



Legislation Text

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TITLE:

Update on Response Rates for Census 2020

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the Town Council with an update on the response rates to Census 2020 since mailed notice was released in early March.

DEPARTMENT: Planning, Manager's Office

CONTACT INFORMATION: Patricia McGuire - 919-918-7327, pmcguire@townofcarrboro.org; Rachel Heggen - 919-918-7314, rheggen@townofcarrboro.org

INFORMATION: Mailed notice of the decennial U.S. Census went out in early March and reporting on the level of responses began on March 20th. North Carolina is currently 36th in overall responses nationwide. Orange County has been leading the state in responses to date, with information available from several sources, starting first with Orange County's web resources on the count at <https://orangecountync.gov/2092/Census-2020>. Carolina Demography, based in the Carolina Population Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is providing weekly updates for the state and counties at <https://www.ncdemography.org/2020-census-tracker/>. The report for April 13th is included as *Attachment A*. Chapelboro's ongoing reporting and archived items <https://chapelboro.com/category/news/2020-census> reveals the local general news and the NC Counts Coalition provides a more detailed view of actions being taken to maximize participation of all residents, <https://www.nccensus.org/updates>. Census tract response rates are available from the US Census website, <https://www.2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html>, with the attached map showing the current level of response. The highest reporting Census tract is 107.06, which lies between Estes Drive and Homestead Road. Focused outreach to tracts 107.08 and 107.09, showing less than 50 percent responses at this time, are anticipated as a next step.

Background and Schedule. Information on Census 2020 has been included in two previous agenda items: June 11, 2019 Board of Aldermen meeting, available at the following link: (<https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3976631&GUID=0674CF6F-F6D9-4AD3-AF5F-08B14042612B&Options=ID|Text|&Search=census>) and January 21, 2020, available at: (<https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4310400&GUID=5C31C631-A831-4FBE-AC3F-523B01878B71&Options=&Search=>).

Council member Barbara Foushee and representatives from three Town departments have been participating in the Complete Count Committee, a collaborative effort, to organize and facilitate the upcoming 2020 census for Orange County, North Carolina. The committee began meeting in the fall of 2019, to develop a comprehensive strategy that would ensure that residents understand the purpose of the census, how it is used, what to expect and, perhaps most important how to be counted.

The state of emergency and associated orders for sheltering in place resulted in the closure of census sites that

were to be located throughout the county. The plan had been for twelve census sites to be located throughout the county, including one at McDougale Middle School in Carrboro. Computers were to be available at the various sites with sufficient assistance to help residents login.

The timeline that remains in place at this time is as follows:

- March 12-20, 2020 -- Census Bureau will [mail invitations to respond](https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2019/comm/2020-everyone.html) [<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2019/comm/2020-everyone.html>](https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2019/comm/2020-everyone.html) to nearly every household in the country and activate the online response form.
- March 16-24, 2020 -- Reminder letters will be sent
- March 26-April 3, 2020 -- Reminder postcards sent to those who have not responded
- April 1, 2020 -- Census Day. You will fill out the questionnaire based on where you were living on this day.
- April 8-16, 2020 -- Reminder letter and paper questionnaire sent to those who have not responded
- April 20-27 -- Final reminder postcards sent before in-person follow-ups begin
- December 31, 2020 -- Final 2020 Census results will be delivered to the President of the United States

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact with receiving this information.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Town Council receive the update and continue to encourage Carrboro residents to contribute their information to Census 2020.