National Human Services Data Consortium

PIT Count Planning and Analysis Aided by Open Data and Open Source Tools

Kristin Zakoor, Assistant Director of Data, Texas Homeless Network

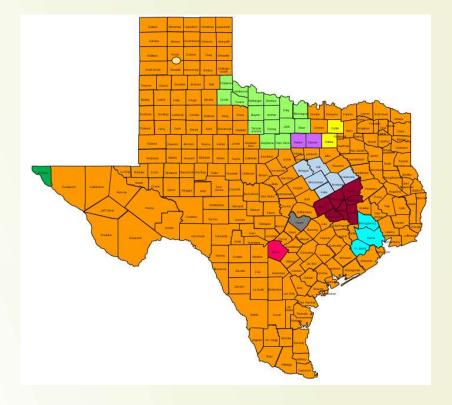**Danielle Winslow, Acting Deputy Director, All Home King County**

Eddie Barber, Lead Developer, Simtech Solutions

Increasing Capacity &
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Bridging to the Future

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2019 Spring Conference
Nashville, TN
April 15-17, 2019

Texas Balance of State

- Snapshot:
  - 215 counties
  - 25 Local Homeless Coalitions
  - Mix of Urban, Suburban, Rural
  - ~1000 volunteers
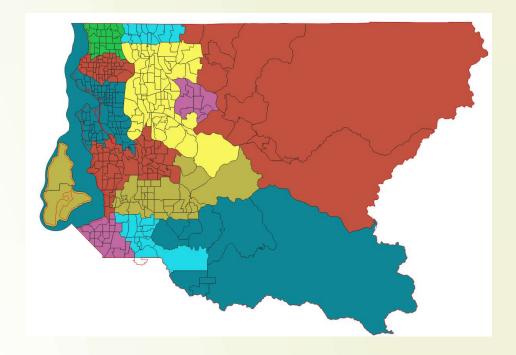 - Until 2018 used paper surveys then switched to mobile app

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King County

- Snapshot:
  - 39 cities, including Seattle
  - Mix of urban, suburban, and rural areas
  - Mix of Urban, Suburban, Rural
  - ~1000 volunteers
- Count Includes
  - General Street Count
  - Youth and Young Adult Count
  - Sheltered Count (Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven, and Transitional Housing)
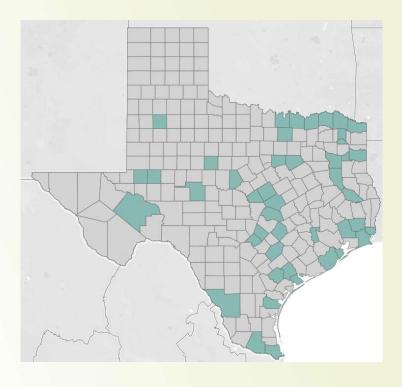 - Peer-Conducted Survey

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Pre-Count Planning
(TX-BOS)

- Outreach to communities
- Designate PIT Leads and Back-ups
- Create "Pre-PIT" materials
    - PIT Lead manual
    - Promotional materials
- Develop a safety plan
- Plan for adverse weather

Free tools: Google docs & forms, Tableau, Canva, Basecamp

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Pre-Count Planning
(King County)

- Confirm Action Group that provides input and oversight of the PIT activities, including an equity impact analysis of PIT components
- Establish Area Leads by regional deployment center coverage area
- Additional youth and young adult planning is done in partnership with general planning
- For the first time in 2019, we used a customized volunteer registration platform that allowed for volunteer team and census tract assignments

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Recruitment
(TX-BOS)

- Social media posts
- Promotional materials
- Partnerships
  - Local Service Provider
  - Faith Based
  - Local Government
  - Law Enforcement + Fire Dept.
  - Higher Education
- Google Forms
  - Volunteer Registration + ROI

Free tools: Google docs & forms, Facebook,
Twitter, Instagram, Canva

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Recruitment
(King County)

- Partnerships
    - PIT Action Group members
    - Local Service Provider
    - Faith Based
    - Local Government
    - Higher Education
- Past PIT guides, Consumer Advisory Council and Youth Action Board
- Advertisement in local paper, Real Change
- Promotional materials and social media posts

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Count Planning
(TX-BOS)

Form Point-in-Time Count Committee

Sheltered:

- Identify and reach out to all ES & TH facilities
- Provide list of facilities to PIT Leads
  - Send out PIT promotional materials
- Assess capacity to count
  - Enlist extra volunteers for larger facilities

Unsheltered:

