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Sisters Civic Leadership Academy

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Introduction

2024 Cohort Members

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**How can the City of Sisters improve its
community engagement and outreach?**

Academy Mandate

- Research Key Facts
 - Identify and Interview Stakeholders
 - Ask Critical Questions
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Key Themes Emerged

1. Stakeholders
 2. Communication Methods
 3. City Capacity
 4. Measuring Success
 5. Building Trust
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Stakeholders

How can the City identify and consider the needs of all current and future stakeholders?

Community Stakeholders

Property Owners

Renters

Business Owners

Commuters

Longtime Residents

New Residents

City Residents

Rural Residents

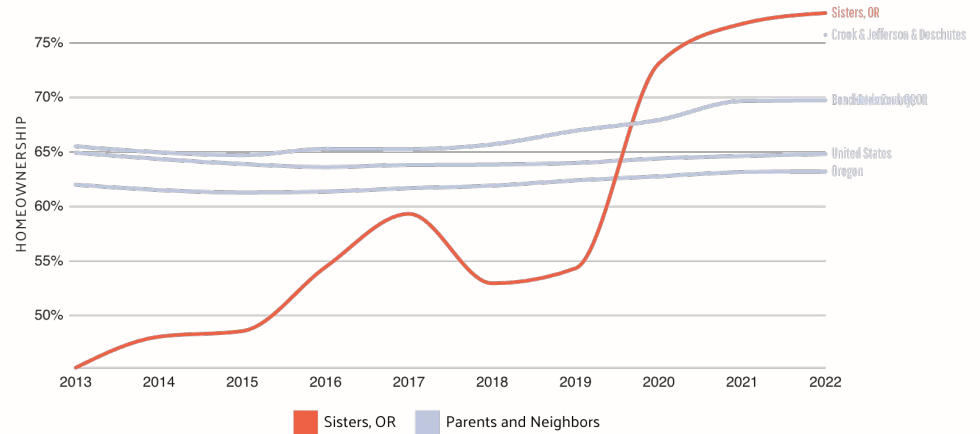
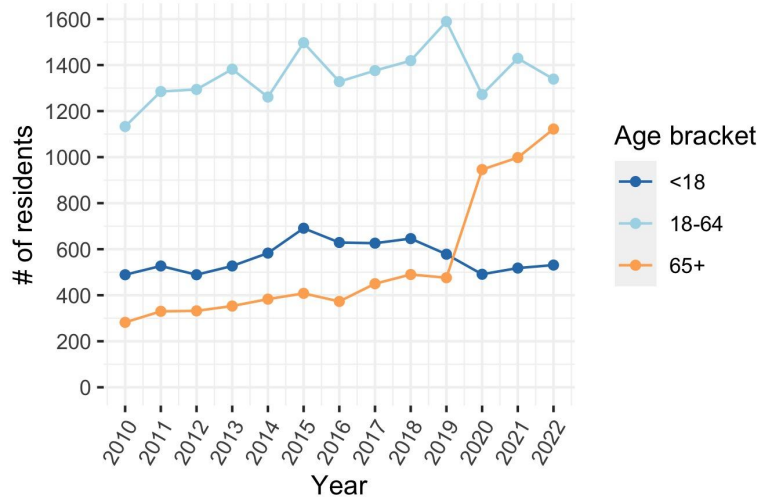
Parents

Retirees

ESL

Racial Minorities

Changing Demographics



In what ways can the City remove barriers to engagement for the average citizen and the extra barriers faced by underrepresented subgroups?

Observations

- City communications limited to English
 - Hard to find relevant information
 - Newsletter signup is challenging
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Communication Methods

How can the city ensure correct information is communicated across a variety of outreach channels that is appropriate for each platform?

“Leveraging more modern communication tools could help reach a broader audience.”

- Property Owner

“Keep [a] fluid mindset, majority communicate through tech and would at least see outreach grow if not engagement if tech was used more.”

- Parent of Young Children

“If the city had an account on Instagram I would probably follow it, and I believe more young people in our community would as well.”

