

10-2003

Emerging Trends Civic Engagement, 2003

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Emerging Trends Civic Engagement

October 2003

Grand Rapids Community Foundation

Community Research Institute[®]

Supporting Community Improvement Through Research and Data Sharing



DOROTHY A. JOHNSON CENTER FOR PHILANTHROPY AND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

About this Report

The Community Research Institute

The Community Research Institute (CRI) at Grand Valley State University, a partnership between the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership and the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, serves the Greater Grand Rapids nonprofit and philanthropic community. CRI's mission is to assist nonprofit organizations with acquisition of information and technical skills that will help them to understand the evolving needs of the community, plan programs, solve problems, and measure outcomes.

CRI engages in applied research and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) projects and is a clearinghouse for community data. The CRI web site provides a comprehensive overview of community indicators at www.cridata.org. Research for this report was provided by: Korrie Ottenwess, Gustavo Rotondaro, Cori Scholtens, Nicole Notario-Risk, Mathias McCauley, and Patricia Teles. Questions may be directed to Korrie Ottenwess at 331-7585 or ottenwko@gvsu.edu, or to Gustavo Rotondaro at 331-7591 or rotondag@gvsu.edu.

Introduction to the Emerging Trends Initiative

Staff at the Community Research Institute (CRI) have developed a process for systematically scanning the Greater Grand Rapids Area for emerging trends and relevant data to inform the work of the Grand Rapids Community Foundation and the larger nonprofit and philanthropic community. More specifically, this project intends to track data for each of the Foundation's Leadership Agenda areas including:

- Public Education
- Healthy Youth/Healthy Seniors
- Civic Engagement
- Community & Economic Development
- Child Welfare

This "working document" is a progress report on the Emerging Trends Initiative in the area of Civic Engagement. Included is a glimpse into the data collected within the areas of diversity, connectivity, politics and government, and philanthropy. As a next step, a group of local experts in issues relating to civic engagement from both the public and nonprofit sectors were involved in the initiative as Community Interpretive Partners (CIP). These CIPs were asked to provide feedback to refine the data collection system and provide insight to emerging trends. At the completion of this project a full range of civic engagement data will be available on the Community Research Institute's website at www.cridata.org. In addition, insight provided by the Community Interpretive Partners and goals for future data collection will be available.

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Introduction

What is Civic Engagement?

Communities are important. Communities provide support, connectedness, voice, and opportunities to make a difference. Being connected to the community and participating in politics and civic life are all responsibilities of being citizens. Engagement in the life of a community is at the heart of civic engagement.

Civic Engagement “implies meaningful connections among citizens, issues, institutions, and the political system. It implies voice and agency, a feeling of power and effectiveness, with real opportunities to have a say. It implies active participation, with real opportunities to make a difference”.

When citizens make connections, communities are stronger. When community members are civically engaged, nonprofits are rewarded with volunteers and financial support as well as their causes being carried before the public eye. When people actively participate in civic life, public politics and voting remain at the center of this democratic nation.

Emerging Trends: Civic Engagement explores various aspects of civic engagement for the local region, including:

Demographics

- *Income & Poverty*: Studies show that as a person's income level rises they are more likely to be civically engaged.
- *Educational Attainment*: The more education people have, the more likely they are to participate in civic affairs.
- *Age*: There are significant differences across age groups when it comes to participation in various types of civic engagement activities.

Diversity

- *Citizenship*: It is the responsibility of U.S. citizens to be civically engaged by voting and serving on juries. Citizenship status is necessary to carry out these civic responsibilities.
- *Race & Culture*: Civic engagement occurs when opportunities are provided for all people of a community – including those from various races and cultures.
- *Segregation*: The level of racial segregation in a community impacts civic engagement by either encouraging investment in diverse relationships or withdrawal from civic participation.
- *Language*: Often times, in order to be civically engaged, the English language is required.

Connectedness

- *Commuting & Public Transportation*: Increased commute times to work decrease a person's ability to be engaged civically in their community through activities such as clubs, churches, and evenings with friends.

- *Homeownership*: Owning a home is a factor in how involved and rooted citizens are in their communities.
- *Religion*: "...religious faith provides a moral foundation for civic regeneration. Faith gives meaning to community service and good will, forging a spiritual connection between individual impulses and great public issues."
- *Internet*: The connection between Internet and civic engagement is hotly debated. Substantial data has been brought forward to both support and refute the relationship between community involvement and Internet use.

Government & Politics

- *Voting*: Voting is a traditional form of civic engagement, a foundation of a democratic society.
- *E-Government*: E-government has the potential to involve citizens in the governance process by engaging them in interaction with policymakers throughout the policy cycle and at all levels of government.
- *News Exposure*: People are more likely to participate in electoral politics if they regularly watch the news on TV or read the newspaper.

Philanthropy

- *Individual and Corporate Giving*: Giving financial support to meet community needs and to support social causes can be used as an indicator of social ties and civic engagement.
- *Volunteering*: Civic engagement is promoted when citizens volunteer in the community, building stronger and more vibrant societies.

Getting Involved

Gaining knowledge and information regarding civic engagement is the first step towards initiating stronger communities. It takes multiple small acts of engagement and participation in the life of a community to foster strong ties.

The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey measured various aspects of civic engagement and social capital across the nation in 2000, including Grand Rapids, Michigan. The City of Grand Rapids had higher than expected levels of social capital in the following areas:

- Giving and Volunteering
- Faith-Based Engagement
- Associational Involvement
- Social Trust
- Racial Trust
- Equity of Civic Engagement
- Activist Politic

While the City had expected levels of social capital for Diverse Friendships, three areas were lower than expected:

- Conventional Politics
- Civic Leadership
- Informal Socializing

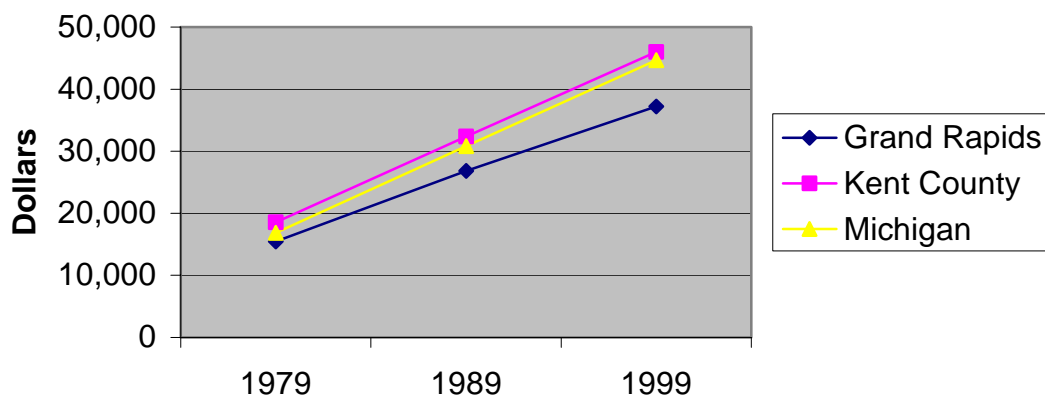
"By fostering stronger relationships between individuals, organizations and communities we can build trust in our neighborhoods, and forge common ground and a foundation to promote citizen responsibility and engagement." (Wilson, 2002) For practical ideas to build civic engagement in your community, visit the *Civic Engagement* section of the Community Research Institute's website at <http://www.gvsu.edu/philanthropy/cric/data/civic/index.html>.

Demographics

Variable 1: Income & Poverty

- Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1997) found that income levels affect civic engagement. When comparing families with incomes above \$75,000 with those who made \$15,000 or less, the lower income families were only about three-fifths as likely to vote, one half as likely to join a protest or contact a government official, one-third as likely to participate in informal community activities, and only one-tenth as likely to contribute monetarily to a political campaign. Higher income families gave an average of 14 times more than the lower income families. Verba, et al. go on to argue that monetary contributions are playing an increasingly large role in political activity, and that when money competes with time as the primary political currency, fewer people can be effectively involved in civic engagement activities and the range of issues articulated is narrowed.¹
- In 1999, the median household income for the state of Michigan (\$44,667) was above the national median household income of \$41,994. This compared to median incomes of \$45,980 in Kent County and \$37,224 in the city of Grand Rapids (Exhibit 1).³

**Exhibit 1 - Median Household Income
Michigan, Kent County & Grand Rapids 1979-1999**



Source: US Census Bureau (2000: SF3 – P53)

- In 2000, there was a greater percentage of families living with a family income under \$20,000 in the City of Grand Rapids (18%) than in Kent County (10.8%) or the State of Michigan (12.7%) (Exhibit 2).³

**Exhibit 2 - Family Income
Michigan, Kent County & Grand Rapids 1999**

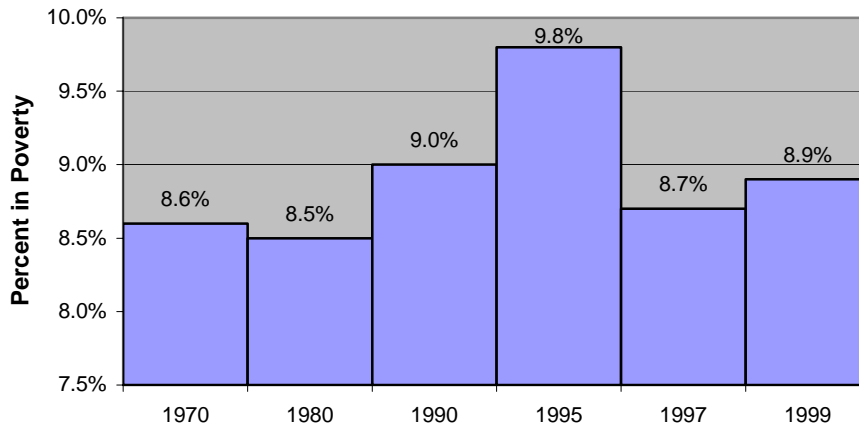
	Michigan	Kent County, MI	City of Grand Rapids, MI
Less than \$20,000	12.7%	10.8%	18%
\$20,000-\$49,999	33.2%	33.4%	38.5%
\$50,000-\$99,999	37.6%	40.7%	34.5%
\$100,000-\$149,999	11.1%	9.9%	6.1%
\$150,000 or more	5.3%	5.2%	2.9%

*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000: SF3 – P76)

- In 2003, a family of four with an annual income of \$18,400 or less was considered below the poverty level in Kent County.²
- Close to 50,000 Kent County residents lived below the federal poverty level in 1999, \$16,700 for a family of four². Kent County’s poverty rate (8.9%) in 1999 was below that of the state of Michigan (10.5%) (Exhibit 3).³

**Exhibit 3 - Poverty Rate
Kent County, 1970-1999**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3 – P87)

- Over one-third of all persons living in poverty in the state of Michigan, Kent County, and the City of Grand Rapids were children under the age of 18 (Exhibit 4).³

**Exhibit 4 - Distribution of Persons Living Below the Poverty Level by Age
Michigan, Kent County, Grand Rapids 1999**

	Michigan	Kent County	Grand Rapids
Under 18 years	34.5%	34.3%	35.5%
18-64 years	56%	57.3%	57.3%
65-74 years	4.3%	3.9%	3.5%
75 years and over	5.1%	4.5%	3.6%

*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

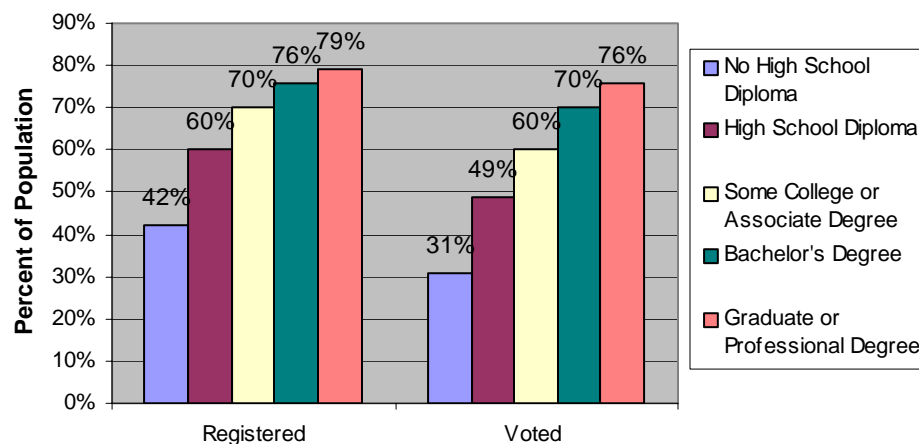
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000: SF 3 – P87)

Demographics

Variable 2: Educational Attainment

- Educational attainment is a powerful predictor of civic engagement. The more education people have, the more likely they will participate in civic affairs, such as voting, signing petitions, community services, or charitable giving.⁴ For example, during the November 2000 elections, United States citizens with higher levels of educational attainment were more likely to be registered to vote and reported voting more than those with less education (Exhibit 5).³

**Exhibit 5 - Reported Voting and Registration by Educational Attainment
United States, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2000, Table 5)

- In 2000, 19.6% of the U.S. population did not have a high school diploma. This compared with 16.6% of Michigan's population, 15.4% of Kent County's population, and 22% of Grand Rapids' population. In contrast, close to a quarter of the population in the United States (24.4%), Michigan (21.8%), Kent County (25.8%), and Grand Rapids (23.8%) had bachelor's, graduate, or professional degrees in 2000 (Exhibit 6).³

Exhibit 6 - Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years and Over, 2000

	United States	Michigan	Kent County	Grand Rapids
No High School Diploma	19.6%	16.6%	15.4%	22%
High School Graduate	28.6%	31.3%	28.3%	26%
Some College, No Degree	21%	23%	22.8%	21%
Associate Degree	6%	7%	7.7%	7%
Bachelor's Degree	15.5%	13.7%	17.5%	15.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	8.9%	8.1%	8.3%	8%

*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000: SF 3 - P37)

- In 2000, when comparing educational attainment by race and ethnicity in Kent County, the Hispanic population had the highest rate of persons without a high school diploma (54.2%) while the Asian population had the highest rate of persons with a college degree (39.7%), including associate, bachelor's graduate, and professional degrees (Exhibit 7).³

