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By Kay Nolan

In one Wisconsin city, voters waited hours: ‘I’ve never seen anything like this.’



Hundreds of voters waiting in line to vote at Nathan Hale High School in West Allis, Wis., on Tuesday.

[Credit...Chang W. Lee/The New York Times](#)

WEST ALLIS, Wis. — As she stepped outside to help a voter with curbside voting, Linda Gesbeck, the chief election inspector for a polling site at Nathan Hale High School, in West Allis, Wis., glanced at the line of voters stretching from the school to far as she could see.

At least 200 people were waiting outside the front doors, with more cars pulling up every few moments.

“I’ve never seen anything like this — it’s been like this all day,” said Ms. Gesbeck. As of about 3:30 p.m., more than 1,200 people had voted, she said. “I’ve seen elections where we’ve had only 58 people vote — I like this better.”

Polls in [Wisconsin](#) close at 8 p.m.

Tom Dobernig, 59, said he’d waited an hour and a half. A retired firefighter who now works at Home Depot, Mr. Dobernig, who is white, said he’d been a lifelong Democrat and had voted enthusiastically for Barack Obama, but now felt the party had changed and become too accepting of violence and crime. This time he voted for President Trump, he said.

“I would never vote for Joe Biden for anything,” he said.

West Allis is a large industrial suburb that blends into Milwaukee, and in its heyday after World War II, it was home to numerous factories and foundries. The city, long known for its melting pot of immigrants, enjoyed plenty of labor union members, who typically voted for Democrats.

“So did police and firefighters,” said Mr. Dobernig, adding, “I’m not so sure of that anymore.”

Donald Trump visited West Allis for a campaign rally in April 2016, and drew loud applause when he promised to punish Carrier Corp., an air-conditioning factory, for moving jobs to Mexico.

One man, 55, who works in maintenance and who would not give his full name, said he believed in Mr. Trump’s hard-nosed tactics. “He’s increased jobs — he’s not a people person, but he’s definitely a businessman.”

Apollo Jackson, 26, who is Black, said he had voted for Joseph R. Biden, citing increasing racism in the area. “When I’m shopping, nobody looks like me, but all eyes are on me,” said Mr. Jackson. “I’m voting because I want my voice to be heard.”