

County of Santa Clara
Office of the County Executive


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September 18, 2019

TO: Honorable Members, Board of Supervisors

CC: Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive
Miguel Márquez, Chief Operating Officer
James Williams, County Counsel
Megan Doyle, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: David Campos, Deputy County Executive 
Nicholas Kuwada, Census Program Manager

RE: Local Update of Census Addresses Results

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Census Bureau (Bureau) Master Address File (MAF) aims to capture an address for every structure in which any person in the United States is anticipated to reside on April 1, 2020. The accuracy of the MAF determines how complete the count of households will be in 2020. This process is essential to the County's goal of a complete census count because researchers attribute up to one-third of the undercount of low-income immigrants and households of color to the omission of their addresses from the MAF.¹ Given these circumstances, the County decided to participate in this process and added 77,306 addresses that were previously missing or invalid in its master address file (MAF).

DETAILS OF THE LOCAL PROJECT

From March 2 to July 14, 2018, the County participated in LUCA through three main activities:

1. Over ten percent of the addresses in the original MAF lacked geocodes to indicate their location by latitude and longitude. Technology Services and Solutions (TSS) was able to locate and geocode all the valid addresses lacking this information.
2. The Department of Planning (Planning) and TSS found an added/corrected 3,482 addresses drawing from lists compiled from:
 - i. The County's internal database, Countywide Address Point Data, which is largely based on records from the Office of the Assessor;
 - ii. Registrar of Voters;

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- ¹iii. Address records from the Santa Clara County Office of Education and school districts; and
 - iv. Melissa Global Intelligence, a private vendor that obtains, verifies, and supplies address data
3. Seven community-based organizations (CBOs) and staff of the Office of the County Executive canvassed 299 of the County's, 1,075 block groups to visually inspect and identify unconventional housing not captured in existing lists.

The project net cost of this effort was \$455,317 while approximately \$500 million per year of the County's budget comes from federal funds whose levels are informed by census-derived data. In addition, the census determines congressional representation of the County's residents and recent projections "show[ed] that the state of California is very close to actually losing a congressional set in 2020, the first time [it] will have lost a seat in its nearly 160-year history."²

LUCA RESULTS

On August 20, 2019, Deputy County Executive David Campos received the LUCA Feedback Address Update Summary Report from the Bureau. Of the thousands of addresses added, only 270 of address records submitted were not added to the MAF. In addition, another 5,558 addresses were deleted from the MAF by another LUCA participant or a different census operation. We believe that the County's unprecedented use of external data sources, canvassing, and other efforts to identify unconventional housing, deep partnership with the Cities, and County attention to the incorporated areas resulted in a unique, data-based approach that achieved this great level of success. Other counties who took more traditional approaches to LUCA have reported thousands of address denials; but Santa Clara has found a reliable method that other counties should adopt in future efforts. For example, the County's decision to rely on a targeting methodology for vulnerable neighborhoods through the work of CommunityConnect Labs and census demographer Ed Kissam were key to our success.

Currently, our GIS team (Planning and TSS) will be conducting an address-by-address evidence appeal of the 270 addresses not added. Of the 5,558 addresses deleted, the team has been verifying that this is the proper action to take with our city partners.

The County has 45 days to appeal these two sets of addresses (October 4, 2019).

¹ Kissam, Ed. *An Effective Strategy to Reduce Census Undercount: Results from California Pilots of Community-Based Address Canvassing*. 12 March 2018.

² https://www.electiondataservices.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NR_Appor17c3wTablesMapsC2.pdf