



Legislation Text

File #: 19-214, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Update on Census 2020

PURPOSE: The purpose of this item is to provide the Board of Aldermen with an update on Census 2020.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

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INFORMATION: The nation's decennial census is approaching; once every 10 years since 1790 and scheduled for April 1, 2020! *Attachments A and B* provides an overview and more detailed list of census activities, data collection and the release of data products.

The enumeration of the United States population is mandated by Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution. The original and principal purpose of the population count is to determine the number of seats each state receives in the U.S. House of Representatives. Population data also inform state's and local government's representation, apportionment of federal funds, and policy and program implementation of all sorts. An accurate count is needed to provide appropriate representation and to ensure the fair distribution of federal funds to our town and county for local initiatives.

The U.S. population has topped 325 million; growth is positive with the current rate resulting in a net increase of one person every 14 seconds (see the population counter at https://www.census.gov/popclock/?intemp=w_200x402. The world population clock is available at this link as well). Carrboro's population in 2010 was determined to be 19,582, a 10.46 percent increase over the 2000 population. Summary and detailed information about the Town's population in the 2000 and 2010 censuses is available at <http://censusviewer.com/city/NC/Carrboro>. *Attachment C* provides a summary comparison of demographic information for 2000 and 2010. The current municipal estimate (July, 2017) for the Town from the North Carolina State Office of Budget and Management is 20,928, a 6.9 percent increase from April 2010 (see https://files.nc.gov/ncosbm/demog/muniestbymuni_2017.html for the listing of population in all North Carolina municipalities).

Town staff have been attending trainings and participating in the update of addressing and boundary information in preparation for Census 2020. There have been some changes to the mapping of tracts and blocks to make them coincide better with geographic and other boundaries. The town has signed up to add new addresses through the deadline prior to the census to make the count of residences in town as complete as possible.

Questions for use in Census 2020 and the American Community Survey were submitted to Congress in March 2018 and can be viewed at <https://apps.npr.org/documents/document.html?id=4426784-Planned-Questions-2020->

[Acs#document/p11/a414610 <https://apps.npr.org/documents/document.html?id=4426784-Planned-Questions-2020-Acs>](#) and downloaded at <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/4426784/Planned-Questions-2020-Acs.pdf>.

A citizenship status question was included in the 2018 submittal. See page 7 for the question. Per the Washington, D.C.-based Population Reference Bureau (<https://www.prb.org/>), the question appeared on the decennial Census long form, completed by approximately one in six households in 1980, 1990, and 2000, but was not part of pilot testing for the 2020 Census count.

The proposed text is the same as the citizenship question that now appears on the annual American Community Survey (ACS). As described in greater detail at

https://www.census.gov/history/www/programs/demographic/american_community_survey.html, in preparation for the 2010 Census, the Census Bureau established a new data collection process, with all households completing only the short form with questions on age, Hispanic origin, race, relationship, sex and tenure. Additional questions - from the long form previously collected from about one in six households - providing more detailed socioeconomic information about the population were shifted to the ACS process.

The survey is sent to a small percentage of the population on a rotating basis throughout the decade. No household is to receive the survey more often than once every five years. Three-year estimates are made available for areas like Carrboro with a population of 20,000 or more. The current ACS data profile for the Town is available at https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml.

In the summer of 2018, states, cities, and other organizations filed lawsuits challenging the question's addition to the census form. <https://www.prb.org/why-are-they-asking-that-what-everyone-needs-to-know-about-2020-census-questions/> Subsequently, three federal courts issued orders to block the question from the 2020 Census. The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments on this issue on April 23, 2019. <https://www.prb.org/why-are-they-asking-that-what-everyone-needs-to-know-about-2020-census-questions/> Information about the case, No. 18-966, is available at

<https://www.supremecourt.gov/search.aspx?filename=/docket/docketfiles/html/public/18-966.html>. A ruling is expected by July 2019, at which time printing must get underway in order for Census 2020 to stay on schedule.

On May 22, 2019, the Board of County Commissioners established a Census Count Committee made up of volunteers and staff and officials from local governments to carry out education and outreach activities and seek to maximize local participation in the Census 2020. The committee makeup is included as *Attachment D* and meetings are to begin this summer. Mayor Lavelle, or her designee, and Rachel Heggen, Communications Manager, are listed as possible Town representatives. Commissioner Renee Price was designated as chair of the committee and sent a letter requesting the Town's participation (*Attachment E*).

A Census 2020 infographic on how the process will count everyone is included as *Attachment F*.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: No fiscal or staff impacts have been identified with the Board's consideration of this update.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Board of Aldermen discuss this matter and select Town representatives to the Orange County Complete Count Committee.