

SCSPC STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Census 2020 Complete Count Committee

MEETING DATE: May 12, 2021

AGENDA ITEM: 4

STAFF CONTACT: Lauren Bianchi Klemann

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a wrap-up report of the Census 2020 Complete Count in Santa Barbara County.

DISCUSSION:

In July 2019, the SBCAG Board approved coordination with the County of Santa Barbara to provide monthly “receive and file” Census 2020 Complete Count Committee updates to the North County and South Coast Subregional Committees beginning September 2019. In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and adjustments to the self-response deadlines, updates were extended in May 2020 through the end of the year. Today, Joni Maiden and Pedro Paz, Co-Chairs of the Census 2020 Complete Count Committee will present a wrap-up report of the countywide effort and outcomes to engage the hardest-to-count residents of the community to participate in the 2020 Census.

Every ten years, the United States Census counts every resident in the nation. A complete and accurate count of California’s population is essential to the State because it determines the number of seats in the House of Representatives and the allocation of billions of dollars in federal funding to local governments. Census data is also used to redraw legislative districts within a State.

The State provided over \$494,000 to the County of Santa Barbara to develop plans to reach out and encourage the hardest-to-count portions of the community to participate in the 2020 Census. The Santa Barbara Foundation was an equal partner with the County, providing over \$366,000 of additional funding, this brought the total funding to \$860,421 and enabled greater resources to be distributed throughout the County. The funds were used as follows:

- 50% - grants to local agencies and coalitions to conduct Census outreach and activities
- 24% - project management
- 15% - advertising
- 6% - printing collateral
- 5% - website, video production, marketing kits, specialties

The County of Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara Foundation together formed the Santa Barbara County Census 2020 Complete Count Committee (CCC). This committee was comprised of more than 100 representatives from public, private and nonprofit sectors with the goal of developing and implementing effective outreach strategies while maximizing resources. The committee was split into six subcommittees based on each member’s ability to access different hard-to-count populations. The purpose of this grass roots approach was to enlist agencies and

individuals trusted by the community to conduct outreach to hardest-to-count populations, or those less likely to respond to the census. The committee also served to assist with tactical, complete count initiatives.

The County's Complete Count Strategic Plan identified four goals:

1. Engage community resources, such as city governments and community-based organizations, to coordinate in the development and execution of outreach efforts, thus ensuring broad regional participation.

This goal was met as the CCC was comprised of over 100 leaders from the public, private and nonprofit sectors to jointly develop and implement effective outreach strategies while maximizing resources.

2. Increase community awareness of the importance of the census, and build trust in the security, confidentiality, and purpose for counting households regardless of legal status through a comprehensive, multilingual, multimodal communication campaign.

The CCC met this goal, some partners began outreach in early fall 2019, reaching the community through many events and speaking opportunities. The census team posted signs and flyers featuring the Census website and phone numbers in additional languages in medians and key locations across the county. For a significant period of the self-response time, the CCC moved to an online environment and canvassing (via door drops and phone) to reach partners and residents across the county.

3. Active outreach to hard-to-count populations through education and engagement.

This goal was met though significant changes in plans were made due to the pandemic. CCC partners conducted multi-lingual outreach in innovative ways on farms, at food distribution sites, while delivering food to the most vulnerable and while providing services. The team also explored new ways to reach HTC populations, including census caravans and launching a more robust Spanish-language media campaign.

4. Support every community member's participation in the Census 2020 by eliminating barriers to access.

This goal was met. The Census questionnaire could be completed online, by telephone, by paper. Many CCC partners canvassed their communities to explain the importance of completing the Census and when possible, made computers and phones available for use, to those that did not have them.

An implementation plan was submitted to the State in October 2019 describing activities, census tract targets, location/date/time of the activities, and the hard-to-count communities being reached. In November 2019, the plan was approved by the State and the Santa Barbara County Census 2020 Complete Count Committee (CCC) began preparations for outreach events and activities.

In March 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom declared a public health emergency due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) followed by a series of temporary "stay at home" orders. This coincided with the start of the self-response period for the 2020 Census. As a result, planned activities were halted and the Santa Barbara County CCC made significant changes in plans in

order to promote the census and to reach the hardest-to-count segments of our community during a pandemic.

Efforts included expanded use of social media, online outreach, a robust media advertising campaign and other creative ways to promote the census. After multiple legal challenges, rulings and appeals, the U.S. Census Bureau ended all data collection on October 15, 2020. As of that day, the self-response rate for Santa Barbara County stands at 71.8%, a 3.3% increase over the 2010 rate.

ATTACHMENT:

- A. 2020 Census Santa Barbara County Outreach Report
- B. [2020 Census Wrap Up Video \(link only\)](#)