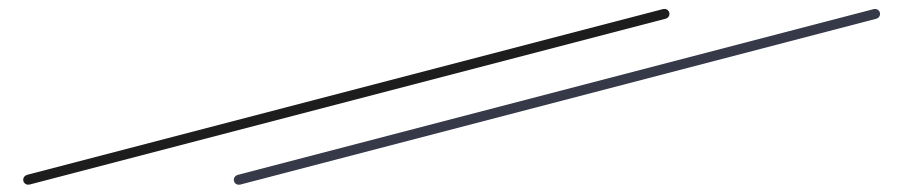


2026 STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

/ I N C E N T R A L F L O R I D A



prepared by the
Homeless Services Network of Central Florida





Volunteers surveyed over three extremely cold days.

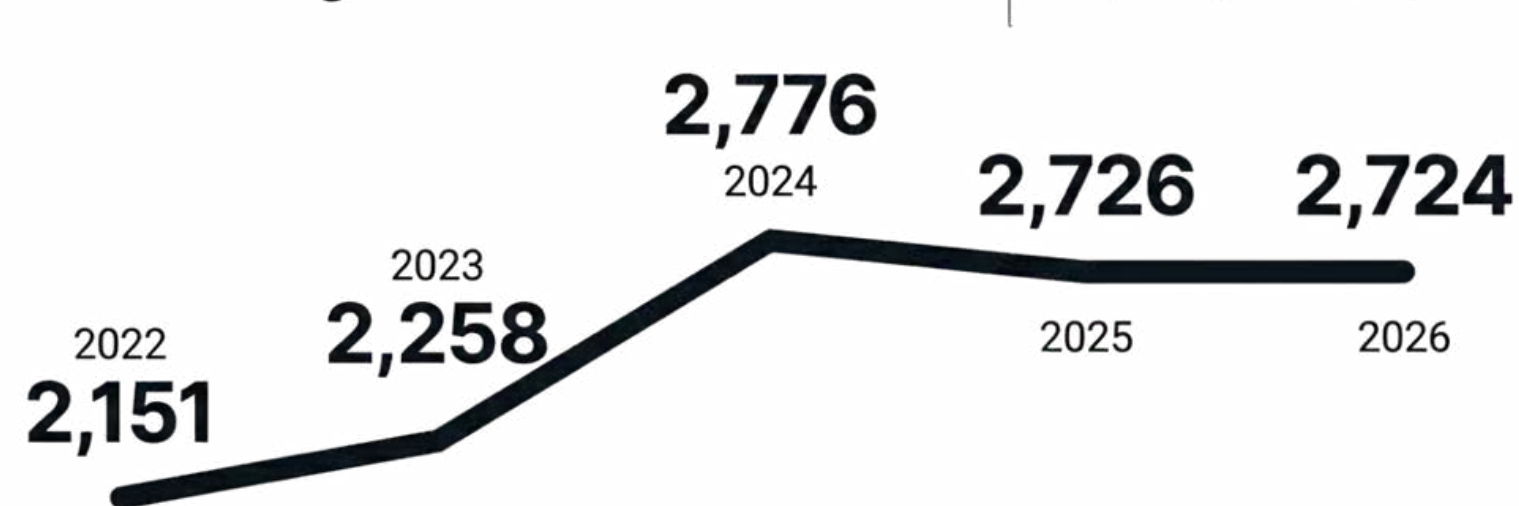
POINT-IN-TIME COUNT

JANUARY 25, 2026

Some 300 volunteers and staff members conducted the 2026 Point-in-Time Count of people who were *unsheltered* (living on the streets, in the woods, in their cars, or some other place not intended for human habitation). The region's homeless and emergency shelters reported the number staying in their facilities (the sheltered count). The Point-in-Time Count is conducted over three days but always asks about where people slept on a single night – in this case, Jan. 25, 2026.