Exhibit 7- Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years and Over by Race & Ethnicity Kent County, 2000

	White	Black	AIAN*	Asian	Hispanic
No High School Diploma	12.6%	28%	22.7%	29.6%	54.2%
High School Diploma	28.6%	29.2%	31.9%	18.8%	22%
Some College, No Degree	23.2%	25%	30.4%	11.9%	11.2%
Associate Degree	8%	6.1%	6.8%	6.2%	3.6%
Bachelor's Degree	18.8%	7.3%	6.8%	22.7%	6.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	8.9%	4.4%	1.5%	10.7%	2.3%

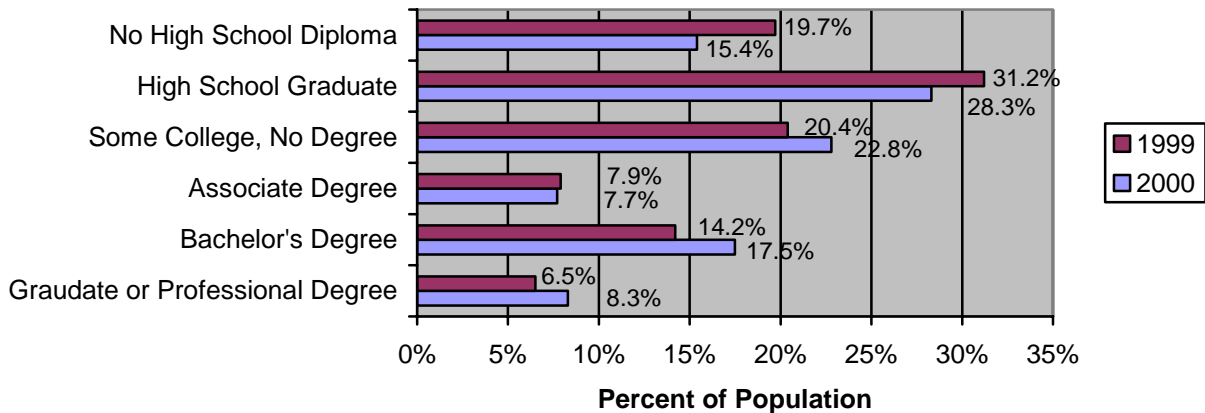
*AIAN=American Indian and Alaska Native

**Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000: SF 3 - P148a-i)

- The percent of Kent County’s population with college degrees increased between 1990 and 2000 while the percent of those without a high school diploma decreased (Exhibit 8).^{3,6}

**Exhibit 8 -Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years and Over
Kent County, 1990-2000**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1990: STF 3 – P057; 2000: SF 3 – P37)

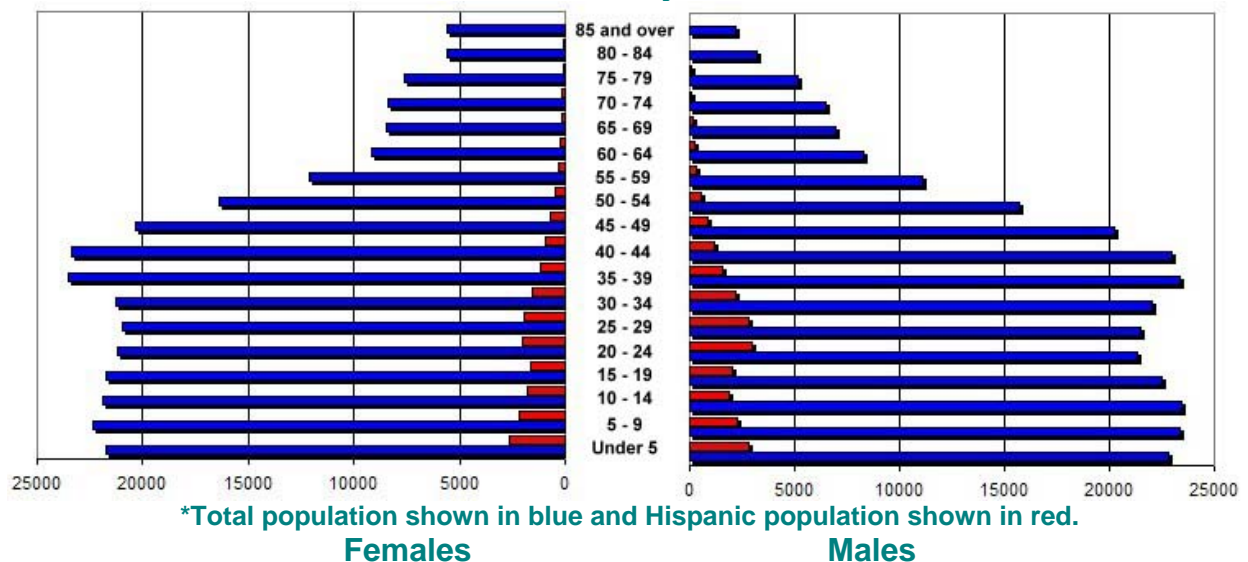
- The 32nd Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll conducted in the year 2000 asked respondents what they considered to be the most important purpose of the nation’s schools. They ranked “preparing people to become responsible citizens” as number one. Today schools are ranked according to their pupils’ achievement in reading, mathematics, writing, and science.⁷
- The 1998 Civics Report Card for the Nation found more than 30% of all students tested at grades 4, 8, and 12 scored below a “basic” level of understanding of civics and government. Another 39% to 48% scored at the “basic level”, defined as “a partial mastery of the knowledge and skills that are fundamental to proficient work at a given grade”.⁸

Demographics

Variable 3: Age

- There are significant differences across age groups when it comes to participation in various types of civic engagement activities. For example, an Illinois survey revealed that middle aged respondents show the highest levels of engagement when it comes to political activity, giving, and discussion of politics and current affairs. Respondents in the oldest age groups had the highest engagement when it came to church activity and news exposure. The youngest age groups came out on top when types of engagement, such as informal socializing and technology-based activities, were discussed.⁹
- Taking the relationship between age and civic engagement into account can be helpful when developing strategies to increase civic engagement. For example, knowing that volunteering is an activity most likely to be cultivated in childhood/teenage years could help one in designing a program to increase engagement through volunteering. It has been shown that adults who report volunteering in their youth are twice as likely to volunteer as adults.¹⁰
- In 2000 it was estimated that there were 574,335 people living in Kent County. Of these, 28.3% were under the age of 18 and 10.4% were 65 years or older (Exhibit 9).³

**Exhibit 9 - Age Distribution of Total Population
Kent County 2000***



Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau (2000: SF 1 – P12)

- Looking more deeply at youth patterns, civic engagement has been shown to vary among ethnic groups. Nationally, the Hispanic youth population (ages 15-25) has been shown to have less trust in the Government (42%) than their African American and White counterparts, 40% and 34% respectively.¹¹ The same trend was noticed when 15-25 year olds were asked about trusting others, with 57% of Hispanic, 55% of African American, and 50% of the White population saying that “you can’t be too careful” when trusting other people.¹¹ In 2000, there were 8,741 people of Hispanic origin in Kent County. Of this Hispanic population, 21.8% were between the ages of 15-24, and 33.6% were under the age of 14.⁶
- It is commonly reported that older adults are looking for connection, growth and meaning after retirement. With this search come opportunities for organizations to encourage civic engagement. An Independent Sector survey completed in 2000 showed that older adults were approximately five times more likely to volunteer if asked.¹²

Diversity

Variable 4: Citizenship

- According to the U.S. Department of Justice’s Guide to Naturalization, the responsibilities of United States citizens include being civically engaged by taking part in activities such as voting and serving on juries.¹³ Without citizenship status, civic engagement in these areas is generally not possible.
- In 2000, census data revealed that in Michigan, 5.3% of the population was foreign born; whereas, 6.6% of those living in Kent County and 10.6% of those living in the City of Grand Rapids were foreign born (Exhibit 10).³
- In 2000, 45.8% of the foreign born in Michigan were naturalized citizens. This compares higher than Kent County’s 31.6% and Grand Rapids’ 24.3% (Exhibit 10). “Encouraging these new citizens [immigrants] to join in the election process and facilitating their participation is...important as they constitute a growing sector. Over the next 50 years, immigrants are expected to make up one-third of the country’s population”.¹⁴
- When comparing city, county and state citizenship levels, Grand Rapids has the highest percentage of foreign-born residents being non-citizens (75.7%). Because they are not citizens, this population is at risk for not becoming civically engaged (Exhibit 10).³

**Exhibit 10 - Citizenship Status
Michigan, Kent County, Grand Rapids, 2000**

	Michigan		Kent		Grand Rapids	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total	9,938,444	100.0%	574,335	100.0%	197,846	100.0%
Native:	9,414,855	94.7%	536,181	93.4%	177,032	89.5%
Foreign born:	523,589	5.3%	38,154	6.6%	20,814	10.5%
Naturalized citizen	239,955	45.8%	12,040	31.6%	5,048	24.3%
Not a citizen	283,634	54.2%	26,114	68.4%	15,766	75.7%

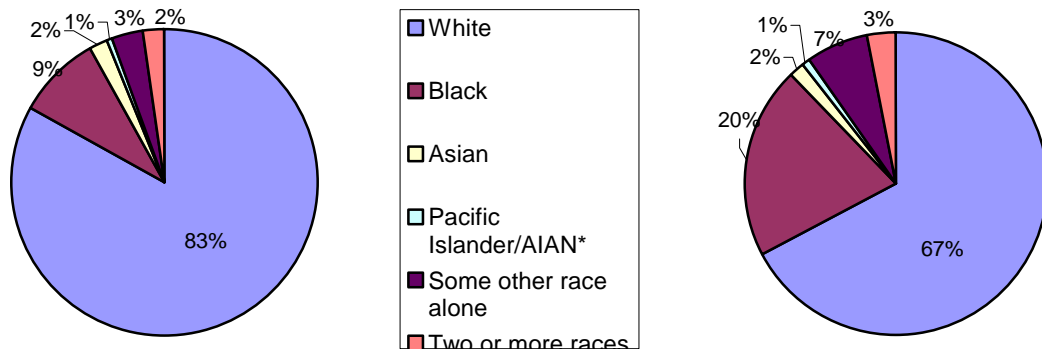
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Diversity

Variable 5: Race and Culture

- Attorney Carl Douglas gave the following testimony in 1999 before Los Angeles’ Human Relations Commission, “The challenge for our city is to bring various races and cultures into the process that we call government. We cannot afford a generation of people who feel detached or disconnected from their city and its leaders”.¹⁵ Civic engagement occurs when opportunities are provided for all people of a community – including those from various races and cultures – to feel connected to the city and to each other. This increases a sense of ownership and responsibility from a diverse community.
- While the majority of Kent County residents (83%) and Grand Rapids residents (67%) were White in 2000, 79% of all Black or African American residents and 64% of all Hispanics or Latinos in Kent County lived in the city of Grand Rapids (Exhibit 11).³

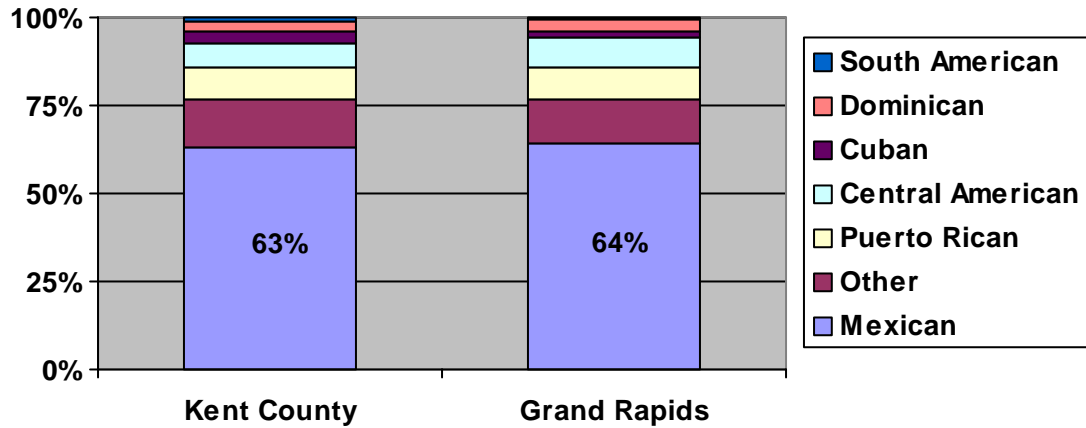
**Exhibit 11 - Distribution of Race
Kent County & Grand Rapids 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000 (2000: SF 1 – P3)

- The Hispanic/Latino population increased dramatically in both Kent County (174%) and Grand Rapids (175%) between 1990 and 2000. During the same time period, Michigan’s Hispanic/Latino population increased by 61% and by 58% in the United States.^{3,6}
- Of all Kent County residents in 2000, 7% or 40,183 persons indicated they were Hispanic or Latino, as did 13% (25,818) in the City of Grand Rapids. Over 60% of these residents identified themselves as Mexican, followed by Other (12-13%), Puerto Rican (9-10%), and Central American (7-8%) (Exhibit 12).³

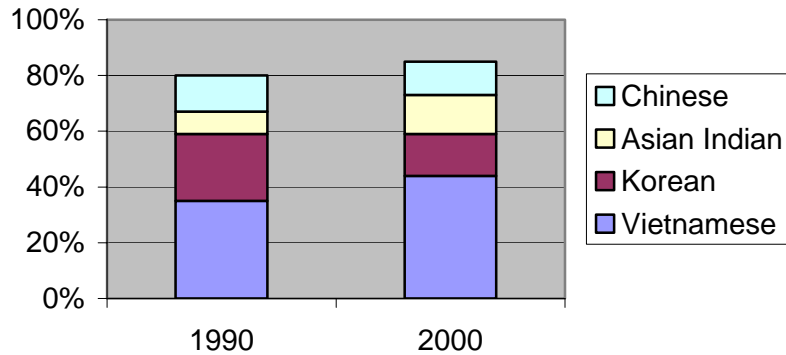
**Exhibit 12 - Distribution of Hispanic/Latino Ethnicities
Kent County & Grand Rapids 2000**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

