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KINGS TULARE HOMELESS ALLIANCE RELEASES ANNUAL POINT IN TIME REPORT

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Kings and Tulare Counties – The Kings Tulare Homeless Alliance (the Alliance) is pleased to release the 2022 Kings and Tulare County Point in Time Report. The Point in Time (PIT) is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people who meet the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD’s) definition of homeless. It is conducted every year in the last 10 days of January and is a requirement of all regions applying for federal funds. Data collected during the PIT count is used by the Alliance and partner agencies to better understand the issues associated with homelessness including causes, service gaps, unmet housing needs, and homeless trends.

The Kings and Tulare County PIT count was conducted on the night of January 23-24, 2022. Over 100 volunteers from local jurisdictions, law enforcement, the faith-based community, non-profit partners, and community stakeholders canvassed locations where people experiencing homelessness tend to congregate including encampments, libraries, food distribution sites, etc. Volunteers conducted brief surveys with each person asking questions such as length of time homeless, main cause of homelessness, and barriers to housing, in addition to demographic questions like race and ethnicity, gender, and disability status. This year the Alliance expanded the gender question to include the categories “Questioning” and “Gender Not Singularly Male or Female” and allowed for multiple selections for that question. Additionally, the Alliance added the question, “What is your... sexual orientation?” The evolution of the PIT survey is an integral part of capturing accurate data to help us understand the homeless population. The full PIT survey is available in the report.

“I would like to thank all of our community partners who participated in this year’s PIT count.” Says Miguel Perez, Executive Director of the Kings Tulare Homeless Alliance. “I believe that the information gathered through the tireless efforts of organizers, counters, and analyzers will help us take a large step towards ending homelessness in Kings and Tulare Counties. It can’t be accomplished by one team, one agency, or one group working independently; we all must band together to tackle the monumental task, and having a successful count is a large step toward achieving that goal.”

The 2022 PIT saw a decrease of 62 individuals experiencing homelessness from the 2020 count (the last year a full count was conducted; the 2021 count was canceled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic), or a 4.7% decline. The exact reason for the slightly lower count isn’t known, but theories include utilizing a new PIT methodology of street canvassing in lieu of an event that would draw people to a centralized location, an increase in the number of people living in vehicles instead of tents, and the breakup of large encampments by some jurisdictions which spreads out the homeless population.

The number of people experiencing chronic homelessness decreased dramatically by 204 individuals (531 people experienced chronic homelessness in 2020 vs. 327 in 2022), or a 38.4% decrease. This decrease may be the result of people experiencing first time homelessness because of COVID-19 related job loss and subsequent housing loss.

Lucia Orozco, HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) Specialist with Kings United Way, says “To understand homelessness we first have to measure it; Point in Time gives us the ability to do so. Only then will we see the

opportunities and the successes.” Lucia has worked as a PIT volunteer, survey developer, and data analyst for 15 years in Kings and Tulare Counties.

The 2022 Point in Time Report includes trends and statistics for the bi-county region, each county individually, and the four largest cities in the region (Hanford, Porterville, Tulare, and Visalia). The full report can be viewed on the Alliance’s website (<https://www.kthomelessalliance.org/>). The Kings Tulare Homeless Alliance and partners will continue to analyze this year’s data and use the information gathered to better understand homelessness in the bi-county region.

If you would like more information on the PIT count or homelessness in Kings and Tulare Counties, please email info@kthomelessalliance.org.

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