TO: City Council
FROM: Department of Environmental Services
SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF PARTICIPATION IN THE VENTURA COUNTY 2020 CENSUS COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE, APPROVAL OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AS TO FORM, AND AUTHORIZATION FOR INTERIM CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the City’s participation in the Ventura County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, approve an agreement with the Ventura County Community Foundation with a not-to-exceed amount of $25,000 as to form, and authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the Agreement.

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

The United States Census Bureau conducts a decennial count to determine how many people reside in the United States and where they live. This once-a-decade count commences in March 2020 and will determine congressional seat apportionments, district lines, distribution of federal funds for medical and nutrition programs, the national school lunch program, housing vouchers, highway construction, and a host of other programs. As such, ensuring an accurate count is critical to local funding.

On November 16, 2017, the City accepted the U.S. Census Bureau’s invitation and authorized staff to participate in the critical decennial count activities, beginning with the 2020 Census Local Update of Census Addresses Operation. This multi-year operation, partially funded by the Bureau, allowed local jurisdictions to add new addresses and verify missing addresses. The City subsequently received feedback from the Bureau and verified nearly 100% of the new and missing addresses submitted to be included in the 2020 Census Database. Census takers are currently canvassing Simi Valley neighborhoods verifying occupancy for some of these properties.

FINDINGS AND ALTERNATIVES

The Census Bureau is aware of the financial burden imposed on local jurisdictions to conduct the necessary operations to participate in the 2020 Census and, therefore, recommends partnerships among agencies to avoid duplication in efforts and oversaturating the media with census content. The Ventura County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee (CCC) was adopted by the Ventura County Economic
Vitality Strategic Plan to work toward an accurate count through a regional collaborative. A fund was established by the Ventura County Community Foundation (VCCF) to provide oversight. As of today, the CCC has received $2.2 million in total contributions and will require another $2.3 million to meet its goal. Examples of government contributions made thus far include the County of Ventura ($500,000), Ventura County Transportation Commission ($50,000), City of Thousand Oaks ($25,000), and the State allocation ($270,000). Based on the scale of finances and resources available, it would greatly benefit the City to continue implementing the 2020 Census through collaboration with the CCC as recommended by the Census Bureau. Staff has been active in the CCC thus far.

While anticipating the CCC’s kickoff, staff requested and received certified media materials from the Census Bureau at no cost to the City, and implemented soft outreach beginning in February 2019. Simi Valley’s soft outreach included dissemination of Census Bureau publications such as 2020 Census at a Glance, Census 101, and Census Recruitment – Jobs Available in Ventura County via www.2020census.gov/jobs. Census publications were distributed through Simi Valley Television Channels 10 and 99 - Spectrum and AT&T U-verse cable TV; staffed booths at the Simi Valley Street Fair and Council on Aging Wellness Expo; handouts were made available at the Simi Valley Youth Employment Services Job and Career Expo; and the Family Movie Night at the Simi Valley Civic Center. The soft outreach continued with a Decennial Census Overview presented by the Census Bureau on October 14, 2019, during the Simi Valley City Council meeting.

The priority of the 2020 Census is to ensure that everyone is counted. For each person not counted in the 2020 Census, it is estimated $2,000 is lost in funding per person for each of the next 10 years, or $20,000 per person. The California Department of Finance Demographic Research Institute has created a Hard-to-Count index which is based on multiple demographic, housing, and socioeconomic variables which determines if an area is hard to count. Ventura County, including small pockets of Simi Valley, is listed as “Hard-to-Count,” which is defined as the rate of census surveys returned as less than 73 percent. Several factors are attributed to a lower count including missing addresses and nontraditional housing units such as converted garages and accessory dwelling units. Additionally, some segments of the population such as low-income residents, non-fluent English speakers, elderly residents, persons experiencing homelessness, persons with mental and/or physical disabilities, and racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to respond to the survey. Furthermore, for the first time, the Census Bureau will be primarily collecting census surveys over the internet. This could further limit the number of responses from members of the community who are technology challenged and/or lack broadband access.

**Hard to Count Populations**

To address the Hard to Count populations, in addition to the efforts that the CCC is planning to make in Simi Valley, staff also plans to disseminate census publications to special districts, including the Simi Valley Unified School District and Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, as well as faith-based and fraternal organizations such as Masonic and Elks Lodges, the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, and the Chamber of Commerce, businesses, and medical facilities. Furthermore, the City has identified
targeted areas with an elevated Hard-to-Count index. Causes for the elevated index may include areas with limited broadband subscribers/access, low-moderate income renters, a slightly elevated minority resident concentration, and children who are under five years of age. These targeted areas are ideal recipients of additional resources to help encourage participation.