- One out of every 50 residents in Kent County and the City of Grand Rapids were of Asian (only) origin in 2000. The highest growth rates between 1990 and 2000 were at the county level (102%), compared to growth rates in the City of Grand Rapids (51%), at the state level (71%), and at the national level (48%) (Exhibit 13).^{3,6}

**Exhibit 13 - Distribution of Asian Nationalities with the Largest Population
Kent County 1990-2000**



Source: Census 1990 and 2000

Diversity

Variable 6: Segregation

- A city's racial segregation or integration impacts the civic engagement of its citizens. In their report, Civic Engagement and Particularized Trust, Uslander and Conley (2003) call attention to the idea that some people with strong ethnic identifications tend to associate primarily with people of the same race or ethnicity. This might mean that they are civically engaged through membership in organizations made up for their own nationality or it might mean that they are at risk for withdrawing from civic engagement.¹⁶
- The “dissimilarity index” is a tool that can be used locally to measure segregation. More specifically, the “dissimilarity index” measures the proportion of Blacks that would need to move across census tracts to get a perfectly even proportion of black residents across the entire Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). When interpreting, if the index is 0.5, it means that 50% of the Black residents of that MSA would have to move to achieve a perfect representation across the MSA. Generally, dissimilarity measures above 0.6 are thought to represent hypersegregation.¹⁷
- In 2000, the “dissimilarity index” for the Grand Rapids-Muskegon-Holland Metropolitan Statistical Area was 0.665, a 0.061 decrease from the 1990 index (.726). Although the number has decreased through the last decade, the current index still indicates that the MSA is hyper-segregated (Exhibit 14).¹⁷

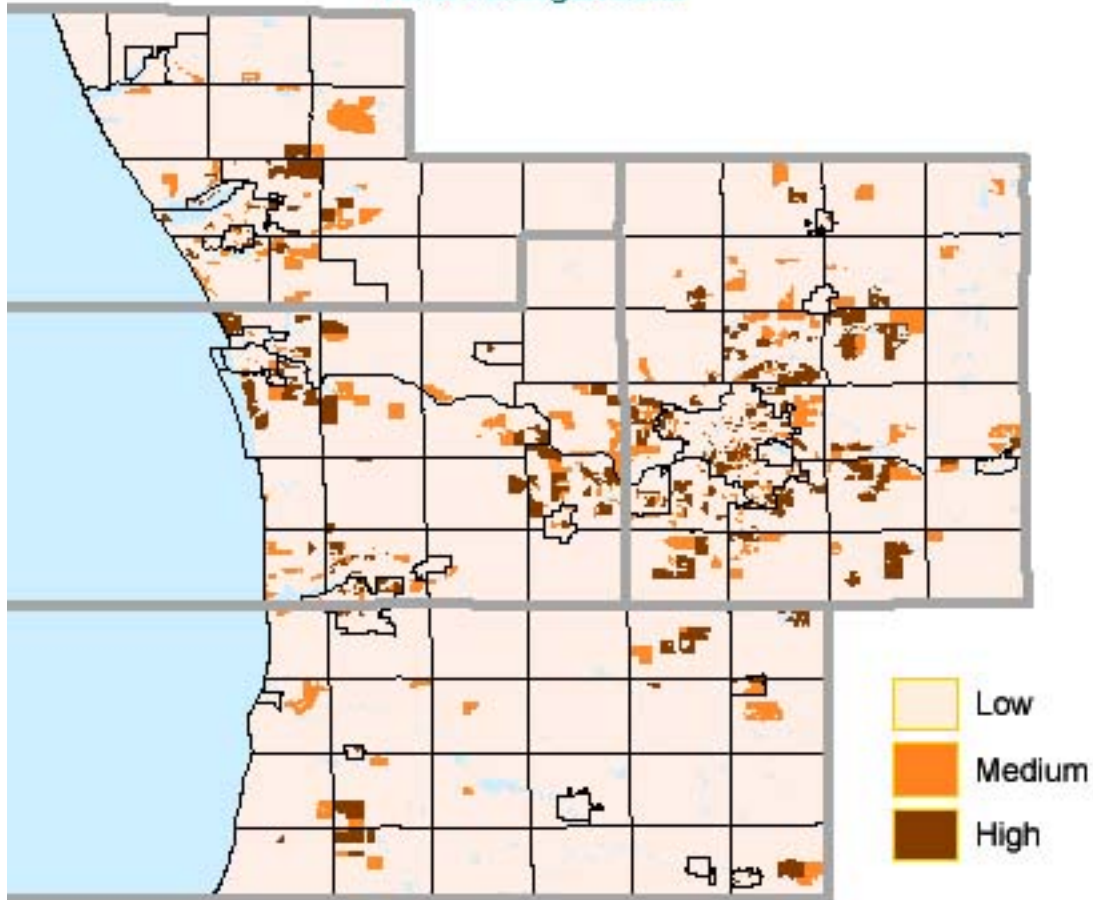
**Exhibit 14 - Black/Non-Black Dissimilarity Index
Grand Rapids-Muskegon-Holland Metropolitan Statistical Area 1990-2000**

Dissimilarity 1990	Dissimilarity 2000	Dissimilarity Change
0.726	0.665	-0.061

Source: The Brookings Institution, 2001

- The Diversity Index captures how close each block's White-to-minority ratio is to the entire Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Holland Metropolitan Statistical Area's ratio (83 to 17). That is, a "high" diversity score indicates that the block's population is close to 83% White and 17% minority. A "low" diversity score indicated that the block's population is almost 100% White or 100% minority (Exhibit 15).

**Exhibit 15 - Residential Diversity Index by block
for non-Hispanic White / All Minority
West Michigan 2000**



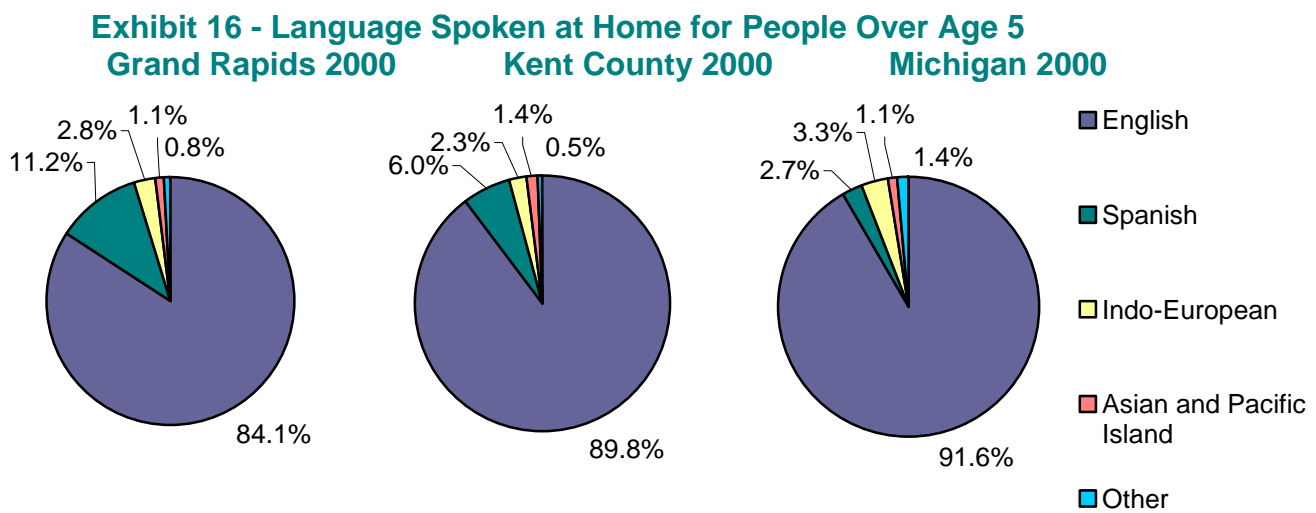
Source: Census 2000 Redistricting (Public Law 94-171) Summary File

Prepared for: School of Public and Nonprofit Administration,
Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy, Grand Valley State University
Prepared by: Grzegorz Orzowski, April 2001
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic

Diversity

Variable 7: Language

- Understanding the language spoken by Kent County’s citizens is important when examining civic engagement because, in many cases, the English language is required in order to be active in community life.
- According to the 2000 decennial Census, there are 530,219 people over the age of five in Kent County. Almost 90% of these (476,293) speak only English at home, while the remainder speaks some other language. Out of the population that speaks some other language at home, 31,787 people speak Spanish, 12,380 speak other Indo-European languages, 7,220 speak Asian and Pacific Island languages, and 2,539 speak other languages (Exhibit 16).³



Source: U.S. Census 2000

- The size of the Spanish speaking population that speaks English well or very well in Kent County increased from 8,335 to 21,510 people between 1990 and 2000. However, taking population growth into account, the percentage of this population that speaks English well or very well decreased during the same time period. The same trend is seen among the populations of Asian and Pacific Islander language speakers, and speakers of other non-English languages. All groups showed an increase in the actual number of people that speak English well or very well, but since the population presented a higher growth, the percentage was decreased (Exhibit 17).^{3,6}

**Exhibit 17 - Proficiency of English Use Among Different Populations
Kent County 1990-2000**

	1990 All Ages	2000 All Ages
Speak Spanish:		
Speak English "well" or "very well"	77.7%	67.7%
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"	22.3%	32.3%
Speak Asian and Pacific Island languages:		
Speak English "well" or "very well"	75.9%	71.9%
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"	24.1%	28.1%
Speak other languages (including Indo-European):		
Speak English "well" or "very well"	90.8%	86.3%
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"	9.2%	13.7%

Source: U.S. Census 1990 and 2000

- The U.S. Census Bureau defines linguistically isolated as a “household in which no member 14 years old and over (1) speaks only English or (2) speaks a non-English language and speaks English very well”. In other words, all members 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with English. In 2000, there were 5,258 linguistically isolated households in Kent County, a 12.8% increase from 1990. All non-English language categories showed an increase in their percentage of households that were linguistically isolated (Exhibit 18).^{3,6}

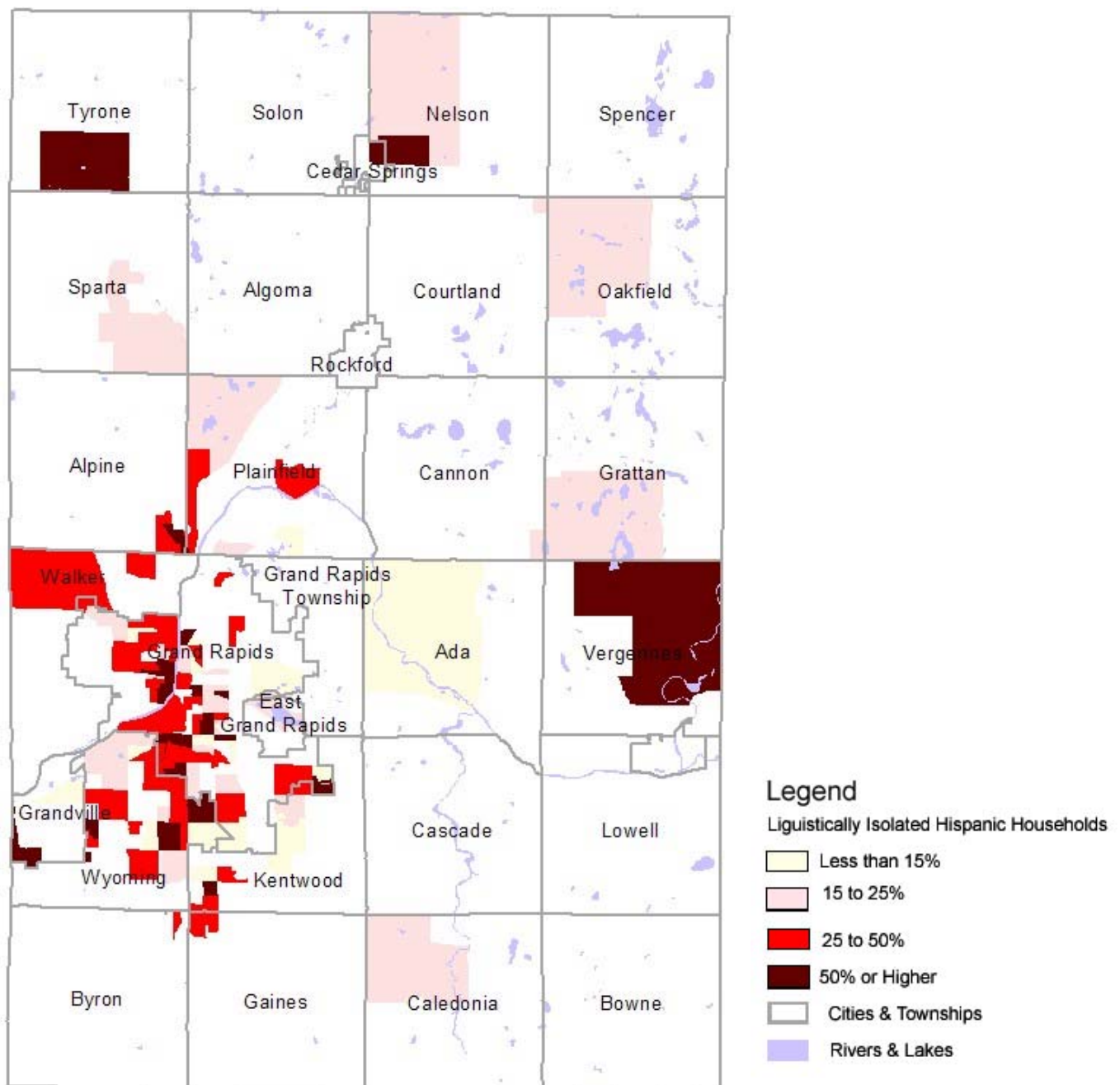
**Exhibit 18 - Language Isolation in Households
Kent County 1990-2000**

