

Agenda Report

DATE: November 15, 1999

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CYNTHIA J. KURTZ, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: Approval of Census 2000 Work Plan and Appropriation of Funds

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that City Council:

- 1) Approve the Census 2000 Work Plan and appropriate \$70,000 from the unappropriated General Fund balance to City Manager account #141000 to fund implementation of the plan, and;
- 2) Adopt the attached resolution forming a Census 2000 Complete Count Committee and emphasizing Pasadena's commitment to an accurate census count.

BACKGROUND:

Census 2000 will be the information cornerstone for the next century. Billions of dollars of federal and state funds will be spent on thousands of programs across the nation. Decisions about health care, education, job training, business and transportation systems will be based on information about children, the elderly, the unemployed or underemployed and on where people work and live. How and where the money is spent depends on an accurate census count.

Population Undercount

Undercounting can cause the city to lose a significant amount of state and federal funding and services. The groups most frequently undercounted are renters, minorities, recent immigrants and children. Many of the people who are missed at a disproportionately higher rate than the national average are the very people who have a greater need for services. Because the funding for many of these services is dependent on census data, undercount results in an increased burden on local and state governments to meet residents' needs.

In the 1990 census, it is estimated that Pasadena's population was undercounted by approximately 7,000 people. Each person counted qualifies the city for approximately an additional \$126 per year in state and federal funding. A similar undercount in the 2000 Census could result in a loss of \$882,000 per year, or almost \$9 million over the next ten years.

Although the 2000 Census will be the most highly publicized census in history, studies show it may receive the lowest participation rate. Results from the Sacramento Census Bureau predict mailback response rates as low as 55%. Reasons for such a low response vary from less trust in government to more junk mail and busier lives. In anticipation, the US Census Bureau is establishing partnerships with state and local governments, private industry, and community groups to increase response rates, especially in historically undercounted populations.

With the investment of general fund money now, Pasadena can increase the accuracy of the city's population count in the 2000 Census and significantly increase revenue from state and federal sources over the next ten years. Staff is proposing a budget of \$70,000, or ten dollars toward reaching each of the 7,000 undercounted in 1990. This is a total investment of less than 1% of the potential return.

Local Government Role

General Audience

Census outreach must target two distinct audiences. The first is the general population who fill out the census forms received in the mail at their home. The Census Bureau has hired Young & Rubicom to develop a national marketing campaign targeted at this audience and focused on raising awareness. Promotional activities include a print, broadcast and outdoor advertising campaign and partnerships with Fortune 500 companies to promote the census through their services and products. Marketing materials will also accompany the direct mail of the census questionnaires to residences.

In addition to marketing, a national Census in the Schools program is providing teaching materials to every classroom in the nation and an expanded Religious Education program provides census messages to church-goers throughout the country.

With minimal support from local agencies, the activities of the Census Bureau are generally sufficient to reach the general population. In this area, the city's role will be lead by the Public Affairs Office and will focus on placing information in the *Pasadena In Focus* newsletter, local media relations, and distribution of materials prepared by the Census Bureau.

Undercount Audience

The second audience is the population who generally do not return the forms through the standard mail procedure for a variety of reasons. Characteristics of undercount areas include single housing units with multiple families, people that move frequently, areas with large numbers of children, neighborhoods with large numbers of minorities and recent immigrants, people that do not speak English as their native language, neighborhoods with large numbers of illegal housing units, areas with high crime, and areas with low or high household income.

In response to this audience, the Census Bureau believes that broad-based participation in the census must be built at the community level through partnerships with local governments, community organizations, businesses and the media. This partnership program is a means to authenticate the Census message by local and trusted leaders known by their community. It is

intended to complement other methods by spreading information about the census, by assuring people that it is okay to participate and by providing help if needed.

This regional partnership model significantly relies on local agencies to reach undercount populations. Under this model, the Census Bureau recommends that the City form a “Complete Count Committee” to develop local strategies to outreach to the community and to recruit residents of these areas to work as census takers. In addition, the Census Bureau suggests that local governments produce messages and promotional materials tailored to undercount populations in the community.

Pasadena’s work plan, outlined below, is focused on this audience.