- Young Adult

Observations and Feedback

- No one place to find all of the information
 - Facebook & Nugget are key sources of information
 - City Facebook Page has minimal engagement
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Communication Mediums

	Sisters Pop 3,200	Joseph Pop 1,200	Jacksonville Pop 3,000	Hood River Pop 8,300
Website	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
FaceBook	Yes, 500 followers	Yes, 2K followers	No	Yes, 4K followers (EN & SP)
Instagram	No	Yes, 2K followers	No	Yes, 1,600 followers
Twitter/X	No	No	No	Yes
YouTube	No	No	No	Yes
Tik Tok	No	No	No	Yes

Use of online platforms, apps varies – sometimes widely – by demographic group

% of U.S. adults in each demographic group who say they ever use ...



	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	Pinterest	LinkedIn	Snapchat	Twitter	WhatsApp	TikTok	Reddit	Nextdoor
Total	81	69	40	31	28	25	23	23	21	18	13
Men	82	61	36	16	31	22	25	26	17	23	10
Women	80	77	44	46	26	28	22	21	24	12	16
White	79	67	35	34	29	23	22	16	18	17	15
Black	84	74	49	35	27	26	29	23	30	17	10
Hispanic	85	72	52	18	19	31	23	46	31	14	8
Ages 18-29	95	70	71	32	30	65	42	24	48	36	5
30-49	91	77	48	34	36	24	27	30	22	22	17
50-64	83	73	29	38	33	12	18	23	14	10	16
65+	49	50	13	18	11	2	7	10	4	3	8
<\$30K	75	70	35	21	12	25	12	23	22	10	6
\$30K-\$49,999	83	76	45	33	21	27	29	20	29	17	11
\$50K-\$74,999	79	61	39	29	21	29	22	19	20	20	12
\$75K+	90	70	47	40	50	28	34	29	20	26	20
HS or less	70	64	30	22	10	21	14	20	21	9	4
Some college	86	71	44	36	28	32	26	16	24	20	12
College+	89	73	49	37	51	23	33	33	19	26	24
Urban	84	70	45	30	30	28	27	28	24	18	17
Suburban	81	70	41	32	33	25	23	23	20	21	14
Rural	74	67	25	34	15	18	18	9	16	10	2

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Not all numerical differences between groups shown are statistically significant (e.g., there are no statistically significant differences between the shares of White, Black or Hispanic Americans who say they use Facebook). Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021.

“Social Media Use in 2021”

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City Capacity

How can the City best utilize existing and future resources for outreach and engagement?

Labor Utilization

No dedicated communications manager

“Allocating more existing resources to one program or activity can affect our ability to accomplish goals and objectives.”

- Jordan Wheeler

“Eventually, as the city grows, or priorities change, we create a new program or establish an FTE to provide a service when it is justified.”

- Jordan Wheeler

Budget Utilization

High variability year to year in actual monies spent

Communications Budget

Budget	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Actual	\$4,560	\$15,428	\$10,023	\$5,491	\$19,037

Suggestion

Explore third party communications contractors or agencies for a more standardized utilization of public outreach budget and labor.

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Measuring Success

What metrics can the city use to track and improve the efficacy of outreach and engagement initiatives?

City Council on Metrics

Mayor Preedin: May not have an easy way to measure the success of engagement.

Councilor Cobb: No metrics attached to this goal.