	1990 Kent County		2000 Kent County		Change in number of households 1990-2000
	Number of households	%	Number of households	%	
English Speakers	167,060		188,386		
Spanish Speakers Linguistically isolated	779	13.6%	2,984	22.5%	283.0%
Spanish Speakers Not linguistically isolated	4,930	86.4%	10,264	77.5%	108.0%
Asian and Pacific Island Language Speakers Linguistically isolated	322	27.7%	975	35.5%	203.0%
Asian and Pacific Island Language Speakers Not linguistically isolated	841	72.3%	1,768	64.5%	110.0%
Other language Speakers Linguistically isolated	906	10.8%	1,299	14.9%	43.0%
Other language Speakers Not linguistically isolated	7,480	89.2%	7448	85.1%	0.4%

Source: U.S. Census 1990 and 2000

- Approximately 44 of Grand Rapids' 100 voting precincts have Spanish speaking populations larger than 5%. However, voter turnout in these precincts typically runs low. Although the U.S. government requires Spanish ballots for precincts where Spanish is the only language voters know, none of the Grand Rapids' precincts reach the required threshold set by the federal Voting Rights Act (10,000 people or 5% of the voting age population). It is argued that even understanding basic information about candidates and proposals on the ballot can be difficult for people who do not speak English.¹⁸

**Exhibit 19 – Percent of Spanish Speaking Households that are Linguistically Isolated (Hispanic Households Only)
Kent County 2000**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau – SF# Sample Data (Table P020)

Connectivity

Variable 8: Commuting & Public Transportation

- As commuting time to work increases, civic engagement decreases. Each 10 minutes of additional commuting time cuts all forms of social capital by 10%. This means 10% less church going, 10% fewer club meetings, 10% fewer evenings with friends, etc.²⁰
- In 2000, there were 284,236 workers aged 16+ in Kent County and 90,663 in Grand Rapids. At the county level, 97.0% of the population did not work at home in 2000. This number represents a 0.3% decrease from 1990. At the city level 97.3% did not work at home in 2000. This figure remained unchanged from 1990 (Exhibit 20).^{3,6}

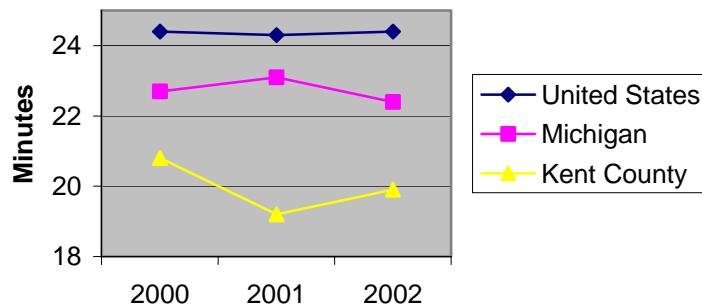
**Exhibit 20 - Travel Time to Work
Kent County and Grand Rapids 1990-2000**

	Kent County		Grand Rapids	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
1-9 min	16.3%	14.3%	17.6%	15.7%
10-19 min	41.1%	37.0%	47.1%	42.1%
20-29 min	23.7%	24.9%	20.8%	23.2%
30-39 min	9.8%	12.3%	6.7%	9.4%
40-59 min	3.9%	5.3%	2.9%	3.7%
60 to 89 min	1.5%	1.8%	1.5%	2.1%
90+ min	1.0%	1.4%	0.7%	1.2%
Worked at home	2.7%	3.0%	2.7%	2.7%

Source: U.S. Census 1990 and 2000

- Between 2000 and 2002, commute times in Kent County were lower than both the Michigan and National averages. In fact, in 2002 the average commute time for Kent County was 4.5 minutes lower than the national average of 24.4 minutes (Exhibit 20B).³

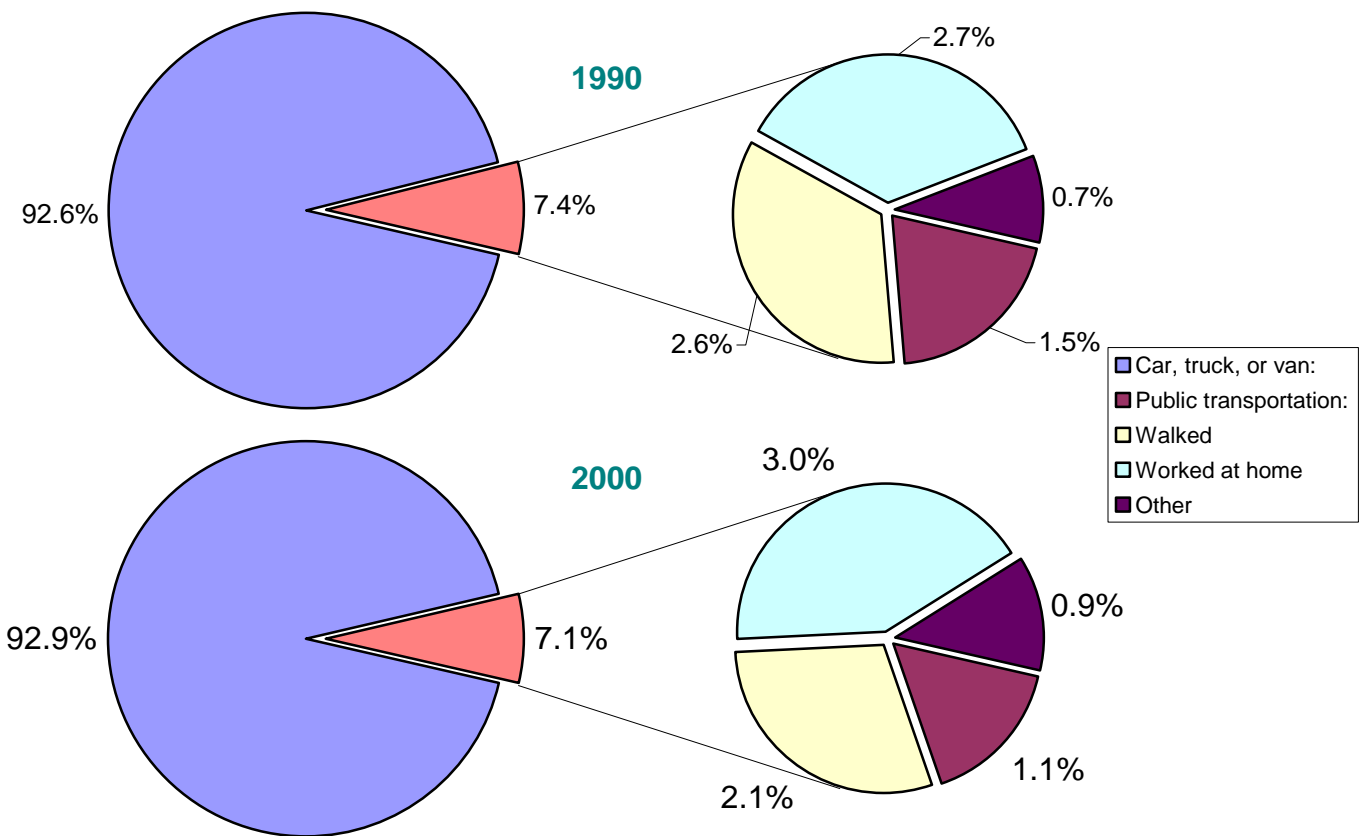
**Exhibit 20B - Average Travel Time to Work (In Minutes)
United States, Michigan & Kent County 2000 - 2002**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

- According to Putnam, not carpooling or using public transportation decreases an individual's capacity for social capital.²¹
- Nationally, 2.5% more people drove alone to work in 2000 than in 1990, while carpooling, transit use, walking and other forms of transportation all dropped slightly. In Kent County, there was a 1.0% increase in those driving alone to work, while public transportation decreased slightly (Exhibit 21).^{3,6}

Exhibit 21 - Means of Transportation to Work for Workers 16+ Kent County 1990 & 2000

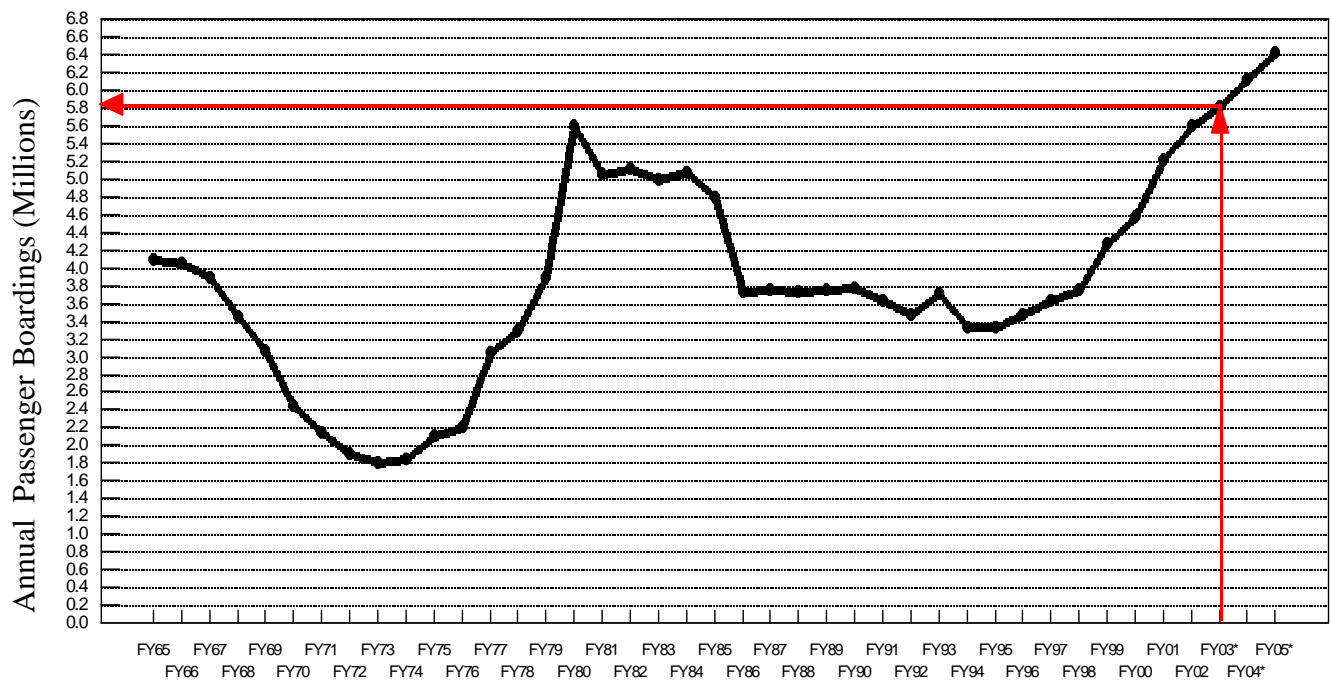


Source: U.S. Census 1990 and 2000.

- In 2000, 89.4% of working residents in the city of Grand Rapids drove to work, with just over ¾ of them driving alone. In addition, 4% walked to work, 2.1% rode the bus, while 2.7% worked at home.³

- Nationally, public transportation riders form a diverse group. In relation to race, 45% are white, 31% are African-Americans, 18% are Hispanic, and 6% are Asian and Native Americans. In terms of age groups, 10% are people age 18 or younger, and 7% are people age 65 or older. Women are believed to make up 52% of riders.²²
- In Grand Rapids, the Interurban Transit Authority reported a 7.4% increase from 2002 to 2003 in weekday ridership of its fixed route bus service, The Rapid. A 9.9% decrease in evening ridership was reported during the same period (Exhibit 22).²³

**Exhibit 22 - Annual Passenger Boardings of The Rapid by Fiscal Year
Grand Rapids 1965-2005 (2003 - 2005 based on projected 5% annual growth)**



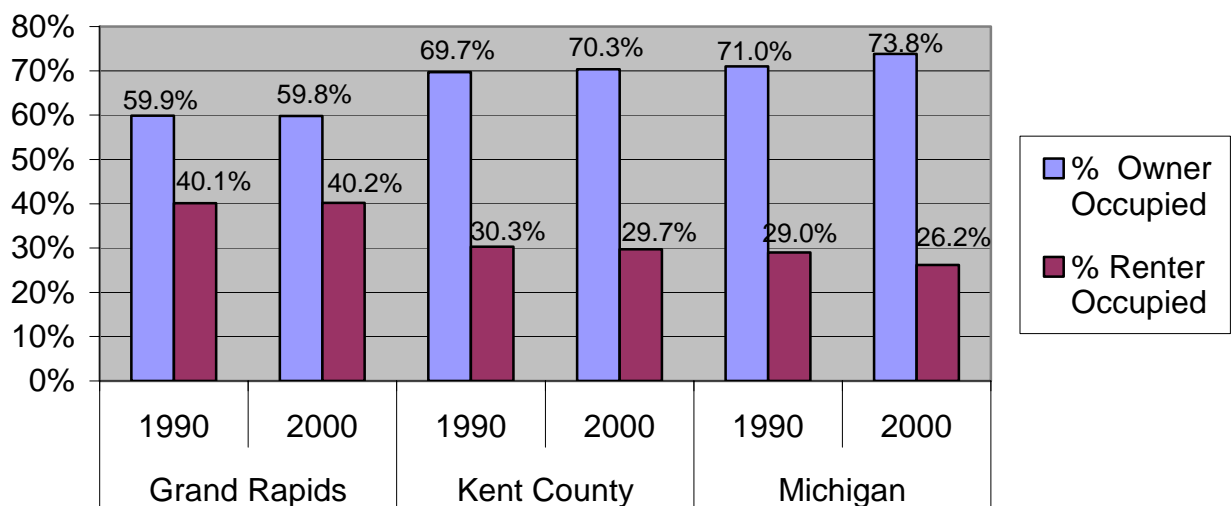
Source: Interurban Transit Authority, October 2003

Connectivity

Variable 9: Home Ownership

- A panel discussion from the National Commission on Civic Renewal stated “while education and age are the factors that most influence volunteering, the real determinant at the community level is what we called rootedness. Home ownership, having school-aged children, and church membership turn out to be the factors that distinguish the involved from the uninvolved”.²⁴
- Home ownership rates in Grand Rapids decreased 0.1% from 1990 to 2000. In Kent County they increased 0.7% and in the state of Michigan an increase of 2.8% was reported (Exhibit 23).^{3,6}
- In 2000, the percentage of the population that lived in rental properties was 40.2% in Grand Rapids, up 0.1% from 1990. In Kent County and the State of Michigan, declines of .7% and 2.8% were seen, respectively (Exhibit 23).^{3,6}