Work Plan

Successfully increasing Pasadena’s population count will require extensive community outreach and participation. Staff recommends following the model established by the Census Bureau and establishing a Complete Count Committee to develop critical strategies. In addition, staff recommends hiring a local marketing/communications firm to develop multi-lingual local outreach programs to historically undercounted populations.

Total cost for implementation will not be clear until a full work plan has been developed by the Committee, however, it is anticipated that a budget of \$70,000 will be sufficient to support committee activities and fund a marketing/communications firm.

Components of the work plan are outlined below:

Complete Count Committee

This committee will be made up of community leaders and representatives of historically undercounted populations in Pasadena. The primary function of the committee will be to develop strategies to reach these population groups and increase census participation. Strategies will include identifying alternate materials distribution methods, directing targeted local multi-lingual marketing/communications plans, recruiting role models and planning special events, and recruiting citizens of these areas to work as census takers.

It is anticipated that committee membership may be as large as 20 to 30 participants who will work in subcommittees targeted at specific tasks. The following local organizations have agreed to participate on the committee:

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| Urban League | Union Station |
| PUSD | Community Housing Services |
| Shelter workers | Passageways |
| Altadena/Pasadena Health Partnership | El Centro |
| Pasadena Neighborhood Housing Services | Foothill Community Council |
| NAACP | |

Costs associated with the committee are limited to funds to be dispersed to non-profit organizations as incentives to recruit volunteers and provide direct assistance to the community.

Specifically, the Census Bureau has requested assistance in establishing several local Questionnaire Assistance Centers where trained volunteers answer questions and help residents fill out forms. Staff anticipates needing approximately ten of these centers in various communities to provide adequate coverage. A sum of \$3,000 would be offered to each non-profit organization willing to provide space and staffing (paid or volunteer) for a Questionnaire Assistance Center during a three-week period. Staff is recommending a total budget of \$30,000 for this purpose.

Communications and Marketing Plan

An equally important component of outreaching to the community is the development of local communications and marketing program tailored to specific target groups. This will require translation of materials into several languages, and, it is anticipated that materials such as posters, flyers, public service announcements and other communications will require reformatting or redesign to appeal to specific audiences. Staff recommends that a local marketing/communications firm be hired to complete this task with direction from the Complete Count Committee and staff.

Although the full scope of this project will not be determined until a full work plan is developed by the committee, it is estimated that costs for a marketing/communications firm will total approximately \$40,000.

Staffing

It is anticipated that organizing and managing this overall effort will require extensive staff support from November through June of 2000 and will require a broad range of existing community relationships. Responsibilities of the lead staff person will include staffing the Complete Count Committee, assisting with the development of local strategies, coordinating implementation of those strategies, and working directly with the Census Bureau. Staff is recommending that this project be lead by the Acting Assistant City Manager with support from the Public Affairs Office and other city staff.

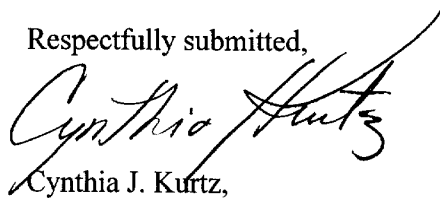
Work Plan

The Census Bureau recommends that a full strategy and work plan for each city be prepared by the Complete Count Committee. To streamline and expedite this process, staff has prepared a proposed work plan and schedule for review by the committee. This plan is attached.

FISCAL IMPACT

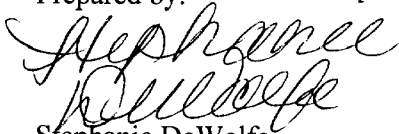
The investment of \$70,000 to increase population count in the 2000 Census could result in millions of dollars in State and Federal funds over the next ten years. Funds are available for this purpose in the unappropriated General Fund balance.

Respectfully submitted,



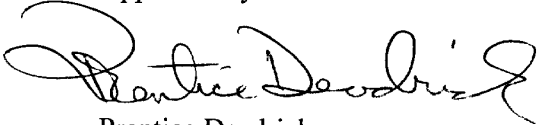
Cynthia J. Kurtz,
City Manager

Prepared by:



Stephanie DeWolfe
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Approved by:



Prentice Deadrick
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Attachments: Draft Census2000 Workplan & Schedule
US Census Bureau Information Materials