- Decide count method
- Create local partnerships
- Review previous year location data
- Develop "hot spot" maps, written guidelines, and directions
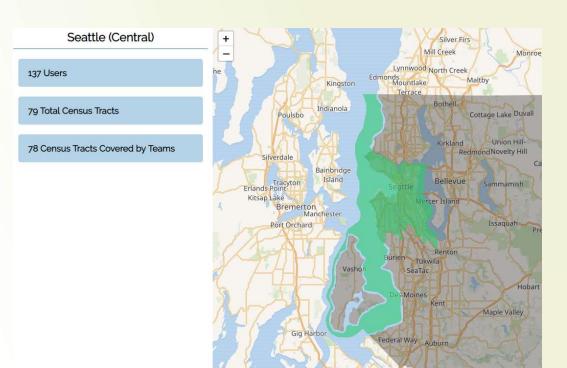- Organize donations
- Assign teams

Free tools: Google maps, Tableau, Doodle Poll

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Count Planning
(King County)

- Assign volunteers to regions
- Split regions into teams
- Ensure each census tract is covered by a team

Seattle (Central)

137 Users

79 Total Census Tracts

78 Census Tracts Covered by Teams

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Training
(TX-BOS)

- For PIT Leads and back-ups:
  - All virtual trainings
  - Mandatory "train the trainer"
    - How to use the tech
    - Q & A session
  - PPTs and supplemental materials
  - Guidance on how to conduct volunteer training
- For volunteers:
  - In person training with PIT Leads
  - Online PPT training with knowledge check
  - "Quick-train" videos
  - Cheat Sheet materials

Free tools: Google form, Canva, Venngage

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Training
(King County)

- For volunteers, guides/surveyors (paid):
  - Regional in person trainings made available
  - Online webinar trainings
  - Posted "Quick-train" videos
  - Are you ready "quiz"
  - Training components:
    - Unconscious bias and impacts on data collection
    - What is the PIT and our local methodology
    - How to complete a tally sheet and how to identify signs of someone living in their vehicle
    - Responsibility and safety

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Messaging (TX-BOS)

- Social media
- Local news and paper
  - "How to engage" materials
- Discussed at CoC meetings
  - Local meetings
- Listserv

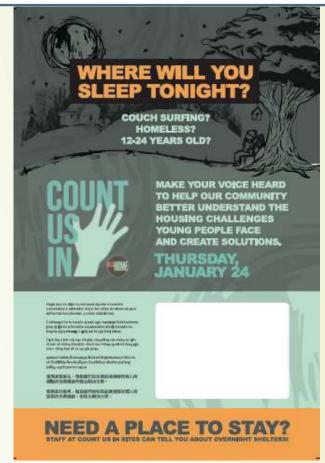Free tools: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Canva

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Messaging (King County)

- Utilized customized volunteer portal to message general and regional reminders and directions to volunteers
- Highlighted the importance AND limitations of trend data
- Discussed at CoC meetings
  - Local meetings

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Night of the Count (TX-BOS)

- 24 hour time frame
    - Community choice
    - Planned events
    - Community partnerships
- Staff monitoring regions
    - Data quality checks
    - Technical assistance

Free tools: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Canva

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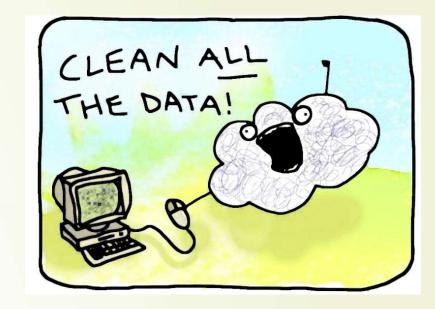**2019 Spring Conference**
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Night of the Count (King County)

- Report to regional command center at 2:00AM to conduct observation count only
    - Review how to complete census
    - Distribute any census tracts not assigned
    - Sign volunteer teams with guide out
- Staff monitoring team needs and returns
    - Data quality checks
    - Community breakfast

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After the Count (TX-BOS)

- Data clean-up
- Analysis
  – CoC wide
  – Community based
  – Racial Disparities
- Community reports
- Extrapolation
- Thank you e-cards

Free tools: Google sheets, Punchbowl, Tableau

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After the Count (King County)