**Exhibit 23 - Percent of Population in Occupied Housing Units
Grand Rapids, Kent County, Michigan 1990-2000**



**Source: U.S. Census for Population and Housing
1990 STF (3) Table H08 – Sample Data
2000 SF (3) Table H7 – Sample Data**

- In Grand Rapids, Kent County, and the State of Michigan, disparities exist between the homeownership levels of various race and ethnicities. In 2000, White and Asian populations had the highest percentages of home ownership in Grand Rapids and Kent County (Exhibit 24).^{3,6}

**Exhibit 24 – Housing Tenure by Race
Grand Rapids, Kent County, Michigan 2000**

	White	Black	AIAN*	Asian	NHOPI*	Hispanic
City of Grand Rapids						
Owner occupied	69.9%	47.7%	43.3%	58.5%	21.2%	44.7%
Renter occupied	30.2%	52.3%	56.7%	41.5%	78.8%	55.3%
Kent County						
Owner occupied	79.8%	45.6%	53.2%	65.9%	31.2%	47.3%
Renter occupied	20.2%	54.4%	46.8%	34.1%	68.8%	52.7%
Michigan						
Owner occupied	82.2%	53.6%	63.6%	59.3%	55.3%	56.8%
Renter occupied	17.8%	46.4%	36.4%	40.6%	44.7%	43.2%

**Source: U.S. Census for Population and Housing
2000 SF (3) Table H11A-E, H – 100% Count Data**

*AIAN (American Indian and Alaska Native) *NHOPI (Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders)

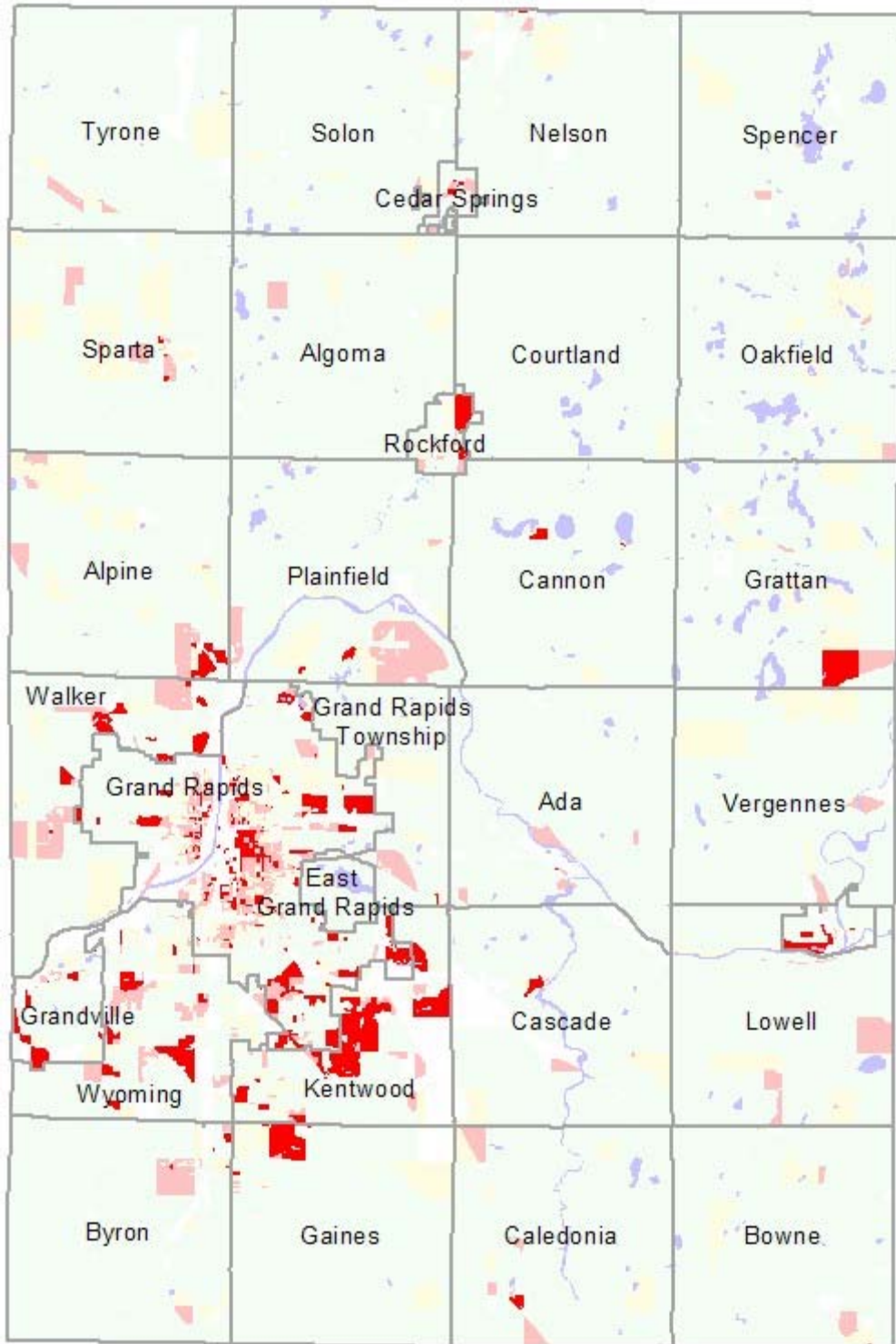
- According to 2000 census data, the majority of people in Grand Rapids, Kent County, and Michigan who own their own homes have been living in them since 1994 or earlier. The majority of those living in rental units have moved in since 1995 (Exhibit 25).^{3,6}

**Exhibit 25 - Year Householder Moved Into Unit
Grand Rapids, Kent County, Michigan 2000**

Owner occupied:	Grand		
	Rapids %	Kent County %	Michigan %
Moved in 1999 to March 2000	10.4%	10.9%	9.7%
Moved in 1995 to 1998	26.4%	28.5%	24.8%
Moved in 1990 to 1994	18.8%	18.9%	17.8%
Moved in 1980 to 1989	16.7%	18.9%	19.2%
Moved in 1970 to 1979	10.5%	10.5%	14.0%
Moved in 1969 or earlier	17.1%	12.3%	14.6%
Renter occupied:	Grand		
	Rapids %	Kent County %	Michigan %
Moved in 1999 to March 2000	42.6%	45.5%	39.5%
Moved in 1995 to 1998	37.7%	37.1%	36.4%
Moved in 1990 to 1994	11.2%	9.3%	12.0%
Moved in 1980 to 1989	5.6%	5.4%	7.9%
Moved in 1970 to 1979	1.7%	1.6%	2.6%
Moved in 1969 or earlier	1.3%	1.0%	1.5%

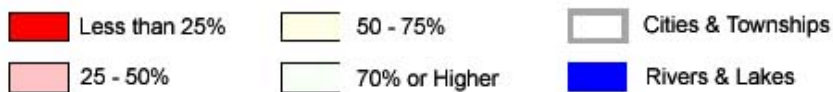
**Source: U.S. Census for Population and Housing
2000 SF (3) Exhibit H38 – Sample Data**

**Exhibit 26 – Percent of Owner Occupied Housing Units
Kent County 2000**



Legend

Percent of Owner-Occupied Homes



Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau – SF1 100% Count (Table H04)

Connectivity

Variable 10: Religion

- The relationship between religion and civic engagement has been documented by multiple studies. At the state level, the Michigan Giving and Volunteering Study (2001) demonstrated that religion is associated with higher rates of volunteering among Catholics (54.9%) and Protestants (51.4%) in comparison to those stating no religious affiliation (39.8%).²⁵
- According to the Glenmary Research Center, Michigan is among the top five states in diversity of church group offerings, with 118 various denominations. In most U.S. counties, the largest religious groups are either Catholic (40%) or Southern Baptist (39%). In the Grand Rapids, Muskegon and Holland Metropolitan Statistical Area, Catholicism was ranked highest in church adherents, with 173,768 members in 2000, a growth of 23.2% from 1990. In second place was the Christian Reformed Church of North America with 92,440 adherents, representing a growth of 11% from 1990. The same rankings held true for Kent County (Exhibit 27).²⁶

**Exhibit 27 - Number of Congregations and Adherents by Denomination*
Kent County, 2000**

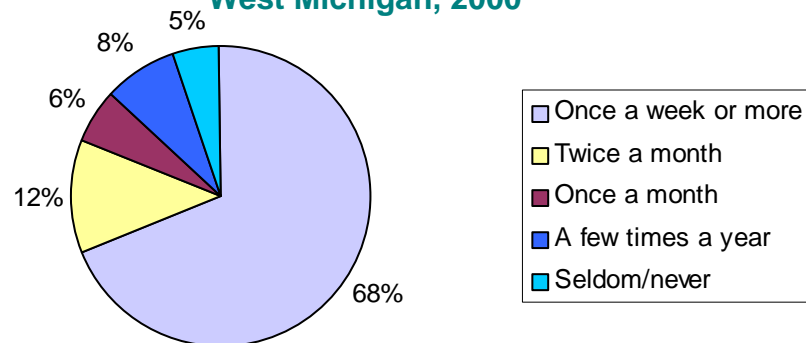
	Congregations	Adherents
Roman Catholic	37	114,716
Christian Reformed	78	48,973
Reformed	34	17,633
General Association of Regular Baptists	32	11,562
United Methodist	36	10,497
Independent Non-Charismatic	6	9,690
Independent Charismatic (Pentecostal)	3	9,350
Evangelical Lutheran	13	7,518
United Church of Christ	15	7,402
Muslim (estimate)	3	6,980

Source: Religious Congregations and Membership in the United States 2000, Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, The 2003 Grand Rapids Press Answer Book⁵¹

* Because this study invites religious bodies to participate, not every group chooses to participate, or is able to do so. It is worth noting that most of the largest groups do participate, so that the authors are confident in saying that the vast majority of people associated with a congregation are represented within the study. There are, however, 14 groups that reported more than 100,000 inclusive members to the Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches that did not participate in the RCMS 2000 study.²⁶

- According to the a report from the Saguaro Seminar, “...religious faith provides a moral foundation for civic regeneration. Faith gives meaning to community service and good will, forging a spiritual connection between individual impulses and great public issues. That is, religion helps people to internalize an orientation to the public good. Because faith has such power to transform lives, faith-based programs can enjoy success where secular programs have failed”.²⁷
- Personal religious practices often are central to strategies for preserving and transmitting faith traditions. According to a study done by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research, the majority of the seven faith families they studied gave a great deal of emphasis to personal spiritual practices and holy day observance. The vast majority of these congregations also were involved in some form of community service either directly or in cooperation with another organization.²⁸

**Exhibit 28-Worship Attendance of Church Members
West Michigan, 2000**



Source: Wirthlin Worldwide, 1999 Survey for the Grand Rapids Press, The 2000 Grand Rapids Press Answer Book⁵²

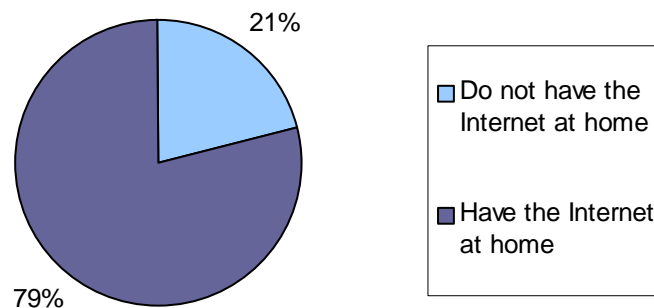
- In recent years the characteristics typically associated with a church congregation have begun to shift. More specifically mega-church congregations and commuter congregations have become more common. Mega churches are characterized by vast buildings, non-traditional amenities, and weekly congregations of at least 2,000 people.²⁹ According to Vaughan, in 2001 Michigan ranked as the state with 8th highest mega-church attendance in the nation, with 56,501 mega-church members.³⁰ Commuter congregations are characterized by those attending church outside of the community they live in. For example, people may live in Walker or Kentwood but they attend church in the city of Grand Rapids. While some commuter congregations are heavily involved in community services within the neighborhood where their church is located, some fear that congregations with less knowledge about the neighborhood will result in less community outreach and less civic engagement.⁵⁵

Connectivity

Variable 11: Internet

- Since 1993, studies have presented controversial evidence about the correlation between civic engagement and technology usage.³¹ Substantial data has been brought forward to either support, disagree or show no relationship between community involvement and Internet use.
- In 2000, Robert Putnam’s “Bad Net Theory” stated that technology was to blame for accelerating the decline in civic engagement.²¹ Putnam claimed that Americans had become less trusting of one another, and technology, primarily television and possibly the Internet, was to blame.³² During that same year, “the Pew Internet and American Life Project reported survey results showing that Internet users had wider social networks than people who do not connect to the web”.³³ A third study released in 2000 indicated that early adopters of the Internet are more likely to engage in civic activities and to have higher levels of community involvement and political participation than later adopters.³⁴
- According to the 2003 Kent County Residential Survey, conducted by the Barry-Ionia-Kent (BIK) - LinkMichigan Project, 79% of Kent County residents had Internet access from home and 67% of those with Internet access have had access for three or more years (Exhibit 29).³⁵

**Exhibit 29 - Percent of Residents with Internet
Kent County 2003**

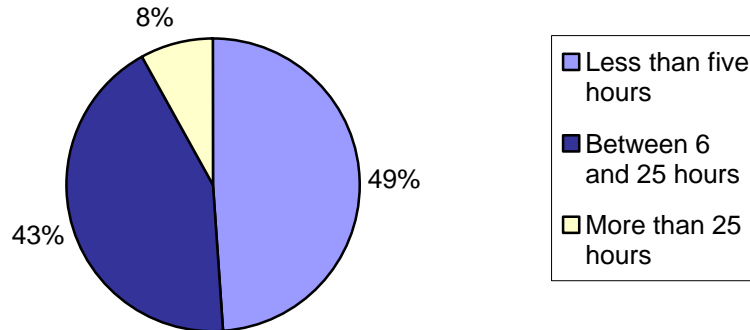


Source: Barry-Ionia-Kent LinkMichigan Project

- Of those without Internet access, 58% do not plan to obtain access in the next year. Among the reasons cited by Kent County residents for not having Internet at home are: 58% do not have a computer, 18% use the Internet elsewhere, and 10% cannot afford it (R. Hoag, personal communication, August 20, 2003).

