

From the Mayor...

March 6, 2020

The 2020 Census data will be used to help shape the future of our community. Accuracy of the census count is critical for many reasons. I cannot overstate the importance of full participation.

My February column focused in general on the 2020 Census. Today, let's get a bit more specific about the process.

For the first time ever, you will be able to respond online or by phone. All online responses will be on a secure connection. As I mentioned last month, by law, none of the information can be shared with anyone.

Next week, you will receive an invitation to respond to the census questionnaire. Do not throw this away as it contains a census ID that links you to a physical address.

The census ID can be used to fill out the census questionnaire online at 2020CENSUS.GOV. You can respond with a mobile phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer as soon you get your invitation. You can also respond by phone.

The 2020 CENSUS is interested in the physical address that you live at on April 1, 2020. Your census ID links you and everyone living there to that physical address. Remember to list everyone residing at that address, even if temporarily, on April 1, 2020, on your questionnaire. There is no limit to the number of people that can be listed as residing at that address.

You can also participate at 2020CENSUS.GOV without a census ID if you don't receive an invitation, because you are living at a different address on April 1. You will be asked to provide a street or rural route address to link your responses to.

If you don't respond online or by phone, you will receive a reminder and then a paper questionnaire to complete and mail back. A toll-free phone number will also be provided if you require assistance with your responses.

Visit 2020CENSUS.GOV for more information. Informational videos and guides are available to answer most questions and are available in many different languages. The census questionnaire is available online and over the phone in English and twelve different languages.

Let's look at why the 2020 Census is so important.

Every community relies on assistance and grants for many different programs. An accurate population count will ensure that we receive our fair share of federal and state funds to support these programs. Locally, this includes the Section 8 housing assistance payment program administered by the Warsaw Housing Authority, Head Start program, Medicaid, and unemployment insurance, to name a few.

Accurate data is also critical for highway planning and road construction funding. Local examples include reconstruction projects including Husky Trail, Market Street, Parker Street, Anchorage Road, and the Lincoln School sidewalk projects, as well as INDOT highway projects including US 30.

The final state and local population statistics directly impact the number and district location of the United States House of Representatives for our state. Locally, Common Council district boundaries may be evaluated to balance the size of the districts. State legislative jurisdictions may also be redistricted based upon the population changes.

If we all utilize the very broad range of opportunities now available to respond to the 2020 Census, be it online, phone, and even paper questionnaires, the need for traditional door-to-door census takers would become a thing of the past.

Responding promptly online will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the process. Please look at [2020CENSUS.GOV](https://2020census.gov) to answer any further questions.