TOTAL COUNTED: 2,724

The Illusion of Stability



CORE INSIGHT

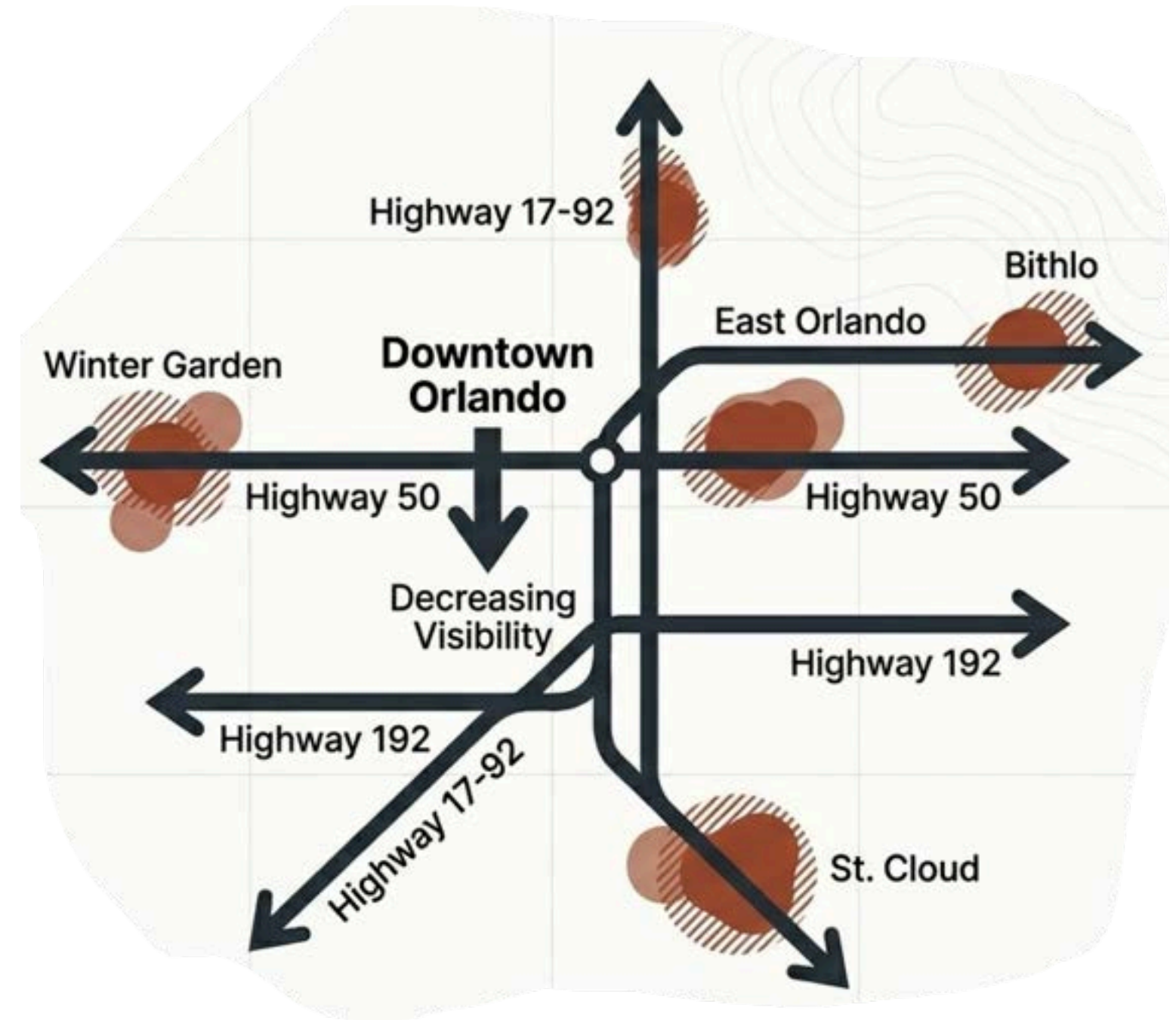
At the macro level, the 2026 total count is virtually identical to 2025. The total system appears completely flat.

Volatile Undercurrents



THE TRI-COUNTY TOTALS

ORANGE COUNTY	SEMINOLE COUNTY	OSCEOLA COUNTY
1,979 Total Persons	363 Total Persons	382 Total Persons
1,312 Sheltered	226 Sheltered	193 Sheltered
667 Unsheltered	137 Unsheltered	189 Unsheltered
 +3% increase over 2025	 -17% decrease over 2025	 +2% increase over 2025



THE TAKEAWAY:

Although overall numbers appear flat compared to 2025, we found that both the demographics and locations of our homeless neighbors are changing. There were high counts along north-south and east-west corridors, and concentrations are significantly increasing in suburban locations, far outside the urban core.