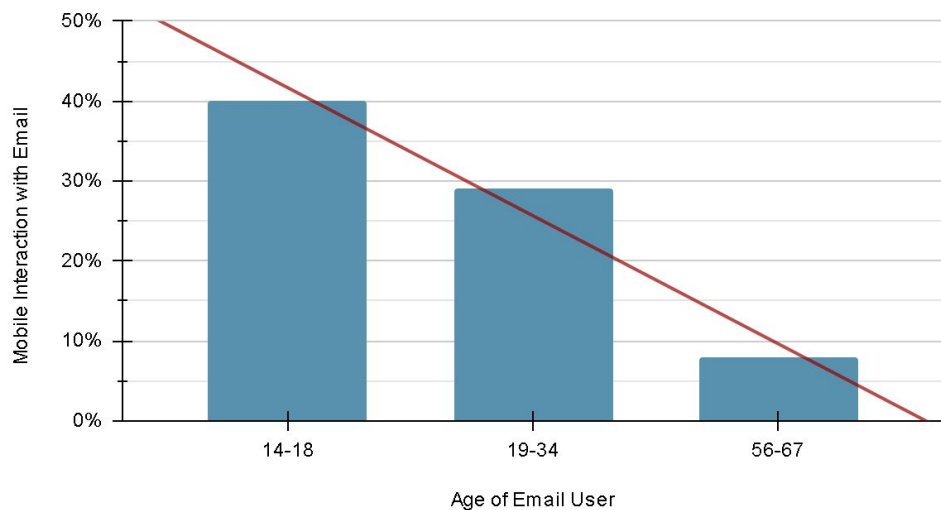
Councilor Ross: Outreach metrics are more quantifiable; engagement metrics may be less.

Councilor Letz: No specific metrics in mind regarding outreach.

Newsletter

- 1,600 subscribers w/ 72% open rate
- 96% Desktop vs 4% Mobile Open
- Use of Constant Contact for distribution

Percent of Emails Opened on Mobile Compared to Age of User



“It would be great to get an email newsletter,
but I didn’t know there was one.”

- Business Owner

“I don’t follow the city on FaceBook and I didn’t know they had a newsletter.”

- Rural Resident

Facebook Engagement

- 506 followers, 68.7% Women, 31.3% Men
 - Mid-April to Mid-May - 16 new followers, 3,036 post reach, 1,226 post engagement, 13 comments, 194 reactions
 - Constant Contact - Social Media Marketing
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– Young Adult

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– Parent of Young Children

Event Engagement

- Deschutes County Property Tax Open House, 2-3
 - ODOT Roundabout Open House (Feb), ~70
 - Knowledge of high attendance events based on Facebook (primarily Community Facebook group)
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“Measuring success can be a challenge because when people feel a topic is being handled well by the city, they don’t get involved.”

- Councilor Letz

Suggestions

- Utilize Civic Plus (website), Constant Contact (newsletter), and City Staff at events to measure reach.
 - Set baseline metrics (current reach) to set quantifiable goals to increase Outreach/Engagement.
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Building Trust

What consistent and inclusive outreach practices can the city implement to build trust and foster long-term engagement?

What is Social Capital

- Creating a feeling that we are in this together
 - Creating a sense of belonging or being connected
 - Strong Social Capital => Healthy Community
 - Trust is a requirement in building Social Capital
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Emotional Challenges to Engaging with the City of Sisters

“Attending a city council meeting is intimidating for our supporters. We are unsure how to remove this barrier.”

- Non-profit Member

“I don’t want to go to a City Council meeting with the angry fringe—it does not seem constructive or a good use of my time.”

- Workforce Member

“The Nugget is a primary source of information but I am reluctant to participate in the discourse given the incivility [in letters to the editor].”

- Sisters High School Alum

How can the city communicate and be transparent about how citizen feedback is incorporated in the decision-making process?

Transparency is Key to Building Trust

“It would be helpful to see more transparent follow-ups on how community input is used in decision-making... more direct outcomes visible from community input would enhance trust and engagement.”

- Young, remotely-employed homeowner

“I would like more transparency on how input is considered and integrated.”

- Workforce Member

Feedback from Stakeholders

“Want in person forums advertised more and auxiliary forums in more informal spaces such as The Barn or Sisters Coffee”

- Sister high School Alum

“Hosting more frequent town halls and community workshops with varied timings could accommodate different schedules, increasing participation.”

- Homeowner

Conclusion

- Key Themes
 1. Key Stakeholders
 2. Communication Methods
 3. Capacity
 4. Metrics
 5. Building Trust
 - Pertinent Questions
 - Relevant Facts
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THANK YOU



**National Policy Consensus
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