

2020 Census Communication Plan

City of West Allis, WI



Census Background

Every 10 years the U.S. Government conducts a mandated nationwide Census survey that will determine how over \$675 billion in federal funding will be distributed to states and communities. Getting a complete and accurate Census count is critically important and provides a reliable picture of the nation's current population status, as well as a snapshot of our nation in many different areas of focus. These areas of focus include where people are living, their age, their race, and how many people own their home. These results are critically important because they help businesses, researchers and policymakers make decisions that affect the entire nation in ways both big and small – for example, funding for school lunches or deciding if a community needs a new fire department.

Challenges for the Community

1. **Lack of community engagement** and not having residents complete the Census.
2. **Reaching hard-to-reach populations** like the homeless or disenfranchised.
3. **Language barriers** can present a challenge to those who may not be able to understand the efforts made to communicate to the general public.
4. **Lack of purpose and importance**, meaning that residents may not possess the need or want to complete the Census, or they feel as if completing the Census is not important or won't affect them.
5. **Lack of knowledge & internet proficiency**, meaning that residents may not understand that there are three ways to complete the Census. Often times, many residents think that the Census can only be completed online, which can discourage residents if internet access and availability are hard to obtain, or if they are not the most internet-savvy.
6. **Fear for privacy**, meaning that many residents may hesitate to complete the Census out of fear that their personal information may be used or sold for outside gains – one of the biggest misconceptions of the Census.

How to Combat Community Challenges

- **Education and direct, deliberate, consistent correspondence** will foster and protect community engagement efforts.
- **A wide range of accessible locations** will offer all residents the availability and access to complete the Census, regardless of socioeconomic standing.
- **Placing emphasis on privacy** as a top priority for the U.S. Government and the City of West Allis through reassuring residents and eliminating them of this misconception.
- **Using translation services** to meet the needs of West Allis' diverse population, allowing all residents to understand the correspondence that they are receiving.

Why the Census Matters

Whether a new school may be needed to ease overcrowded classrooms or a new road to ease overcrowded commutes – there are countless ways in which the 2020 Census will shape our community. Increasingly important factors the Census helps to determine are:

- How billions in federal funding is distributed to states and communities.
- How many seats our state gets in congress.
- How boundaries are drawn for congressional districts, state legislative districts, and school districts.
- How communities respond to natural disasters and secure funding for hospitals, fire departments, and more.

Simplifying & Branding the 2020 Census

Using the already-created promotional materials and guidelines produced by the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of West Allis will ensure that residents gain an understanding of the 2020 Census and the importance of doing their part by participating and completing the Census, as well as understanding the community impact. These promotional materials will reach residents through mail, in-person interaction, City social media platforms, and the City of West Allis website. A custom URL will be created to provide a virtual home for all of the 2020 Census information, including directing residents to the 2020 Census website and other helpful resources.

*Target Audiences

With a population of 59,934, the City of West Allis recognizes that our community is diverse and that all members of our community deserve to be reached. Here are some fast facts about our target audiences:

Age

- West Allis has the largest percentage of their residents between the ages of 25 – 44.
- West Allis has the second largest percentage of population among peer cities between the ages of 45 – 64.
- Over 57% of the population in West Allis was between the ages of 25 – 64 during the years of 2010 – 2014.

Millennials

- Almost one out of every three residents in West Allis is between the ages of 20 – 39.

