

MEMORANDUM

TO: Debbie Tarry, City Manager
Shoreline City Council

FROM: Emily Rankin, City Manager's Office Fellow

DATE: March 4, 2020

RE: Census 2020 Update

The City of Shoreline received a \$24,000 grant from the State of Washington Department of Revenue for census outreach, education, and questionnaire assistance over the course of January through July 2020. CMO Fellow Emily Rankin has been able to use those funds to commit up to ten additional hours per week towards Census work, in close partnership with two other Shoreline-area grantees, the Center for Human Services and Turning Point. Tanya Laskelle from Center for Human Services also serves as our liaison to the King County Complete Count Committee and Kenmore's Complete Count Committee.

Census Outreach and Education

Staff have given presentations about the Census at several community meetings: North Urban Human Services Alliance (November 20), Shoreline Schools Family Advocates (January 7), Council of Neighborhoods (February 5), and Ballinger Neighborhood Association (March 2). Staff also tabled at the ICHS 5k (February 23) and on February 27 hosted a workshop at City Hall for 20 participants to learn about the Census generally, what the City and its partners are doing in Shoreline, and how everyone can champion the Census in our own networks. This event drew representatives from the Shoreline School District, PTAs, Shoreline-LFP Senior Center, libraries, the Indian Association of Western Washington, and Census Bureau enumerators as well as interested community members. Staff will also likely present at the Shoreline-LFP Senior Center birthday lunch (March 19).

The Center for Human Services and Turning Point have identified "trusted messengers" in specific language communities (Spanish and Tigrinya) who are better equipped to deliver the message of the Census within their networks. These individuals receive stipends from CHS/TP's grants but the City also has grant funds available should translation or interpretation services be needed.

Questionnaire Assistance

For the first time ever the primary way that most people will complete the Census is online, and while this creates opportunities for many, it also creates barriers for those without access to the internet, without a permanent home, or who are not comfortable using computers. To that end, staff have been working with community partners to make space and computers available with trained staff and volunteers standing by to answer questions. So far, questionnaire assistance is planned for the Shoreline Library (Saturdays April 4 and 25) and at City Hall during the Community Court Resource Center (Tuesdays April 14 and April 28). Staff have also been contacted by the shelter coordinator at Ronald UMC about doing questionnaire assistance at the Ronald UMC/YMCA community dinners that occur every Thursday and serve 70-100 people.

Additionally, our community partners are planning some targeted/semi-private questionnaire assistance events, such as at Ronald Commons or the Bosnian Mosque. Staff will help support these events as needed.

Next Steps

As mentioned above, once the Census opens online March 12, the focus will be on getting every household to actually fill out the survey and get counted. The Census Bureau will have an online map tracking real time response rates, which the City and its partners can then use to do more targeted outreach and assistance in areas with low initial participation. Enumerators will begin visiting homes that have not yet provided a response online beginning in late April and continuing through the summer.