


**City of Alexandria, Virginia****MEMORANDUM**

DATE: AUGUST 26, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR THE CITY'S COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE FOR 2010 U.S. CENSUS ACTIVITIES

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**ISSUE:** Funding 2010 U.S. Census "complete count" efforts.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council allocate \$30,000 from the FY 2010 General Fund Contingent Reserve to fund the Complete Count Committee's requested budget for the 2010 U.S. Census.

**BACKGROUND:** On March 24, 2009, the Council of the City of Alexandria established a Complete Count Committee and funded this Committee's activities to the amount of \$30,000. The Committee is chaired by former Councilman Justin Wilson, and its members represent neighborhood associations, affinity groups, charitable organizations, schools and City agencies.

The \$30,000 in funding requested by the City Council is contingent on the presentation of a budget indicating how the funds are to be used in reaching out to the residents of Alexandria and to targeted groups in the City. The targeted groups in Alexandria are minority and immigrant households and households headed by young adults, as these households have been undercounted in the past -- in Alexandria and elsewhere.

**DISCUSSION:** In order to influence the targeted population, the City of Alexandria's Complete Count Committee has developed a number of outreach initiatives. These will focus on a set of two complementary messages that are consistent with the Census Bureau's outreach campaign and recommended by the marketing/public relations professionals assisting the Complete Count Committee. The messages are (1) that it is safe to complete the Census form, and (2) that a complete count provides tangible benefits to Alexandria through increased funding for services and facilities.

The Complete Count Committee will have a presence at selected public events between now and April 1, 2010. The first of these is Citizen's Day, scheduled for early September. The Committee is also looking at having a presence at farmer's markets starting next spring and other public events (such as the St. Patrick's Day parade, which is a few weeks before Census Day).

The Committee plans to work with leaders of faith-based institutions serving populations that have been undercounted in the past.

ARHA has identified several opportunities to share Census information with the households they serve, such as by including information in their monthly rent notices and in their newsletters and posting materials at family resource centers.

There are initiatives specifically targeted to the schools, and the Committee is working with ACPS and NOVA. ACPS is determining how the Census Bureau-developed education program can be incorporated into the social studies curriculum. They are also looking at how journalism and TV production students can get involved.

Some expenditure is necessary to support the outreach activities that the Complete Count Committee is expecting to pursue. Some of the expenditures are for “giveaway” items that are part of the campaign to instruct and remind people of the need for households to complete their 2010 Census forms. The items help attract attention when the message is being delivered and serves as a reminder of the message until Census Day.

Another cost is for a mailed brochure at the end of March that reminds targeted households of the need to complete the 2010 Census forms. We are using Census and other data to identify the neighborhoods where the mailing would be most fruitful, and we have found ways to reduce costs by sending mailed items to those areas.

Other programs which will involve expenditures are the printing of posters, placing advertisements in the ethnic press, creating videos to be shown on Comcast and training of parent liaisons in the City’s schools. These expenditures will equal the \$30,000 that Council has provided for a Complete Count Campaign.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The Complete Count Committee is requesting the release of \$30,000 in budgeted FY 2010 General Fund Contingent Reserve funds. The objective is for the City to benefit fiscally from this expenditure. The U.S. Census Bureau asserts that \$300 billion dollars is allocated annually to localities across the nation from state and Federal sources using formulas based on Census information. If this money is distributed equally on a per capita basis (which often it is not), and if in 2010 the City has the same under count of approximately 3,300 people as it did in 1990, then over the next ten years the City could theoretically be at risk for losing nearly \$30 million, approximately equivalent to the cost of two elementary schools or two recreation centers.

**ATTACHMENT:** Complete Count Committee Proposed Budget

**STAFF:**

Karl Moritz, Deputy Director, Department of Planning & Zoning  
Kathleen Beeton, Division Chief, Department of Planning & Zoning  
Ralph A Rosenbaum, Urban Planner, Department of Planning & Zoning

## COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE PROPOSED BUDGET

Item	Giveaways	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
	<u>For Adults</u>			
1.	Reusable Shopping Bags	2,000	\$2.00	\$4,000
	<u>For School Children</u>			
2.	Small Sports Balls	1,000	\$1.14	\$1,140
3.	Download Cards	780	\$1.15	\$900
4.	I-Pods	8	\$45	\$360
5.	LED Key Chain	1,500	\$1.60	\$2,400
	<u>For Volunteers</u>			
6.	T-Shirts Various Colors	100	\$5.00	\$500
	<b>Direct Mail</b>			
7.	Bi-Fold Letter with Sticker	45,000		\$10,000
8.	Postage	35,000		\$6,500
	<b>Other Print Items</b>			
9.	Bus Poster/ Businesses	200	\$4.00	\$800
	<b>Media</b>			
10.	Ethnic Media			\$500
11.	Comcast Ads & Ad Production	4 days	\$600/day	\$2,400
12.	Training event	1	\$500	\$500
	<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</b>			<b>\$30,000</b>

The "giveaways" are meant to inform the recipients of the impending 2010 U.S. Census and encourage conversation about the need for households to participate in the Census. All of the giveaways will be embossed with a message about the 2010 U.S. Census.

Item 1: The reusable shopping bags will have a Census message in four languages, English, Spanish, Arabic and Amharic. When these bags are used, they will be mobile advertisements for the 2010 U.S. Census.

Items 2-5: Alexandria's school children are an entrée into many of the households which need to be targeted. The Census Bureau has prepared materials specifically for schools which can be incorporated into the curriculum. The giveaways reinforce the message and help spark conversations between students and parents about the need to participate in the Census. Music download cards and the I-Pods are for children at the middle school and high school levels as well as the students at NOVA and will be given as prizes for knowing facts about the 2010 Census.

Item 6: T-shirts will be given to volunteers who distribute Census information at events in the City and who march in the Washington Day and St. Patrick Day parades.

Items 7 and 8: Bi-fold letters with a Census message will be sent out to those areas of the City with the most number of targeted households. The bi-fold letters will be in four languages and the message will inform households that it is safe to participate in the 2010 Census and that it is to their benefit and the benefit of their community to participate. An extra 10,000 bi-fold letters will be printed and handed out by volunteers at events in the City.

Item 9: Posters with a Census message in four languages will be created and placed in the racks above the seats of buses serving Alexandria. The posters will also be placed in businesses and in apartment and condominium buildings.

Item 10: Advertisements will be placed in the ethnic press and on ethnic radio. Editorials espousing participation in the 2010 Census will also be written and placed in various newspapers.

Item 11: Advertisements will be created to be shown on Comcast channels. These advertisements will be run continuously in the weeks leading up to the 2010 Census.

Item 12: A training event will be held for parent liaison staff in the schools. The objective is to make the staff familiar with the 2010 U.S. Census so they are equipped to encourage parents to participate in the Census.