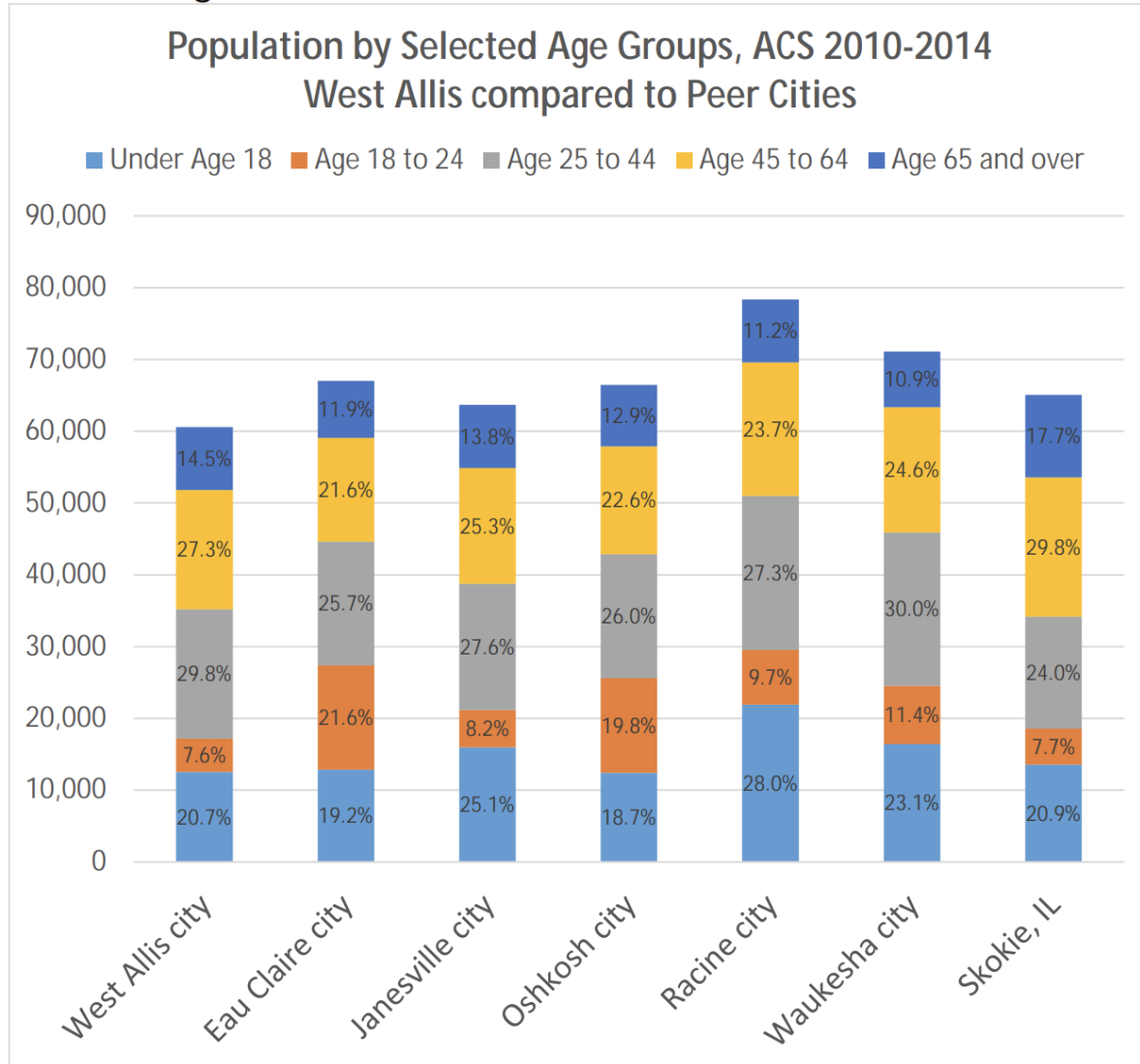
Race and Ethnicity

- West Allis' Latino population ranks in the middle of peer cities.
- West Allis has the third highest percentage of Black or African American residents when compared to peer cities.
- West Allis has the fourth highest percentage of Asians when compared to peer cities.

In summary, with regards to diversity of West Allis' population based on race and ethnicity, West Allis has 20% of West Allis' population being Black, Asian, Latino, or races other than White.

*Information from January 2017 City of West Allis Fact Book

Chart 6. Age Distribution



Languages

About one in ten households in West Allis speaks a language other than English at home, Spanish being the most prominent.

*Information from January 2017 City of West Allis Fact Book

Key Messaging

Keeping language simple, positive, and easy to understand will be the City of West Allis' greatest tool when moving forward in their 2020 Census communications. We need to place an emphasis on providing a consistent flow of communications that accurately and efficiently conveys the many benefits of completing the Census. The City must also clearly demonstrate a willingness to assist residents in their efforts to complete the census. Additionally, promotional and educational materials will help to further emphasize the importance of completing the census, the actions taken by the U.S. Census Bureau to protect residents' privacy, and the many routes for completing the Census available to West Allis residents.