The Architecture of the Unsheltered

1% slept under a bridge or overpass
5% other unspecified locations

53%

Streets or sidewalks

27%

Woods or encampments

8%

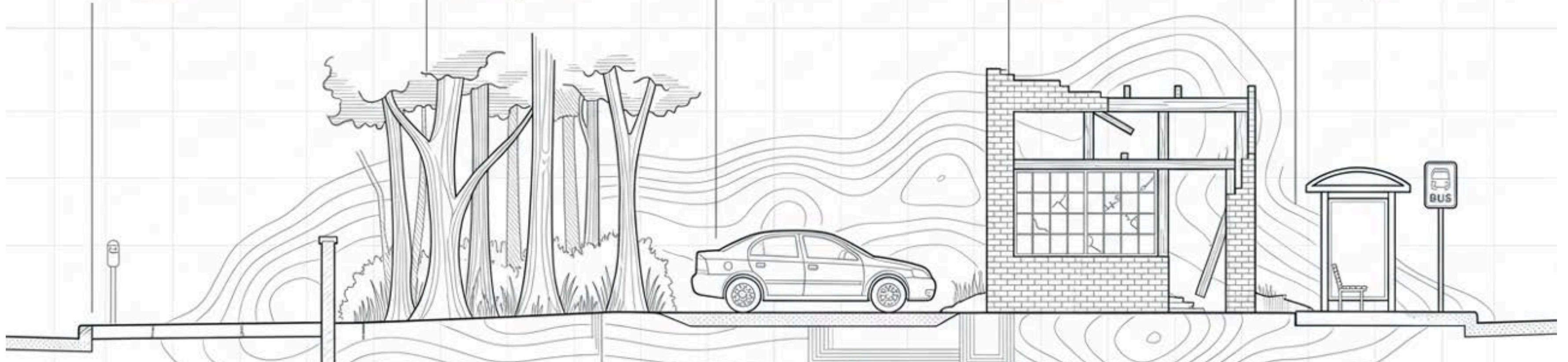
Inside a vehicle

4%

Abandoned buildings

2%

Bus, train, or airport



Intervention vs. Vulnerability

The Youth Intervention

AGES 18-24

153 Total Enumerated

123 Sheltered | **30** Unsheltered

UNSHeltered DOWN 23%

Directly tied to increased youth resources over the past two years.

The Senior Crisis

AGES 55+

715 Total Enumerated

510 aged 55-64 | **205** aged 65+

OVERALL UP 6%

49% of all individuals over 55 were unsheltered, even as the broader count remained flat.

AGE, DISABILITY, GENDER MULTIPLY VULNERABILITY

Nearly half of the unsheltered population (49.7%) reported having a disability – most often a chronic physical condition. ▶▶▶

Homelessness among people age 55 and older has increased 6% over last year. ▶▶▶

Women account for 28.5% of the total homeless population, but they make up 38.4% of homeless individuals with multiple disabilities. ▶▶▶



NEARLY 43% OF UNSHELTERED POPULATION IS NEW TO HOMELESSNESS

Overall, 42.7% of the unsheltered population surveyed reported they had not been homeless in the previous two years.

In Orange County, the figure was 45%.
In Osceola County, it was 44.2%.
In Seminole, it was 29.2%.

This aligns with other data: In April alone, 1,336 people sought housing assistance from our network of providers after becoming homeless for the first time.



REGION RANKS WORST IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING



A 2026 report from the National Low Income Housing Coalition found the Orlando–Sanford–Kissimmee metro **tied with Las Vegas for the worst shortage** of affordable housing for people with extremely low incomes.

It found **13 affordable rental units for every 100** extremely low-income households.

In recent years, our area has never ranked better than 7th worst nationally. We have often been worst or second worst. This has led to thousands of families living in rent-by-the-week motel rooms. Their numbers are not captured by homelessness data.