Beyond circulating mailers to the targeted areas, staff recommends establishing partnerships with faith-based organizations, fraternal organizations, Simi Valley Hospital and medical/urgent care clinics to establish up to 25 internet hotspots with web-based Census Questionnaire Action Kiosks or stations. These Kiosks will supplement the six kiosks proposed by the CCC to be located at County fire stations within Simi Valley City limits and Kiosks at the Sierra Vista Medical Clinic on Los Angeles Avenue and the Human Services Agency facility on Madera Road. Given that the census questionnaire will be predominantly online, and that the digital divide (residents with or without access) still impacts localized areas of Simi Valley, establishing these stations would create accessibility and invite participation. These stations are physical locations with regular operating hours open to the public where survey respondents can comfortably and securely access information, fill out the 2020 Census and receive help if they need it.

The City has met with representatives of the Simi Valley Unified School District and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District regarding the Census 2020 efforts. Both the School District and the Park District recognize the importance of a complete Census count and have pledged to work cooperatively to this end. Of critical importance is a unified message among the parties. Both Districts have preliminarily identified methods to distribute Census materials with an emphasis on the hard-to-count populations as described in this report. Additionally, the Districts have identified potential areas to set-up Kiosks to assist Simi Valley residents participate in the Census. The City, School District, and Park District will continue to work cooperatively and jointly towards a strong and accurate Census count in Simi Valley.

Complete Count Committee (CCC)

The City has been partnering with the CCC as prescribed by the Census Bureau. The CCC is composed of three co-chairs, a steering committee, and nine subcommittees each with its designated outreach responsibilities. As a partner with the CCC, the City has been proactively involved with the Local Government Coordination Subcommittee activities since its initial formation. The attached agreement would be approved as to form, with any final changes to be approved by the City Attorney before execution.

The partnership allows the City to take advantage of economies of scale while maintaining influence over outreach within the community. The goals of the committee specified on the next page (Exhibit 1 to Attachment A) correspond with the Contribution to 2020 Census Recipient Agreement (Attachment A) to be executed by the City and VCCF:

- To work in concert with diverse stakeholders and government agencies from various sectors to ensure a full, fair, and accurate count countywide.
- To avoid duplication of outreach efforts and maximize limited resources.
• To build a budget needed for outreach and leverage neighboring counties’ efforts.
• To strengthen local non-profit organizations’ internal capacity and external influence through grant making and collaborations.
• To organize funders to ensure that funds are strategically distributed to maximize funding for the county.

Funding

As a participant of the CCC, it is recommended that the City contribute $25,000 to help leverage the State’s matching fund. In return, the City will have access to marketing and outreach materials, a volunteer base, translators, and various other resources including grants to set-up web-based Census Questionnaire Action Kiosks throughout the City at locations designated by the CCC. The additional locations for Kiosks and additional outreach referenced above would be funded outside of the $25,000 allocated to the CCC; however staff recommends both methods of outreach to ensure that the City’s population is accurately counted. Staff has budgeted a total of $50,000 for the 2020 Census activities in the FY2019-20 Annual Budget.

On October 11, 2019, the City submitted a grant application to the CCC requesting a $50,000 grant to establish the 25 stations/kiosks throughout the City. This grant request is the first of the multiple-round funding allocation cycles established by the CCC. If the City decides not to participate with the CCC, efforts to ensure an accurate count will be paid for directly by the City and could exceed budgeted funds. Approved payment and expense categories in the grant application are as follows:

• Census-related community forums and one or more 2020 Census kick-off events.
• Media outreach through local radio stations, printed media and local community publications which serve or have the capability to reach the County's Hard-to-Count populations.
• Development and printing of electronic, print, and video publications in English, Spanish and Tagalog.
• Spanish, Tagalog, and American Sign Language interpreter and translation services for census-related meetings and events.
• Census Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Questionnaire Action Kiosks (QAKs) and related facility, staff, and technology costs not funded by other means.
• Costs associated with census ambassador and speaker presentations (handouts, facility rentals, etc.).
• Competitive grants to other community-based organizations to provide any of the above.
• Other census outreach-related investments and costs as recommended by VCCF or the CCC Steering Committee and with notification to the City.