- Nationally, contradicting studies have shown a linkage between the amount of Internet usage and socialization, with some suggesting that heavy Internet users cut back on social ties³⁶ and others saying that the heaviest Internet users have wider social circles and support networks.³² In the Kent County area, a large portion of its residents (49%) spend less than five hours a week using the Internet, while only 8% utilize the Internet more than 25 hours per week (R. Hoag, personal communication, August 20, 2003). (Exhibit 30).

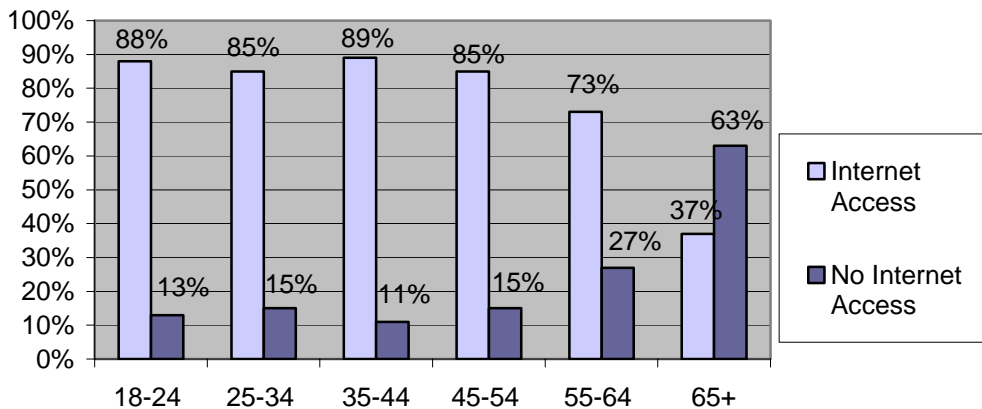
**Exhibit 30 - Time of Internet Use in Households
Kent County 2003**



Source: Barry-Ionia-Kent LinkMichigan Project

- In Kent County, between January and April of 2003, 99% of residents surveyed said that they use the Internet for email purposes. Of that same population, 89% stated that general browsing was their main purpose for using the Internet (R. Hoag, personal communication, August 20, 2003).
- With regard to accessibility, 85-89% of Kent County residents ages 18-54 had access to the Internet. Accessibility appeared to decline after age 55, however, with 73% of residents ages 55-64 and only 37% of residents age 65 and older having Internet access (Exhibit 31).³⁵

**Exhibit 31 - Internet Access by Age
Kent County, 2003**



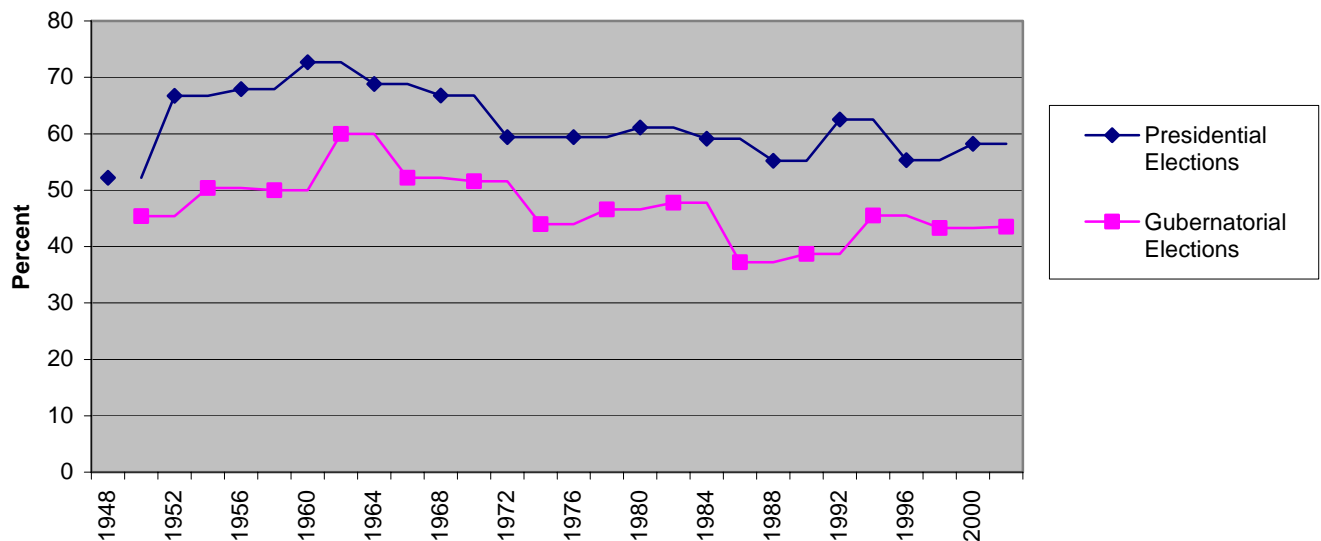
Source: Barry-Ionia-Kent LinkMichigan Project

Government & Politics

Variable 12: Voting

- Voting is one of the fundamental avenues available for individuals to participate in government decision-making.³⁷ Yet this is more than merely one aspect of civic engagement; it is the single most essential element of political participation in a democracy.³⁸ According to Diller (2001), traditional forms of civic engagement such as voting and knowledge of government processes are the foundation of a democratic society.³⁹
- The last 25 years have seen a dramatic decrease in voter turnout nationally; with a 9% drop in participation in the total voting age population (from 63% to 54%) and an 18% decrease in the 18-24 age group (from 50% to 32%). The 1996 presidential election had the lowest voter turnout recorded since the federal government started collecting data in 1948.⁴⁰
- In Michigan, the 1996 general election VAP (Voting Age Population) turnout was 55.3%, 0.1% higher than the 1988 turnout, which was the lowest presidential election turnout in Michigan within the last 50 years. The VAP percentage continued to rise in 2000 reaching 58.2% (Exhibit 32).⁴⁰

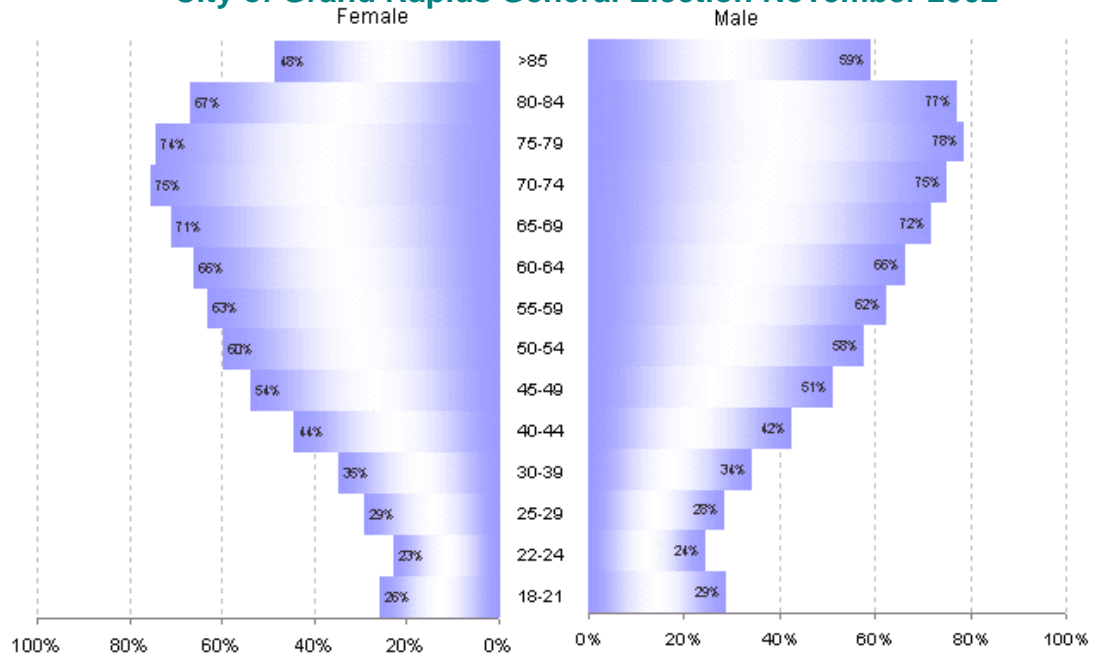
**Exhibit 32 – Percent of Voter Turnout
Michigan 1948 - 2002**



Source: Michigan Department of State

- Nationally, one out of two 18-25 year olds thinks that candidates never go to their community. Approximately 70% of this population also think that candidates would rather talk to wealthier and older voters.¹¹ In Grand Rapids the 18-25 year old age group represented 13.1% of the population in 2000³. However, this is an age group that continually exhibits very low voter turnout when compared to other age groups in Grand Rapids (Exhibit 33).

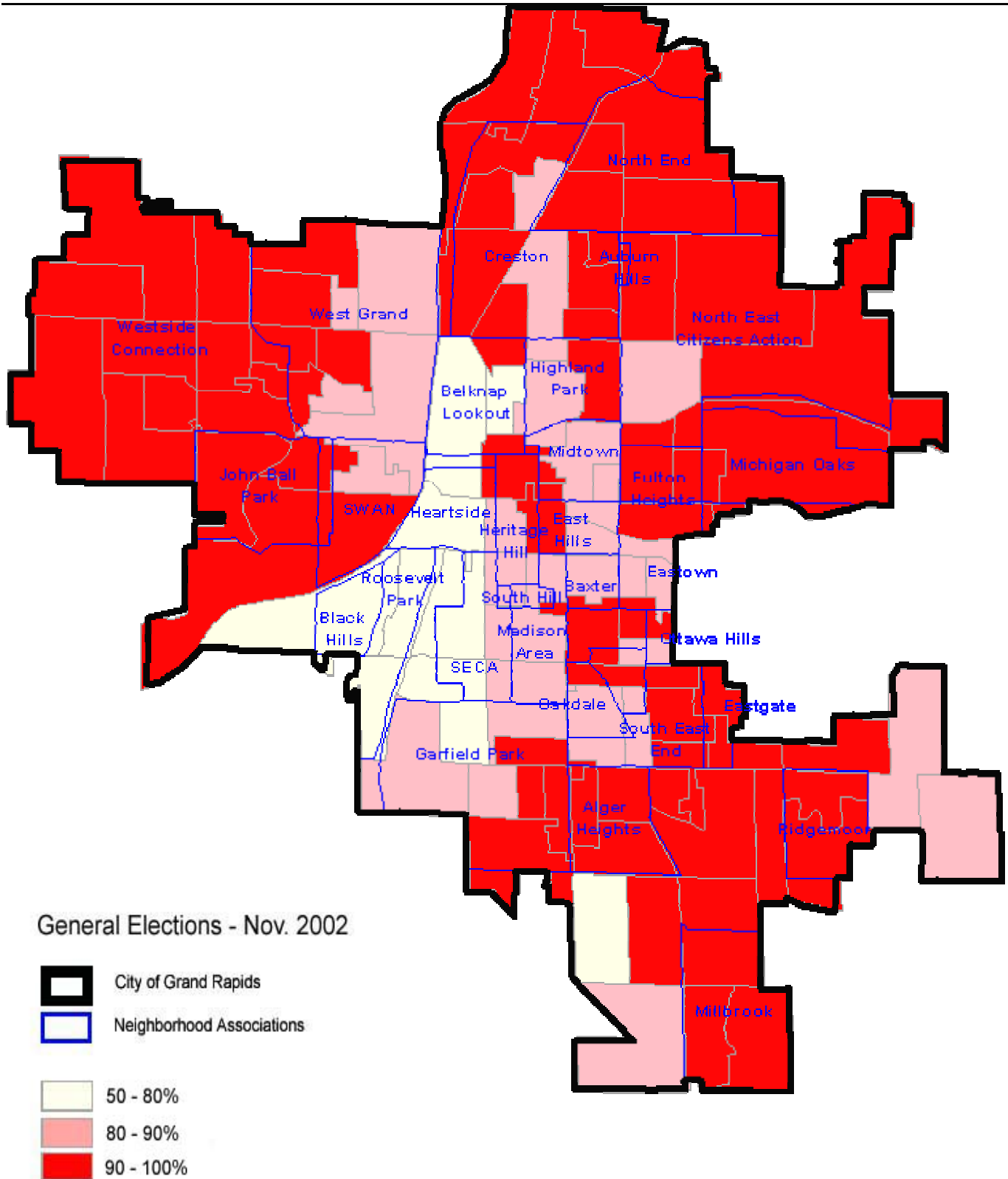
Exhibit 33 - Distribution of Voters By Age
City of Grand Rapids General Election November 2002



