



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 4, 2019

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration for release of \$50,000 from FY 2020 Contingent Reserves to further support the 2020 Complete Count Committee's Community Engagement and Outreach Activities leading to the 2020 Census.

ISSUE: Consideration for release of \$50,000 from FY 2020 Contingent Reserves to further support the 2020 Complete Count Committee's community engagement and outreach activities leading to the 2020 Census.

RECOMMENDATION: That the City release \$50,000 from FY 2020 Contingent Reserves to further support the 2020 Complete Count Committee's activities leading to the 2020 Census.

BACKGROUND:

Alexandria's 2020 Complete Count Committee

Census Day is April 1, 2020 nationwide and, by then, all households will have received an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. There are three options for self-response: online, mail, or phone. Households that have not responded by April 1 may be contacted at home by a Census enumerator to collect their information in person.

By [Resolutions 2842 \(September 2018\)](#)

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/Resolution2842.pdf>) and [2867 \(February 2019\)](#), <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/Resolution2867.pdf> Alexandria City Council established the City's 2020 Census Complete Count Committee which is working in conjunction with staff to develop and implement an outreach strategy to maximize participation in the 2020 Census by all population groups and, in particular, the communities of Arlandria, Alexandria West, Beauregard, and Landmark; families with children under the age of 5; renter households; Black or African American residents; Hispanic residents; foreign-born residents; and households with limited English proficiency. The Committee's strategy will:

1. Identify groups that will be targeted for priority attention to encourage their members to be counted in the 2020 Census;
2. Develop a program encouraging participation by the public in general in the 2020 Census; and
3. Prepare recommendations to staff about expenditures of funds to accomplish the proposed program in an amount not to exceed the established budget.

The Committee has met three times since March 2019 and will meet once in September and November before holding monthly meetings in January through June 2020. It has established Subcommittees which have begun to meet as well, namely, (1) the Partnership Subcommittee (2) the Marketing and Communications Subcommittee, and (3) the Schools Subcommittees. To help guide the work of the Committee and Subcommittees, staff has developed the attached Complete Count Committee Work Plan (Attachment 1) which follows the guidance of the U.S. Census Bureau to approach Alexandria's Count in three phases:

1. **Phase I: Education (Now through September 2019).** During this phase, Committee members will learn more about how Census data are collected and used.
2. **Phase II: Promotion (Now through January 2020).** The Committee will educate the public about the Census.
3. **Phase III: Motivation (February 2020 through June 2020).** The Committee will motivate each household to participate in the Census.

Budget

Last fiscal year, the City Council approved \$30,000 in funding to help kick-off the work of the Committee. Its purpose is to help fund multi-media marketing in both electronic format and through written materials, such as direct mailings, posters and event signage. The budget also reflects funds for gift cards and promotional items, such as cups and sports items for adults and children, respectively, which will help incentivize participation at events and meetings and which will also be good advertising for the 2020 Census in general. Tee-shirts for volunteers are included to help the community know who to go to for information. Once Census enumeration has started, some volunteers will be equipped with iPads so that members of the public can participate in the Census online and submit it directly and securely. Additionally, supplies, refreshments, day care and translation services will be secured to support trainings, events and full Committee meetings and to help draw and retain participation in these public forums. It is also expected that some funds will be utilized to leverage financial and other resources from partners willing to sponsor special events.

DISCUSSION: While the \$30,000 in existing funding will facilitate a strong launch of the outreach and engagement processes, additional funds are required to sustain the effort and to provide a strong push during Phase III as noted above. For that reason, the City Council approved \$50,000 in Contingent Reserve funding in the FY 2020 Budget, and staff is seeking release of those funds to help ensure Alexandria achieves success with a full Census count in 2020. A draft Summary Budget anticipating the full \$80,000 in 2020 Census Count Community Engagement and Outreach funding is attached (Attachment 2).

FISCAL IMPACT: Release of the \$50,000 will have a one-time fiscal impact. However, by investing funds in a strong complete count effort, Alexandria will increase its eligibility for federal entitlement funds over the coming years which will, in turn, help the City strengthen and sustain a strong quality of life for all Alexandrians. Based on research by the George Washington University Institute of Public Policy, on average, a jurisdiction could lose \$1,200 every year for each person missed in the 2020 Census, or \$12,000 over a ten-year period. In addition, undercounting impacts redistricting and reapportionment.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2020 Census Count Committee Work Plan
2. Draft 2020 Census Count Community Engagement and Outreach Summary Budget

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