

City of
Bellevue



Transportation Commission Study Session

DATE: December 12, 2019

TO: Chair Wu and Members of the Transportation Commission

FROM: Gwen Rousseau, Senior Planner
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SUBJECT: 2020 Census: The What, Why and How

DIRECTION REQUESTED

_____ Action

_____ Discussion/Direction

☒ Information

PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

• Purpose of the Presentation

Gwen Rousseau, Senior Planner in the Community Development Department, will provide an overview of what the decennial census is, why it is important, how it will be conducted in 2020 and how Commissioners can help raise awareness in the community.

• Council Direction

Bellevue City Council proclaimed April 2019 Census Awareness Month to raise awareness of the importance of the 2020 Census. In May 2019, City Manager Brad Miyake signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Seattle Foundation, King County and the City of Seattle agreeing to contribute \$50,000 to the Regional Census Fund to help build a strong network of trusted messengers who can ensure everyone has accurate information about the impact of the 2020 Census. In September 2019, the East King County 2020 Census Communities Count Committee formed with Councilmember Lee representing the City of Bellevue.

• Transportation Commission Role

Staff seeks Transportation Commissioners become Census Ambassadors. Commissioners can help raise awareness about the what, why and how of the 2020 Census in several ways.

Spread the Word

Through the power of social networks and social media channels, commissioners can help raise awareness of the 2020 Census by sharing interesting facts, real-life stories, and how-to information to encourage the community to participate in the 2020 Census.

Stay Up to Date

The 2020 Census marks the first time that residents will be able to respond to the census online. Commissions can sign up [here](#) for updates and to receive a reminder when it's time to respond.

Set the Record Straight

An accurate count is critical for communities across the country. One of the best ways to show support for the 2020 Census is by knowing the facts. Review the basics of the 2020 Census and how the Census Bureau protects everyone's data, then share these facts with the community. If you hear false information or are wondering whether a rumor is true, please contact rumors@census.gov.

Learn How Others Are Helping

Across the country, people are stepping up to support the 2020 Census. Check out the creative ways that Census Bureau partners, community leaders, and others are making a difference.

- City of Bellevue 2020 Census [webpage](#)
- East King County [Communities Count Committee](#)
- King County [Regional Census Committee](#)
- Pierce County [2020 Census webpage](#)
- Washington State [Complete Count Committee](#)
- U.S. Census Bureau webpages: [2020 Census](#) and [Become a Census Partner](#) and [Partner Spotlight](#)

Context of the Project

Beginning next March, the U.S. Census Bureau will invite households across the country to participate in the 2020 Census.

BACKGROUND

What is the decennial census?

The census is a head count of every person living in the United States. To be sure the government represents the people, the U.S. Constitution requires a population count every ten years. Ever since 1790, the census has determined the number of seats each state receives in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 2020, Washington State gained a tenth seat in the House since its population had grown. The census is, and always has been, a cornerstone of our democracy.

Why is it important?

Leaders use Census data to make decisions. Census data help guide planning for the future of communities. The 2020 Census will help inform decisions on how billions of dollars are allocated annually for critical services like roads, schools, hospitals and healthcare clinics, fire and emergency response services, and hundreds of other programs.

Since the last decennial Census, the City of Bellevue has received \$76.2M in federal and state funding for Transportation projects, \$7.1M for Park projects, \$5.8M for Community Development Block Grants and \$40.9M. Bellevue School District has received over \$112M in federal revenue since 2010.

How will it be conducted?

In 2020, for the first time, one will be able to complete the census online, by phone or by mail. It asks a few simple questions, such as how many people live in your home on April 1st, including their age and sex, and if there are any children living there.

How is the information protected?

By law, all census responses are completely confidential and personal information cannot be shared with any law enforcement agencies.

Who counts?

Every person counts, no matter who they are or where they live. Whether a family has participated for decades or the 2020 Census will be their first, everyone has a role in shaping the future of our country.

NEXT STEPS

2020 Census Timeline

- March 12-24: Mailings inviting people to complete the census questionnaire online

If people don't respond ...

- March 26-April 3: Reminder postcard mailed
- April 8-16: Reminder letter and paper questionnaire mailed
- April 20-27: Final reminder postcard mailed
- May-late July: Census takers knock on doors of households who have not responded to collect information in person

ATTACHMENTS

1. Sample questionnaire.