Source: City of Grand Rapids

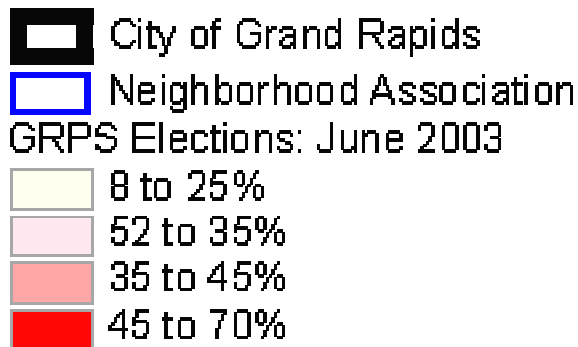
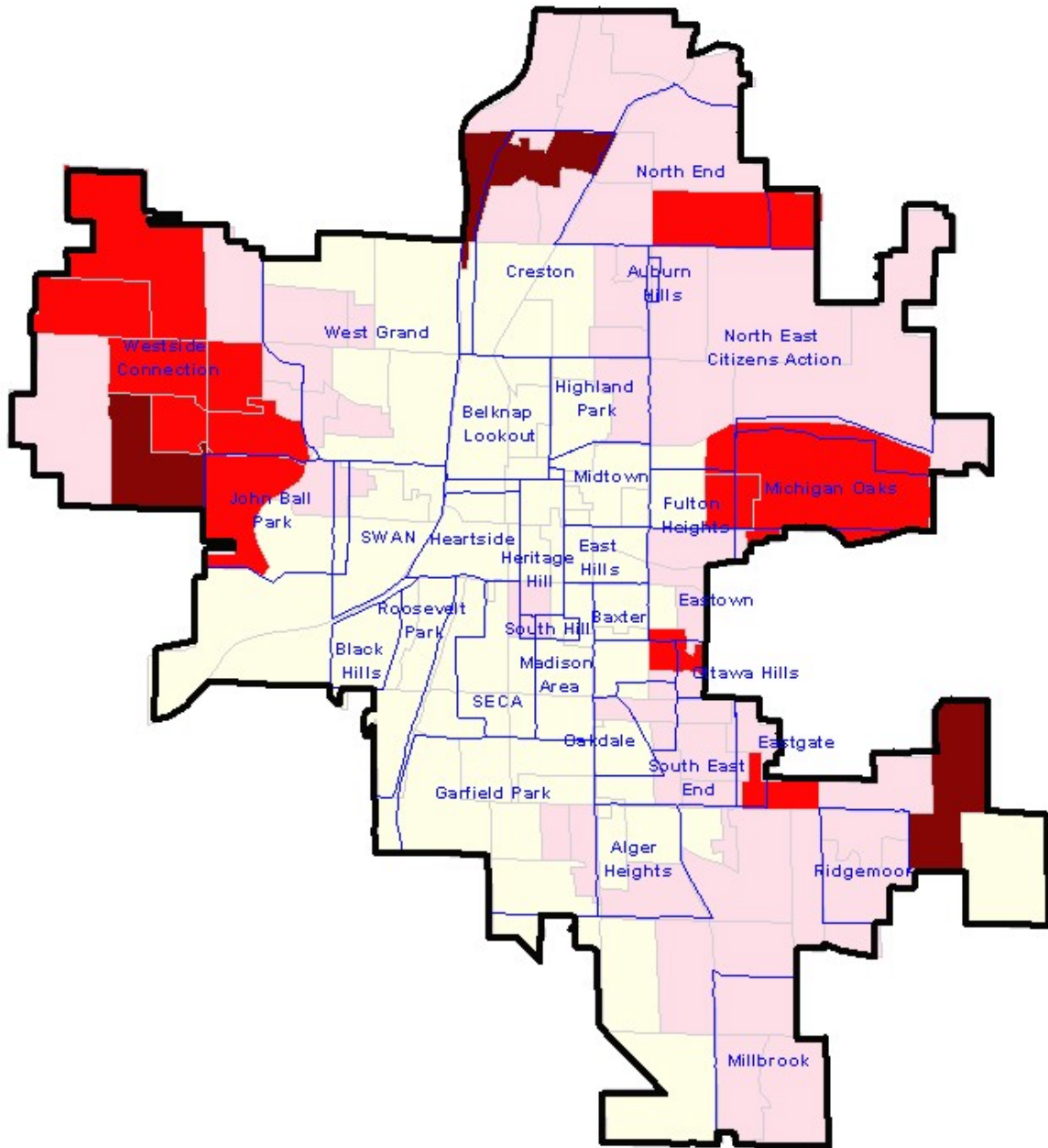
- Voting patterns in the City of Grand Rapids vary widely based on election type. In the November 2002 general election, only 8 out of 100 precincts in the city of Grand Rapids had participation rates lower than 80%. In the June 2003 election for the Grand Rapids Public Schools, the highest participation rate in any of the precincts was 17.8%. Only 3 out of 100 precincts in the City of Grand Rapids reached participation rates between 15 to 18% (Exhibit 35).
- Nationally, one in ten African American males age 25-29 is in state or federal prisons compared to 1% of white males. When black males in local jails are added, one in seven of all black males aged 25-29 are incarcerated. When large numbers of black men are removed from their communities, family dissolution, single parent households, and reduced job prospects upon return increase. In addition, state-based disenfranchisement laws that restrict voting rights of felons or ex-convicts was estimated to have kept 13% of all black males from voting in the November 2002 elections.⁴⁹ In the Kent County jail, on average, the majority of inmates in 2001 were black (at least 50%) compared to white, Hispanic, or other. When these percentages are compared to the racial breakdown of the general population in Kent County, racial disparity is evident. While over 50% of the Kent County jail population is black, only 8.7% of the general population in Kent County is black.⁵⁰

**Exhibit 34 - Density of Voter Participation
City of Grand Rapids General Election November 2002**



Source: City of Grand Rapids

**Exhibit 35 - Density of Voter Participation
City of Grand Rapids Public School Elections June 2003**



Source: City of Grand Rapids

Government & Politics

Variable 13: E-Government

- According to the Center for Democracy and Technology, “E-government has the potential to involve citizens in the governance process by engaging them in interaction with policymakers throughout the policy cycle and at all levels of government.” E-government involves two-way communications, such as email contact and feedback forms for submitting comments on legislative or policy proposals, and the creation of citizen/government forums that allow people to exchange ideas, broaden public awareness of issues, and establish new opportunities for activism not constrained by distance.⁴¹
- In 2003, 19 of the 30 (63%) cities and townships in Kent County published official websites. Breaking the number down further, 8 out of 9 cities (89%) and 8 out of 21 townships (38%) were using websites to disseminate information to the public (Exhibit 36).⁴²

**Exhibit 36 - City and Township Website Utilization
Kent County, 2003**

Website	No Website
City of Cedar Springs	City of Lowell
City of East Grand Rapids	Algoma Township
City of Grand Rapids	Bowne Township
City of Grandville	Caledonia Township
City of Kentwood	Courtland Township
City of Rockford	Grand Rapids Township
City of Walker	Grattan Township
City of Wyoming	Nelson Township
Ada Township	Oakfield Township
Alpine Township	Solon Township
Bowne Township	Sparta Township
Byron Township	Spencer Township
Cannon Township	Tyrone Township
Cascade Township	
Gaines Township	
Grand Rapids Township	
Plainfield Township	
Sparta Township	
Vergennes Township	

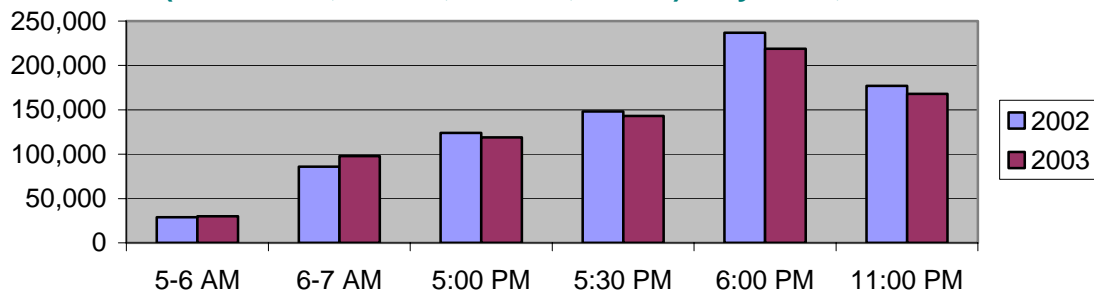
- The extent of website utilization varies by government within Kent County. Of the municipalities who maintain a website, all offered the opportunity to email them with feedback or questions, but none offered a format for residents to electronically discuss issues affecting their communities. In 2003, the most common municipal services offered through government web sites in Kent County included: downloadable forms and permits, searchable tax and assessment records, searchable municipal codes, and online bill payment.

Government & Politics

Variable 14: News Exposure

- Education and the open flow of information are the necessary cornerstones of a democratic society. People who watch television news or read newspapers are more likely to participate in electoral politics than those who do not. For example, in a study conducted by the University of Texas, nearly twice as many people (41%) who watched television news participated fully in electoral politics than those who did not watch television news (21%).⁴³
- In West Michigan, the largest number of adults watch the 6:00 p.m. television news compared to other news times, with 237,000 viewers in May 2002 and 219,000 in May 2003 (D. Fernlock, personal communication, July 14, 2003) (Exhibit 37).

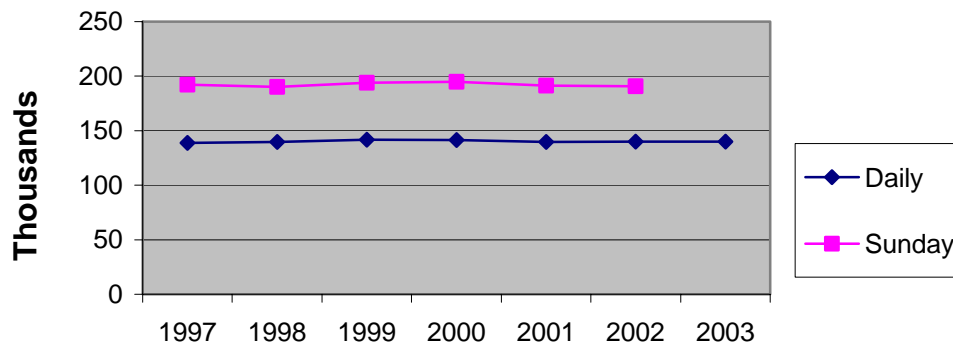
Exhibit 37 - Number of Adults Watching Television News (Wood TV8, WZZM, WWMT, WXMI) May 2002, 2003



Source: Wood TV8

- Kent County's primary newspaper is the Grand Rapids Press. Both weekday and Sunday circulation of the Grand Rapids Press have remained at steady levels since 1997. In 2003, the average paid weekday circulation of the Grand Rapids Press was at 139,890 while Sunday circulation was at 190,784 (Exhibit 38).⁴⁴

Exhibit 38 - Average Paid Circulation Grand Rapids Press 1997-2003



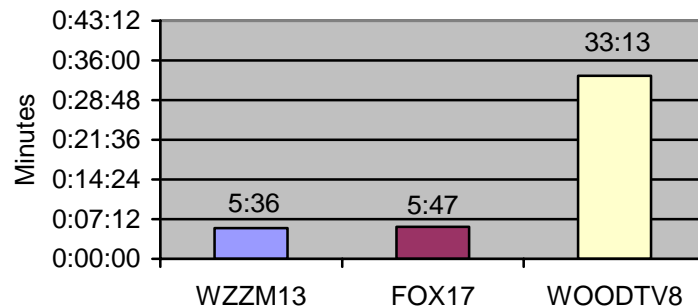
Source: Grand Rapids Press

- Smaller newspapers published on a weekly basis in Kent County include the Rockford Squire (8,500 issues per week in 2002 and 2003) and the Advance (3,648 issues per week in 2001, 3,682 issues per week in 2002, and 3,886 issues per week in 2003).
- The greater Grand Rapids area has at least three weekly newspapers targeting ethnic populations: The Grand Rapids Times, El Vocero Hispano, and El Hispano News.
 - The Grand Rapids Times has targeted the African-American Community for 57 years. This publication printed in English with a readership of 24,000 is distributed in Kent County and Kalamazoo.
 - El Vocero Hispano has targeted the Hispanic community and Spanish readers in West Michigan for 10 years. This Spanish publication prints 25,000 copies weekly and is distributed across West Michigan.
 - El Hispano News has targeted the Hispanic population and the larger community for 12 years. This Spanish and English publication prints 30,000 copies each week and distributes in the Greater Grand Rapids area, Holland, and the Lakeshore.
- According to the Grand Rapids Institute for Information Democracy (GRIID), improved election coverage is paramount if citizens/voters are to make informed decisions. After five years of tracking news coverage of fall elections, they concluded that a voter cannot make an informed decision based on the 4 news sources they studied for most races and propositions on the ballot.⁴⁵
- During the 30 days prior to the November 5, 2002 elections, candidates voices were heard by viewers during newscasts on the three local TV stations in Grand Rapids for a total of 77 minutes and 36 seconds. The voices of all 52 candidates were heard on WOODTV 8, compared to 8 candidates on WZZM 13, and 5 candidates on FOX 17 (Exhibit 39).⁴⁵

Exhibit 39 - Candidate Voices, 2002 Fall Elections

(Amount of time viewers heard candidates speak during newscasts*)

*WoodTV 8 and WZZM 13's 5:30p, 6p, and 11p newscasts and WXMI Fox 17's 10p newscast.