U.S. Government Communication Tools and Strategies

By April 2020, households will receive contact to participate in the Census. There will be three options to respond: online, by phone, or by mail. The U.S. Census Bureau's schedule for content distribution is as follows:

- **March 12 - 20:** A mailed invitation to respond to the 2020 Census will be sent out (some households will also receive paper questionnaires).
- **March 16 - 24:** A mailed reminder letter will be sent out.
- **March 26 - April 3:** A mailed reminder postcard will be sent out.
- **April 8 - 16:** A mailed reminder letter and paper questionnaire will be sent out.
- **April 20 -27:** A final mailed reminder postcard will be sent out before an in-person follow-up is pursued.

Key Dates

2019

- **January - March 2019:** The U.S. Census Bureau opens 39 area Census offices early to support address canvassing.
- **June - September 2019:** The U.S. Census Bureau opens the remaining 209 area Census offices. These offices support and manage the Census takers who work all over the country to help conduct the census.
- **August 2019:** The U.S. Census Bureau conducts in-field address canvassing, meaning that census takers visit areas that have added or lost housing in recent years to ensure that the U.S. Census Bureau's address list is up to date.

2020

- **January 2020:** The U.S. Census Bureau begins counting the population in remote Alaska.
- **April 1, 2020:** Census Day is observed nationwide. By this date, households will receive a mailed invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. Residents will have three options for responding: online, by mail, or by phone.
- **April 2020:** Census takers begin in-person follow-ups with households around select colleges and universities. Census takers also begin conducting quality check interviews.
- **May 2020:** The U.S. Census Bureau will begin follow-ups with households that have not responded.
- **December 2020:** The U.S. Census Bureau delivers apportionment counts to the President.

Communications Tools and Strategies

The City of West Allis will use the following outlets for informing and educating the residents of the community:

- Social media
- Online videos
- City Newsletter/e-Newsletter
- Print FAQ Brochure
- FAQ webpage (with a custom URL (Virtual home for all information; contained FAQ, videos, print & digital communications)
- Coffee with the Mayor
- Reinforcement flyer
- Water bill mailer
- Partner with school district (?) (School parent nights)
- Neighborhood Partnership meeting with Police Department
- Door hangers
- Information at Library, City Hall, Health Dept., Senior Center
- Neighborhood Association Meetings
- Large poster info at city hall lobby
- Computer available (kiosks) for people to fill out Census in City Hall, Stickers - trade in stickers for T-shirt
- Video PSAs
- Government Access Cable Channel

Timeline	Dates/Timeframe	Done?
City Website	In rotation under City News starting in January; including pop up on City website	
Facebook	Bi weekly posts in January; once a week starting the beginning of February - March; Reminder posts to complete Census starting April	
Twitter	Bi weekly posts in January; once a week starting the beginning of February - March; Reminder posts to complete Census starting April	
NextDoor	Bi weekly posts in January; once a week starting the beginning of February - March; Reminder posts to complete Census starting April	
Videos	Online custom URL/on social media/City Channel	
City Newsletter/e-newsletter	Fall 2019 issue; Winter/Spring 2019/2020	
Printed FAQ Brochure	February 2020	

Timeline	Dates/Timeframe	Done?
FAQ Website/Custom URL on Website	Ongoing since October 2019	
Coffee with the Mayor	1st: February 3rd - before Census starts; 2nd time: March - 2nd - when Census is ongoing; 3rd: April 6th - Reminder to fill it out/Thank everyone for participating	
Census Kick-off	Thursday, February 12th	
Water Bill Mailer	January and February and March	
Partnership Meeting with Police Department	January 22nd	
Door Hangers	1 week before March (week of February 24th); Reminder door hanger end of April?	
*Neighborhood Association Meetings	After the new year	
Large Poster Info in City Hall Lobby/Library	February March/April; Census Day	
Information Sheets at Clerks' Office and Treasurer's Office	Starting in February - to the end	
Info at Health, library, senior center	Starting in February - to the end	
Computer Kiosks at City Hall/Stickers Redeem for T-shirt	Starting in March	

Feb. 12, 2020 - Census Kick-off

West Allis kick-off will include:

- Date: Thursday, Feb. 12, 2020
- Time: 3-4 p.m.
- Where: Common Council Chambers at City Hall
- Invitation to local community groups including school leaders, church leaders, not-for-profits, elected reps, neighborhood associations, West Allis Memorial Hospital leaders, bank leaders, manufacturing, nursing homes, day cares, apartment owners, low income housing owners/operators, father genes, mobile home parks, VFW, rotary, and women's club.

***Still waiting for confirmation**