



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Date: 10/16/2019

In Control: City Council B Session

DEPARTMENT: Government & Public Affairs

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Jeff Coyle

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Briefing on the 2020 Census and Complete Count Committee activities

SUMMARY:

Government and Public Affairs will provide a presentation on the San Antonio/Bexar County Complete Count Committee and local efforts underway for the 2020 Census

BACKGROUND:

In the summer of 2018 the City of San Antonio convened stakeholders representing multiple community organizations to develop the framework of a strategic work plan which would guide San Antonio's efforts for a complete count during the 2020 Census. A critical strategy central to achieving a complete count was to form a Complete Count Committee. The Complete Count Committee is a volunteer organizing body whose members serve as trusted community voices during the census process. Members provide guidance on census outreach strategies and work with community partners to increase awareness and encourage all residents to complete the census questionnaire.

In April 2019, with appointees from the City Council and Commissioners' Court, Mayor Nirenberg and Judge Wolff launched the 53 member San Antonio/Bexar County Complete Count Committee (Committee). The Committee is charged with reaching all residents, with a particular focus on the 25 percent of the county at risk of being undercounted, according to data provided by the Census Bureau. The Committee, under the leadership of Co-Chairs Celina Pena and Rebecca Cedillo, formed 6 Subcommittees and identified 12 Target Populations at risk of being undercounted in the 2020 Census. During the summer, the Subcommittees conducted a deep dive data analysis and identified strategies to mitigate barriers for participation among the Target Populations. To support the outreach strategies of the Committee, the Count Me In branding and logo was launched and was used in the development of the resident centric Count Me in website.

Census day is April 1, 2020 and will mark the first decennial where the questionnaire will be available online, in paper form and via telephone. The City will be investing \$400,000 in non-personnel dollars to support the Committee's advertising/marketing and grass roots outreach efforts to ensure residents self-respond in a manner they are most comfortable with. GPA issued a Social Media RFP in September and has begun the procurement

process for issuing a paid Media Planner/Buyer RFP in support of the Committee's outreach strategies.

In addition to City funding, and in light of the State of Texas' decision to not allocate dollars for census outreach, several local stakeholders are pursuing funding from foundations who will be awarding census outreach dollars later this year. GPA is helping to identify those funding opportunities and providing technical and grant writing assistance to stakeholders who wish to apply. At this time, two proposals have been submitted on behalf of the Committee by the Bexar County Health Collaborative with a combined ask of \$225,000.

A key strategy in our paid media campaign will be to develop messaging that is relevant and resonates with our Target Populations. GPA is working with national organizations who are researching messaging to mitigate participation barriers such as fear of government, apathy and lack of knowledge as to the importance of the census. In addition, with the removal of the citizenship question it will be vitally important to educate our community the census is a count of all residents, regardless of their status.

The Committee and local stakeholders will be moving into the implementation phase of our efforts beginning in January. The Mayor and County Judge are scheduled to attend the Quarterly Complete Count Committee meeting on November 6th to provide a message of support to Committee members for their commitment and work on strategies for a successful count and to generate additional public interest in support of the launch of 2020 Census communications and outreach. The Census Bureau will officially collect census data from April 1 - July 21, 2020.

It will be critical that the City Council, and the vast networks of constituents with whom they communicate, help spread the message about the importance of the 2020 Census. This briefing will provide tangible ways that the Councilmembers can support the efforts of the Complete Count Committee.

ISSUE:

The 2020 Census is the constitutionally mandated decennial count of the U.S. population. Data gathered is used to apportion representation at the federal and state government and impacts the distribution of billions of dollars in funds to states and local communities. As one of the fastest growing regions in the state, an accurate and complete count of our residents is critical to the City of San Antonio. Redistricting at the local, state and federal levels will occur after the 2020 Census has been completed.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.