Source: Grand Rapids Institute for Information Democracy

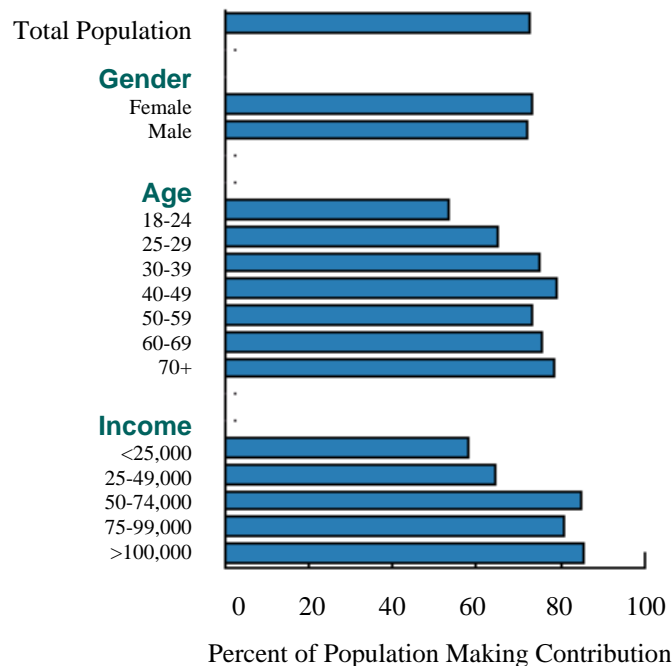
- The 2002 governor's race earned the most news stories from the Grand Rapids Press and the three TV news stations compared to other races during the fall elections with the most substantive stories coming from the Grand Rapids Press and WOODTV 8. 40% of the Grand Rapids Press' election stories covered the race for governor, compared to 50% of FOX 17's, 52% of WZZM 13's, and 54% of WOODTV 8's. None of the three TV stations reported on the 19 races for Kent County Commissioner.⁴⁵
- Each of the three TV stations ran more paid political advertisements during newscasts than election stories. For the thirty days prior to the fall 2002 election, WOODTV 8 ran 329 paid ads, WZZM 13 ran 306, and FOX 17 ran 68. These compare to the Grand Rapids Press' 42 paid political advertisements.⁴⁵
- When comparing crime to election stories, WOODTV 8 and WZZM 13 aired 2 crime stories per 1 election story compared to FOX 17's 5:1 ratio.⁴⁵
- During the 30 days prior to the Fall 2000 general elections that included the race for president, the three local news stations broadcasted 8 hours of election news stories, of which over 7 hours were devoted to presidential elections. Candidates' voices were heard for 46 minutes and 49 seconds of those 8 hours. The following races received no coverage: State Board of Education, State Supreme Court, State Board of Appeals, University Regents, regional judicial races, Kent County Commission, Kent County Clerk, and most State House races.⁴⁵

Philanthropy

Variable 15: Individual Giving

- Research suggests that an individual's giving can be used as an indicator of social ties and civic engagement.²¹
- Nationally, a survey by Independent Sector showed that 89% of households made a charitable contribution in 2001. At the state level, almost 90% of Michigan adults made a charitable contribution during that same time period. Locally, almost three-quarters (73%) of Kent County households donated money or property to charitable and nonprofit organizations during the 12 months prior to September 11, 2001. When September 11 giving is included, the rate increases to 83%.⁴⁶
- In Kent County, giving rates were very similar for women (74%) and men (72%) in 2001. However, giving did vary by age group; increasing as individuals got older. Fifty-four percent of 18-24 year olds made contributions compared to approximately three quarters of those 30 years and older (Exhibit 40).⁴⁶
- Income was also associated with giving. More than four-fifths of households in Kent County earning \$50,000 or more contributed to charity in 2000, compared to 58% of lower income households (Exhibit 40).⁴⁶

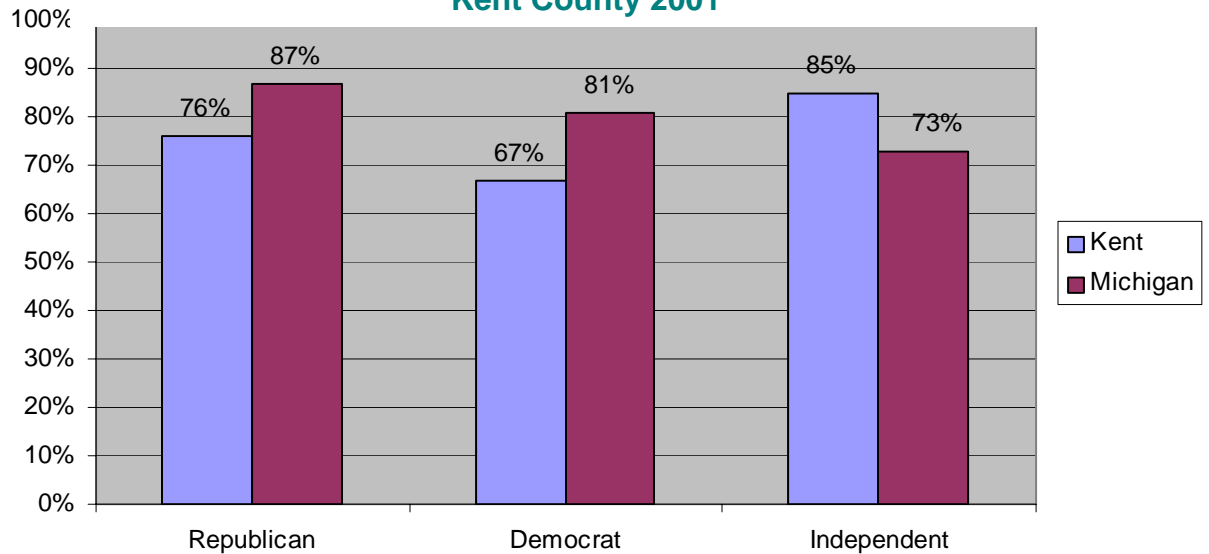
**Exhibit 40 - Demographic Profile of Donors
Kent County 2001**



Source: Johnson Center for Philanthropy

- Other factors influencing giving rates in Kent County include political affiliation (76% of Republicans, 85% of Independents, and 67% of Democrats) and marital status (78% of married couples, 71% of widowers, 65% of single people, and 62% of divorced or separated people) (Exhibit 41).⁴⁶

**Exhibit 41 – Percent Who Gave by Political Affiliation
Kent County 2001**



Source: Johnson Center for Philanthropy

- In 2001, giving in Kent County was most often directed to religious organizations and family and friends, followed by health, other types of nonprofits, and the United Way. In 2001, a similar pattern emerged, with more support indicated across the sector with the exception of the United Way (Exhibit 42).⁴⁶

**Exhibit 42 - Individual Giving by Type of Gift
Kent County 2001**

	12 Months Prior to November 2001	Plans to Give in the next 12 Months
Religion	74%	78%
Needy Friend	52%	86%
Human Services	44%	62%
Health	38%	50%
Education	36%	53%
United Way	34%	33%
Foundations	23%	31%
Youth	21%	42%
International	15%	23%
Arts/Culture	11%	18%
Environment	11%	18%
Other	35%	48%

Source: Johnson Center for Philanthropy

Philanthropy

Variable 16: Corporate Giving

- Philanthropy represents a unique opportunity for corporations not only to be personally fulfilled, but also to connect with and become civically engaged with their communities.⁴⁷
- Kent County businesses understand the importance of investing in their community. In 2001, 36 of Kent County's largest firms reported donating over \$7 million in cash and an additional \$2.7 million in goods and services. Over three-quarters of the funds donated by the firms surveyed stayed in Kent County.⁴⁶
- In Kent County, over 90% of the firms surveyed donated cash to area causes, and four-fifths supported the United Way in the year 2001. Almost two-thirds of the firms surveyed donated goods and almost 60% of these firms gave employees time off for community service work (Exhibit 43).⁴⁶

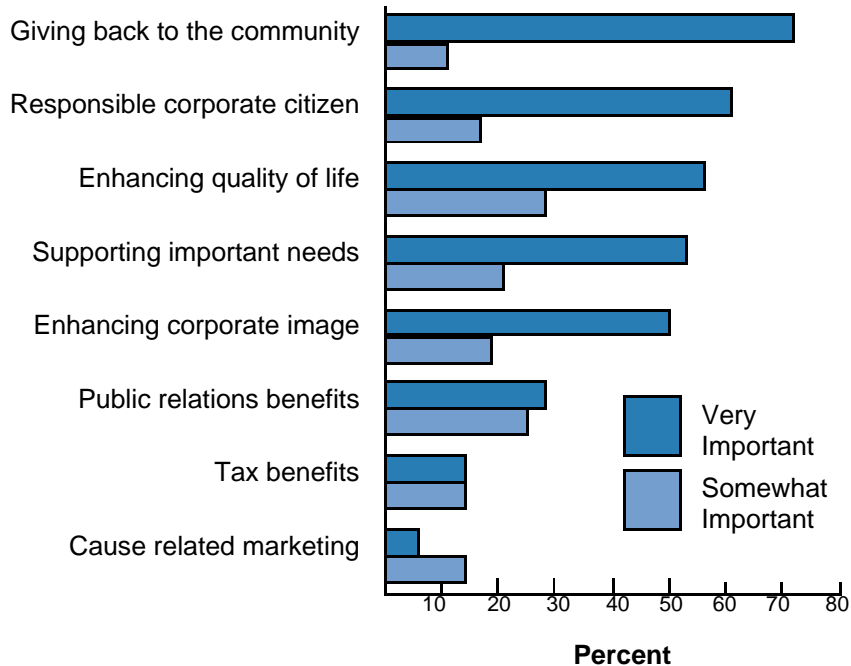
**Exhibit 43 - Corporate Giving By Type of Donation
Kent County 2001**



Source: Johnson Center for Philanthropy

- When asked about plans for corporate giving in the 12 months after November 2001, almost two-thirds planned to give about the same, 21% planned to give less and 15% planned to give more (Exhibit 43).⁴⁶
- In 2001, the Johnson Center for Philanthropy’s Corporate Philanthropy Survey asked about motivations in Kent County regarding involvement in philanthropy and how giving decisions are made (Exhibit 44).⁴⁶

Exhibit 44 - Influences on Corporate Giving Kent County 2001



Source: Johnson Center for Philanthropy

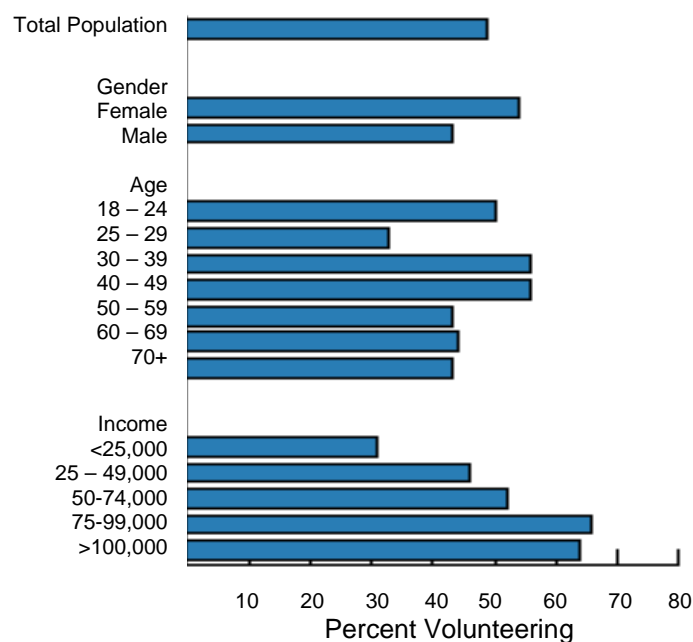
- Strong influences in philanthropic decisions for corporate giving include: senior management (70%), key customers (67%), other employees (61%), and board members (56%). Less important influences included civic leaders (50%), nonprofit organizations (22%), and suppliers (17%).⁴⁶
- In relation to motivation, most companies in Kent County reported that they would be more motivated to give if they had a better understanding of what their contributions actually achieve and a better understanding of community needs. Recognition events, such as appreciation banquets, are least likely to motivate corporate giving.⁴⁶
- The workplace also plays an important role in the involvement of their employees by encouraging giving and providing systems that simplify giving, such as payroll deduction and employer gift matching. 49% of Kent County workers surveyed had access to payroll deduction, while 20% had access to employer gift matching. Both the existence and use of payroll deduction plans increased with income.⁴⁶

Philanthropy

Variable 17: Volunteering

- Engaging citizens as volunteers is one way to promote civic engagement. Society as a whole benefits from the enthusiasm, skills and commitment of volunteers. Not only does their time equate to billions of dollars nationally, volunteers in countless communities have been the building blocks to more vibrant, civil societies.
- In 2001, 50% of the adult Michigan population volunteered, with men and women volunteering at the same rate. In the most recent survey of Kent County, it was revealed that volunteering is a common local activity, with 49% of those surveyed having volunteered. Volunteer gave an average of 2.6 hours a week in the year 2001.⁴⁶
- Volunteering rates vary by a number of demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, income, and race. For example, nation-wide 42% of the Hispanic population said they have never volunteered, followed by the White population, with 39%, and the African American population, with 37%.⁴⁸
- In 2002, Michigan volunteers between the ages of 40 and 49 revealed the highest percentage, accounting for approximately 55%, followed by the 50-59 age group.²⁵ In Kent County, the highest population volunteering was between 30 and 49 years of age (Exhibit 45).⁴⁶

**Exhibit 45 - Demographic Profile of Volunteers
Kent County 2001**



Source: Johnson Center for Philanthropy

- People learn about volunteer opportunities from a number of different sources. In 2001, over 35% of Kent County volunteers became involved in a volunteer activity after hearing about it at church or a religious organization, 19% had a relative or friend already involved in the activity, 19% were personally asked by someone, 11% heard about a volunteer opportunity at work, and 10% responded to an advertisement soliciting volunteers.⁴⁶
- More than 60% of Kent County's non-volunteers cited lack of time as the main reason for not volunteering. Another 11% reported being physically unable, 10% said they were not asked, and 5% said they were not interested.⁴⁶

Additional Areas of Interest

In preparing this report, Community Interpretive Partners brought forward several areas where community level data does not exist or is incomplete. These areas included:

Political Voice – According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) (2002), when people participate, their voices are heard by their elected leaders. Since our political system affects “who gets what,” it matters if some voices are louder than others. When a large number of voices are absent, extreme viewpoints may be over-represented, resulting in a loss of stability.⁵⁴ Indicators of political voice recommended by CIRCLE include:

- Contacting officials - to express an opinion on an issue
- Contacting the print/broadcast media - to express an opinion on an issue
- Protesting - Taking part in a protest, march, or demonstration
- Written or E-mail petitions - Signing a written or e-mail petition about a political or social issue
- Boycotting - NOT buying something because of conditions under which the product was made, or because of dislike for the conduct of the company that produced it
- Buycotting - Buying a certain product or service because of like for the social or political values of the company that produced or provided it
- Canvassing - Working as a canvasser for a political or social group or candidate⁵⁴

Involvement/Use of Free Time – According to Putnam, surveys have indicated that since 1965 time spent being civically engaged through informal socializing is down as much as 25%. In addition he says that time devoted to clubs and organizations is down by approximately half.²¹ Whether involved through political, recreational, service, educational, or religious groups, our citizens need to engage with those around them to form community connections and become civically engaged.

Over the next year, CRI will explore new data sources for 2004’s Civic Engagement report. It is the hope of CRI staff that local organizations and individuals involved in civic engagement will consider ways to gather political voice and involvement data in the upcoming year. In addition, CRI remains interested in gathering further input regarding the community’s interest areas.

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