

Census 2010

City Point Person – **Deanna Santana**, Deputy City Manager

County Point Person – **Emily Harrison**, Deputy County Executive

Census Day is April 1, 2010. Non response follow up will be conducted through June 2010.

Synopsis: The Census is a count of the population conducted every 10 years, mandated by the U.S. Constitution. It counts everyone living in the United States on April 1, 2010. Census figures determine the allocation of over \$436 billion per year in federal funding to local governments. It also determines the number of seats California has in the House of Representatives. For the first time in its history, California is in danger of losing a seat in Congress in this decennial. Among other things, Census data is used to help plan where to build roads, schools, and what programs are needed in our community, as well.

With this in mind, the City of San Jose and the County of Santa Clara, along with Valley Transportation Authority, have formed the Census 2010 Partnership Network, dedicating resources of staff and budget to ensure an accurate Census count. The Partnership Network is a grassroots approach to outreach and education of the residents of Santa Clara County to encourage participation in the census.

The Census Bureau has revised the 2010 questionnaire to only 10 questions. It should take residents less than 10 minutes to fill out. It is illegal for the Census Bureau to share the information it collects with other government agencies including the IRS, Immigration or welfare agencies. The message of the Census is that “It’s easy, it’s safe and it’s important.”

City and County View: San Jose is the largest city in Santa Clara County and the 10th largest city in the nation. As such, of all the cities in the county, it has the biggest stake in this Census. A recent study by Brookings Institution calculates that for each person who is not counted, it costs \$1,145 per year in loss of potential funding. Over 10 years, that equates to a loss of \$11,450 per person who is not counted. Based on those figures, for San Jose, with a projected population of one million, there is a potential of \$11,450,000,000 in federal funding and for the County overall, with a projected population of two million the potential funding is \$22,900,000,000 over 10 years.

The City has several organizational networks that will be used in Census outreach including Strong Neighborhoods Initiative and the City/Schools Collaborative.

Santa Clara County was rated as a highest achiever in the 2000 Census, with an overall mail back response rate of 75%. The mail back response rate for the City of San Jose was 74%.

A challenge unique to this county is that it is one of only 10 counties in the United States where 51% or more of the population speaks a language other than English at home.

Linguistic isolation, high homeless and immigrant populations, and fears and distrust surrounding sharing information with the government are among the challenges in obtaining an accurate count. The Partnership Network has developed a grassroots outreach plan that encompasses K-12 schools, colleges and universities, community- and faith-based organizations and the other cities. The message of the Census must reach the people of the community through their trusted voices.

Regular workgroups, called “Breakfast Briefings” bring together these organizations to brainstorm and develop action plans. Working in partnership with the Census Bureau, action plans are being developed to reach the hard-to-count populations. The goal is continuous outreach and education on a grassroots level, to compliment the Census Bureau’s national campaign. Ethnic and local media advertising will supplement national advertising by the Census Bureau.

The National Census in Schools Program will be supplemented at a local level as well. Corporate sponsorships will be sought to fund school contests and additional take home items for children. This will empower the children to go home and discuss the Census with enthusiasm with their families, in many cases in a language other than English, with which the family is comfortable and can communicate easily.

A volunteer program, called “Census Ambassadors” is also being developed. This program will mobilize employee volunteers as well as volunteers from youth and community groups to get involved to spread the message of the Census through their networks of communication.

The Partnership Network has also mobilized the other cities of the county to take action and plan their own Census outreach to their communities. Census liaisons were appointed early in the year and staff is in constant contact, exchanging ideas and sharing information about upcoming events and operations. Presentations to City Councils are being made as requested to keep the community leaders informed of activities to date and the importance of supporting the Census outreach efforts.

The Partnership Network has received tremendous support from the community thus far. We are confident that our outreach and education efforts, along with our partnership with the Census Bureau, cities and our local organizations, will ensure an accurate a count as possible in 2010.