

Good Afternoon and Happy Wednesday Memphis!



As we say goodbye to January, and welcome February, join me in commencing a celebration of Black History Month 2020! The theme of this year's observance, "*African Americans and the Vote*," coincides with the sesquicentennial anniversary of the 15th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which gave African American men the right to vote in 1870. Despite the establishment of the historic amendment, discriminatory practices were routinely implemented to prevent its use. Therefore, this year's Black History Month theme achieves two goals: *memorializing* the historic struggle for the right to vote, while also *calling each of us* to preserve and protect the fundamental right through its regular exercise. Please take time to check your voter registration status, [here](#). Additionally, register to vote, [here](#). Also, the [Presidential Preference Primary and County Primary Election](#), commonly referred to as Super Tuesday, takes place on March 3, 2020. In addition to Democratic and Republican presidential nominees, the ballot will also feature Republican and Democratic primary candidates for General Sessions Court Clerk. Early voting begins February 12 and ends February 25.

Finally, if you were not able to attend Tuesday's Memphis City Council meeting, a full review can be found, [here](#).

Empowering Memphis Non-Profits via the Memphis City Council's Community Grant Program:

Recognizing the indispensable work of Memphis non-profits, the Council established the Community Grant Program to assist organizations each year.

To be eligible, applicants must provide proof of current programming and a successful track record in providing the services for which they are requesting funding. The funds must go toward addressing either Crime and Drug Prevention, Youth Empowerment, Economic Development, or Poverty. Since the Community Grant Program's inception, requests from local non-profits have increased annually. In 2019, alone, the Council awarded \$2.4M. On Tuesday, the 2019 Community Grant recipients came to City Hall to present status updates as part of their required mid-year Council review. As we prepare to hear new requests from future applicants, the Council's Budget Committee discussed amending the FY21 Memphis City Council Community Grant Program. No action was taken. However, proposals were made to ensure applicants' compliance with grant writing standards, as well as to reinstate a Council-based selection committee. *Stay tuned for updates as the conversation continues to evolve.*

Keeping Memphians Safe in 2020:

Bottom line: Ensuring the safety of all Memphians is the Council's top priority. To that point, [we have previously discussed the issues affecting police and fire recruitment in the City of Memphis](#). On December 17, 2019, the Council voted in favor of a referendum ordinance allowing the citizens of Memphis to decide in November 2020 whether specified personnel employed with the Divisions of Police and Fire Services may live within 50 miles of Memphis. Notwithstanding, on Tuesday, that critical conversation was revisited as Councilman Martavius Jones introduced an ordinance to rescind the December 17, 2019 action. The move gives the current council members the ability to weigh in on the public safety discourse. As the robust debate moves forward, I will keep you up-to-date on the decision that will ultimately be made to best protect the citizens of Memphis in 2020 and beyond.

The 2020 Census is Coming:

Did you know **Census Day** is April 1, and is observed nationwide? Beginning in 1790, and taking place every ten years since that time, 2020 brings forth the 23rd Census administered in our country's history. As Mayor Strickland mentioned in his [latest update](#), *the numbers count*. The resulting 2020 census data will be used to determine how federal funds, grants, support to states, counties, and communities will be allocated to cities like Memphis for use in improving our schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and a myriad of other vital programs including fire and police services. Furthermore, the numbers will inform the decennial apportionment of voting memberships, or seats, in the U.S. House of Representatives. Last week, a U.S. Census office opened in Memphis! To staff its operation, the Census Bureau is now hiring local

applicants to fill paid positions in the Memphis-area. To join the 2020 Census team, see the flyer provided, [here](#). The following individuals are highly encouraged to apply:

1. Retirees
2. College students
3. People who do not have a job and are seeking temporary employment
4. People already working who are looking for a second job, and
5. People available to work flexible hours, including days, evenings, and/or weekends.

Improving Our Valued Public Infrastructure:

Finally, the Council is dedicated to improving of our city's public infrastructure, period. On Tuesday, we followed through on that objective by appropriating \$335,000.00 to traffic signal improvements to the intersection of Barron Avenue at Prescott Road. The upkeep of our extensive engineering framework is vital and will continue over the next four years, across the City of Memphis.

Looking Forward:

As we move ahead, I am and will always be honored to serve you each day as part of a thirteen-council member team working to transform our great city into a place of opportunity for all. Stay tuned for future Council updates as we keep you informed regarding the activities taking place here at City Hall!

With earnest appreciation,



Patrice Jordan Robinson
Chairwoman, Memphis City Council
District 3