All contributions by the City to the CCC must be for expenses directly related to supporting the activities of the CCC in conducting census outreach and education to the Hard-to-Count populations.
The following alternatives are available to the City Council:

1. Authorize the City’s participation in the Ventura County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, approve an agreement with the Ventura County Community Foundation with a not-to-exceed amount of $25,000 and authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the Agreement.

2. Provide further direction to staff.

Staff recommends Alternative No. 1.

**SUGGESTED CITY COUNCIL MOTION**

I move to authorize the City’s participation in the 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, and approve an agreement with the Ventura County Community Foundation with a not-to-exceed amount of $25,000 as to form and authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the Agreement.

**SUMMARY**

The Ventura County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee (CCC), a regional collaborative established for the county-wide census count as prescribed by the U. S. Census Bureau, requests for the City’s participation and financial contribution to help leverage State’s matching fund. The Ventura County Community Foundation (VCCF) is the region’s designee to provide oversight and accountability to the Committee. In preparation for the census, the City has appropriated up to $50,000 (in the City’s FY 2019-20 General Fund Budget) and requests the City Council’s approval for the City’s participation in the Ventura County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, approval of an agreement with the Ventura County Community Foundation with a not-to-exceed amount of $25,000 as to form, and authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the Agreement.

Ronald K. Fuchiwaki
Interim Environmental Services Director

Prepared by: Eric Chen, Associate Planner

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Exhibit 1 – Ventura County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee
This Agreement is entered into between the CITY OF SIMI VALLEY as Grantor, hereinafter referred to as the "CITY"; and VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, hereinafter referred to as the "RECIPIENT" as of October 28, 2019 (the "Effective Date"), each a “Party,” and collectively, “Parties”.

**RECYTALS:**

SECTION 1. PURPOSE. This Agreement sets forth the responsibilities of the CITY and RECIPIENT in accomplishing the objectives of the United States Census Bureau, as set forth in the 2020 Census Complete Count Committee Guide of the United States Census Bureau.

SECTION 2. GENERAL PROVISIONS. CITY will provide $25,000 to fund 2020 Census outreach activities and programs to promote full participation in the census by Ventura County's Hard to Count populations (the “Not-To-Exceed Amount”) upon execution of this Agreement. The types of activities and programs the City will fund under this Agreement are specified in Exhibit 1 to the Agreement.

SECTION 3. TERM. The term ("Term") of this Agreement shall be two (2) years from the Effective Date.

SECTION 4. OUTREACH. RECIPIENT, in addition to security the City funds allocated herein, will conduct philanthropic outreach to attempt to obtain additional community and philanthropic organization funding to further support Complete Count Committee (the "CCC") Census outreach and education efforts.

SECTION 5. SCOPE OF WORK. RECIPIENT agrees to implement the project(s) identified below and as described in the specified Exhibit(s), which are included in this contract and made a part hereof by this reference:

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SECTION 6. CHANGE IN SCOPE OF WORK. RECIPIENT shall notify CITY in writing of any proposed changes or additions to approved project prior to such change or addition. The City Manager is authorized to approve changes which do not
materially alter the general scope and aims of the Agreement or that increase the Not-To-Exceed Amount.

SECTION 7. UNSPENT FUNDS. RECIPIENT shall provide the City with quarterly reports of payments made and funds remaining and shall return any unspent funds to the City within 120 days after the conclusion of the 2020 Census response period.

SECTION 8. REPORTING. RECIPIENT shall make supporting expense documentation available to the City for review upon request. Such supporting document shall include proposals, bids, quotes, receipts and evidence of product delivery or service completion, depending on the type and form of outreach expenditure, activity or expense.

SECTION 9. DISPUTE RESOLUTION; VENUE. The Parties will use their best efforts to avoid disputes in the administration of this Agreement. Should the Parties be unable to resolve any dispute, all actions in court will take place in the County of Ventura in a court of competent jurisdiction, under California law without regard to choice of law principles.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed as of the Effective Date.

Attest: City of Simi Valley,
A Municipal Corporation

___________________________________ By: ______________________________
Lucy Blanco, City Clerk Brian Paul Gabler, Interim City Manager

Approved as to Form: Ventura County Community Foundation

___________________________________ By: ______________________________
Lonnie J. Eldridge, City Attorney Vanessa Bechtel, President/CEO
Ventura County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee

The County’s Complete Count Committee (CCC), spearheaded by the Ventura County Community Foundation (VCCF) will be comprised of community-based organizations (CBOs), local government representatives, business owners, faith-based organizations and other members of the public and community volunteers, consistent with and based on the community model as described in the “2020 Census Complete Count Committee Guide” by the US Census Bureau.

