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CITY CONDUCTS 11TH ANNUAL HOPE SURVEY

NEW YORK—Tonight, the City will conduct its 11th annual Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE) survey. The point-in-time survey estimates the number of individuals chronically living on city streets, parks and in other public spaces throughout the five boroughs. With over 3,000 volunteers fanning out to complete the count, the City will gather valuable data to better serve the street homeless population.

“We are using every tool, including the HOPE count, to fulfill our moral obligation to help our brothers and sisters living on our streets by giving them the shelter and resources they need, including increasing safe haven beds, doubling drop-in centers, and implementing the nation’s most comprehensive street homeless outreach program, HOME-STAT,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “We thank the thousands of New Yorkers participating with us on this mission tonight.”

“Every person deserves a safe place to call home. That’s why I’m proud to join Mayor de Blasio and thousands of other New Yorkers tonight to survey folks living on the streets so we can better understand the needs of the city’s most vulnerable people. At HUD, we’ll use the survey data from New York and communities nationwide to improve on our strategies so that together we not only reduce homelessness, but end it,” said **Julián Castro, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**.

“Taking full stock of our city’s homelessness crisis and responding with comprehensive solutions is a solemn duty that must be taken seriously,” said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “Through the HOPE count, we can better understand the nature of homelessness in New York City and set out to help our fellow New Yorkers who are living without shelter. I thank all the City workers and volunteers who are helping us address this very serious crisis.”

“I would like to thank all of the volunteers and the staff of the Department of Homeless Services for making this possible,” said **Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steven Banks**. “It’s essential to know how many New Yorkers need our services, and the HOPE count is an important part of that. Now, with the Mayor’s HOME-STAT initiative, we are greatly increasing our outreach program to help bring people in from the streets, and we will also have more information about homelessness on the streets going forward.”

Introducing the survey in 2003, New York became one of the first cities in the nation to carry out a street count to project service needs and allocate resources accordingly. Similar assessments have since become a federal requirement for all municipalities receiving funding for homeless services under the McKinney-Vento Act. With the City’s efforts being identified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as a best practice method, the HOPE survey is among the most comprehensive undertakings nationwide. The 2015 HOPE count found 3,182 individuals living on our streets, a 28 percent decline from the 4,395 individuals in 2005. Last December, the de Blasio Administration launched HOME-STAT, the nation’s most comprehensive street outreach program. The City’s HOME-STAT outreach teams – mobilized citywide 24 hours per day, seven days a week – help bring chronically homeless individuals into shelter. New Yorkers are encouraged to call 311 to help get services to homeless individuals living on the city’s streets.

In order to ensure street homeless individuals have multiple pathways to move from the streets to shelter, the de Blasio Administration is adding 500 safe haven beds, which are lower-threshold spaces with services for those who reject traditional shelter. The Administration is doubling the City-funded drop-in centers that serve as a gateway for street homeless individuals to enter shelter. At drop-in centers, individuals can shower, get a meal and access social services. The Administration is also implementing a 15,000 unit supportive housing plan. Supportive housing is affordable housing with supportive services, including both mental and physical healthcare access, alcohol and substance abuse programs, and other social services. It is a proven, cost-effective approach to deliver stability and permanently house New Yorkers struggling with mental illness, homelessness and substance use. Supportive housing reduces reliance on homeless shelters, hospitals, mental health institutions and incarceration.

“The HOPE survey provides critical information on homelessness in New York City, and we need that data to best combat the problem,” said **Congressman Steve Israel**. “No New Yorker should ever be forced to sleep on the street, and I will continue to fight to end homelessness across the country – especially for our nation’s veterans. I applaud Mayor de Blasio for his leadership and thank the thousands of volunteers who make this life-saving survey possible.”

“The HOPE count generates important data that helps set our priorities in the fight against homelessness, and it involves a broad range of everyday New Yorkers in the crucial work of helping our city's homeless population,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**.

“The enthusiastic response to HOPE 2016 proves that New Yorkers are ready, willing and able to step up and help their neighbors in need,” said **Council Member and Chair of the Committee on General Welfare Stephen Levin**. “This important project is crucial to crafting effective, data-driven policy that helps put chronically street homeless New Yorkers back on the path to stable homes, jobs and lives. The HOPE count depends on the generosity and compassion of thousands of volunteers, and it is inspiring to see so many New Yorkers from all walks of life come together to donate their time and energy to help the most vulnerable among us.”

“We have a homeless crisis in this city, and we need to bring all appropriate resources to address it,” said **Council Member Dan Garodnick**. “Being able to measure the problem is incredibly important to that task, and that is what the HOPE count is all about.”

“Tonight we leave the comfort of our homes to count those still unsheltered and on our streets so that we may better understand the challenge we face as a city as we seek to help each person off the street and into shelter, and supportive and affordable housing,” said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. “Thank you to the thousands of volunteers who joined us tonight for HOPE or in service throughout the year. Every New Yorker can help by using the NYC 311 App or calling 311 to dispatch 'homeless outreach' who can offer three meals a day, shelter and job training.”

“I am ecstatic to see that New Yorkers answered the HOPE 2016 call for volunteers,” said **Council Member Vincent Gentile**. “With 3,000 registrants, this year’s annual street count will have a profound impact on the City’s outreach efforts. I look forward to joining volunteers at P.S. 102 in Bay Ridge.”

“In order to properly address the issue of homelessness on our streets, we need to understand the true scale of the problem. Today’s annual homeless count will once again help provide the critical data we need to ensure future measures to combat homelessness are based on the facts on the ground. I’m thrilled to join volunteers and advocates across our city to support our fellow New Yorkers who’ve been pushed to the streets,” said **Council Member Mark Levine**.