- Paid peer surveyors conduct paper surveys following the count
- Transitional housing projects conduct surveys with program participants
- Contractor receives tally and survey data

for extrapolation, analysis and reporting
- An electronic thank you and participation survey goes out to volunteers and guides
- We hold an appreciation celebration for Action Group Members and Area Leads
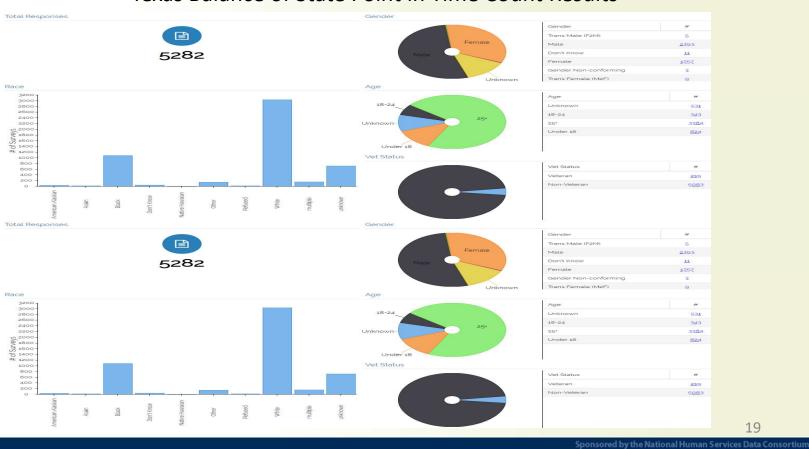
Summary (TX-BOS)

- Start planning early
- Get local buy-in
- Find a "champion" in each community
- Provide on-going support and supplemental materials
- Technology is a game changer

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Texas Balance of State Point in Time Count Results

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Summary (King County)

- Strategies to pave the way for technology
    - Start thinking about it now
    - Volunteer/guide experience
    - Cost saving
    - Efficiency and nimbleness
    - Build on HMIS framework for data privacy
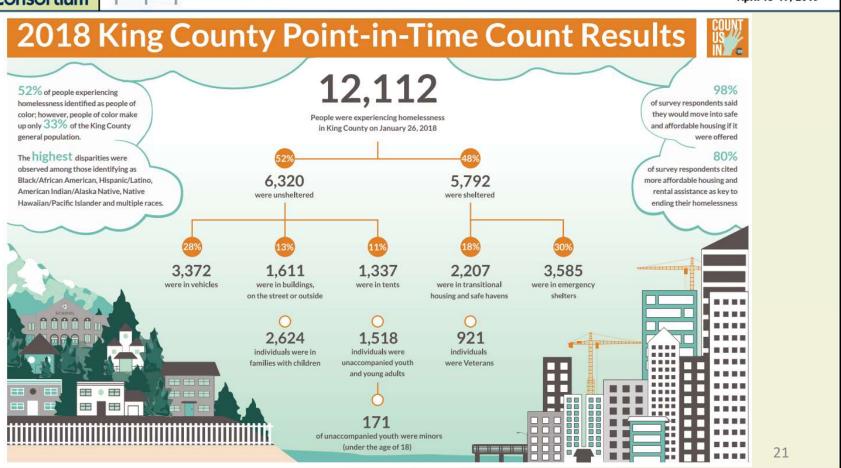   - Leverage partners outside of the CoC

For more information visit http://allhomekc.org/king-county-point-in-time-pit-count/

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Google Sheets

<table>
<tr><td align="center"><u>Benefits</u></td><td align="center"><u>Drawbacks</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>

- Familiar interface (same as Excel)
- Allows for easy collaboration
- Very flexible

</td><td valign="top">

- Not secure
- Need to start from scratch

</td></tr>
</table>

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Trello

Benefits

- Great for tracking tasks
- Allows for uploading/sharing of various documents and images
- Sends email alerts

Drawbacks

- Not secure
- Needs buy-in from all users
- Free version is limited in how many integrations it can do

QGIS

Benefits

- Fully-functional GIS software
- 100% free and open-source
- Can create beautiful maps for the count
- Great for doing analysis on past or current PIT Data

Drawbacks

- Steep learning curve
- No dedicated support
- Does not allow for easy collaboration, not web-based
- Can be slow depending on your computer

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Tableau

Benefits

- Tableau Public is free
- Can produce both graphs and maps if provided with the right data

Drawbacks

- Learning curve
- Need to provide it with data in the correct format

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Join.Me

Benefits

- Able to have a customized link for users to quickly join a meeting/screensharing session
- Easy to set-up/join for meeting hosts and participants

Drawbacks

- Free version limits number of meeting participants

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EventBrite

Benefits

- Great for planning/managing training sessions
- No charge for free events

Drawbacks

- Need to manually send link to list of potential users for them to sign up

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Mailchimp

Benefits	Drawbacks

Benefits

- Allows you to send automated emails to volunteers regarding trainings/night of count information, etc.

Drawbacks

- Manually upload the list of users you'd like to email
- Free version limits on the number of users you can send to/emails that can be sent.

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Questions?

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