition has a plan to find housing for the most vulnerable.

By [Adelaide Chen](#) | [Email the author](#) | June 15, 2011 [Print](#)

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A nonprofit coalition is organizing a homeless count in Milpitas in the early morning on June 28, and they are looking for volunteer surveyors.

The campaign, [Housing 1000](#), seeks to cut chronic homelessness in half throughout the county by 2013, said Jennifer Loving, executive director of [Destination: Home](#), based in Campbell.

Throughout the county, volunteers are needed to register and identify homeless individuals and to gather data. The information will be entered into a database and used to prioritize and match those individuals with the greatest need with housing and services.

Already more than 300 volunteers have signed up for various roles, but the biggest need is for surveyors, approximately 600. The deadline to [register online](#) is June 20. Volunteers are required to attend a [training](#) in San Jose.

The detailed count, performed for the first time is different from the county's count, conducted every two years.

"Ours is by name and by face," said Loving. The questionnaire is scored in a way that prioritizes the most vulnerable, those most likely to die early, she said.

According to the standard count conducted by the county every two years, Milpitas' homeless population doubled from 70 to 138, said Felix Reliford, a senior planner with city. The last count was taken January of this year.

Reliford said not every city experienced an upswing in their homeless numbers, and some saw a decrease. But in general, "it's a function of the economy. Homelessness has no borders. It has no boundaries."

The city will send four or five staff, including Reliford, to be part of the surveying team. Some will be police officers.

Railroad tracks and under freeway underpasses are some of the places Milpitas' homeless population seek shelter, said Reliford.

The initial results of the [Housing 1000](#) survey will be revealed on [July 1, 10:45 a.m. at San Jose City Hall](#).

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Comments (1)

Pat Montoya[Flag as inappropriate](#)

3:19pm on Wednesday, June 15, 2011

Dear Adelaide, Please note that this is not a good plan. It is going to hurt these people, who are already hurting. A more humane way to handle this is to ask them if they would like to move out of this area. If so, then give them options. We haven't done right by our disabled in our community, what makes us think we know better than these people. I understand that the already placed homeless will be displaced to other facilities, to make room for these newly acquired homeless. Church should dig into their pockets and find the home and \$, rather than following the police in these matters. Well, sounds like Milpitas is going in a very bad direction here. Thanks for following this Adelaide, my hat is off to you. Please keep us informed...sincerely fellow poet Pat Montoya

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