The specific goals of the CCC will be to:

• Ensure a full, fair, and accurate count countywide;
• Develop a countywide education and outreach plan(s) for Hard to Count (“HTC”) communities;
• Engage in joint fundraising efforts to strengthen outreach activities and avoid duplication of efforts;
• Build strategic alliances and organizational capacities that could live beyond the Census;
• Work to solve broadband equity issues; and
• To truly be a community where everybody counts.

The specific objectives of the 2020 Census Committee are:

1. Ensure the Committee reflects a true snapshot of the whole community;
2. Create a trustworthy, unifying brand and promotional materials in multiple languages that communicate both emotional and intellectual reasons for an accurate count to motivate action;
3. Leverage what already exists by attending local community events and utilizing the committee’s trusted messengers at information booths;
4. Deploy a suite of marketing tactics and strategies that build public awareness through engaging interviews presentations and activities with diverse groups in multiple languages;
5. Onboard census outreach volunteers in partnership with other Ventura county community-based, educational, faith-based and cultural advocacy organization, along with local cities and special districts.
6. Spread positive information on the census. Each participating organization will receive a toolkit upon request that includes various census articles and messages they can personalize;
7. Beginning October of 2020, hold numerous Census Days in places of congregation among HTC populations. During Census Days, mobile libraries equipped with Internet, tablets, and laptops will be taken to HTC communities to help educate and provide the tools needed for people to learn about the complete the Census;
8. Through a coordinated electronic and social media strategy, communicate “nudges” and follow-up information to activate HTC people to self-respond, tracking live engagement data to maximize efforts;
9. Build lasting relationships between diverse groups in our county, which will benefit the community for years to come.
**Fund Expenditures:**
All approved payments by the City must be for expenses directly related to supporting the activities of the Ventura County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee in conducting census outreach and education to census Hard To Count (HTC) community populations.

Approved payment and expense categories are:

- Census related community forums and one or more 2020 Census kick-off events.
- Media outreach through local radio stations, printed media and local community publications which serve or have the capability to reach the County’s HTC populations.
- Development and printing of electronic, print and video publications in both English, Spanish and Tagalog.
- Spanish, Tagalog, Mixteco and American Sign Language interpreter and translation services for census-related meetings and events.
- Census Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Questionnaire Action Kiosks (QAKs) and related facility, staff and technology costs not funded by other means.
- Costs associated with Census Ambassador and Speaker presentations, (handouts, facility rentals, etc.)
- Competitive grants to other Community Based Organizations to provide any of the above.
- Other Census outreach related investments and costs as recommended by VCCF or the CCC Steering Committee and approved by the Ventura County Executive Officer or designee.

**Specific phases include:**
- Planning and Education Phase (February - September 2019);
- Awareness Phase (April 2019 - Completion of Census in 2020);
- Motivation Phase (March 2020 – Census Day);
- Census Day (April 1, 2020); and
- Reminder Phase (May – July 2020).

**CCC Subcommittee and Steering Committee:**
The 2020 Census Committee includes various subcommittees to help advise the CCC on needs for a complete and accurate count. The subcommittees will serve as trusted ambassadors and outreach strategists for the community around their specific areas of focus, such as the business community and faith-based subcommittees, and others provide subject matter expertise in such areas as budget and finance, health, human services, marketing, along with other subcommittees and stakeholders.

The subcommittees will propose funding needs up to a CCC Executive Steering Committee which will help prioritize needs and shall submit funding recommendations to the County regarding the use of the County’s Census funds. The members of the Executive Steering Committee shall be:

1. The President & CEO of the VCCF;
2. The Ventura County Superintendent of Schools;
3. One County representative, who shall be nominated by the CEO of the County;
4. One local government representative, to be nominated by a majority vote of the incorporated city managers within the County of Ventura. The local government
representative must be a government official who holds an executive position (e.g., a City Manager or Deputy/Assistant) in a local government that is a part of the 2020 Census Complete Count Committee; and
5. Two community representatives, to be selected by the VCCF.

The Executive Steering Committee will meet regularly to review the subcommittees’ requests for funding. A majority of the Executive Steering Committee members then in office shall constitute a quorum for a meeting, and a vote of a majority of the members present at a meeting at which there is a quorum shall constitute an act of the Executive Steering Committee for purposes of making its recommendations to the Foundation.