

THE PORTUGUESE AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP PROJECT
A NON-PARTISAN INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE CITIZENSHIP AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT



**ST. JOHN PARISH
NEW BEDFORD, MA**

**EVALUATION
OF
THE 2008 ELECTIONS**

June 14, 2009

SUPPORTED BY THE
LUSO-AMERICAN
FOUNDATION

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KEY STATISTICS

- **Number of Parishioners in St. John: 1,219**
- **Heads of Household registered to vote New Bedford: 617 (51% of all parishioners)**
- **Heads of Household registered to vote in Bristol County: 851**
- **All Household Members registered to vote in New Bedford: 732**
- **All Household Members registered to vote in Bristol County: 1,107**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout* in February 2008 – 59% (citywide turnout 32%)**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout in September 2008 – 35% (citywide turnout 14%)**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout in November 2008 – 82% (citywide turnout 61%)**

SUMMARY OF WORK

St. John has been an active participant in the Portuguese American Citizenship Project since 2002.

For the 2008 elections, postcards in Portuguese and English were sent to every registered parish voter reminding them of the date, polling hours, and location of the assigned polling station for the election. Cards were not sent out for February 2008 Presidential Primary Elections.

* Voter turnout is the number of citizens voting in an election divided by the total number of citizens registered to vote. Voter turnout statistics are based on New Bedford residents only.

RESULTS

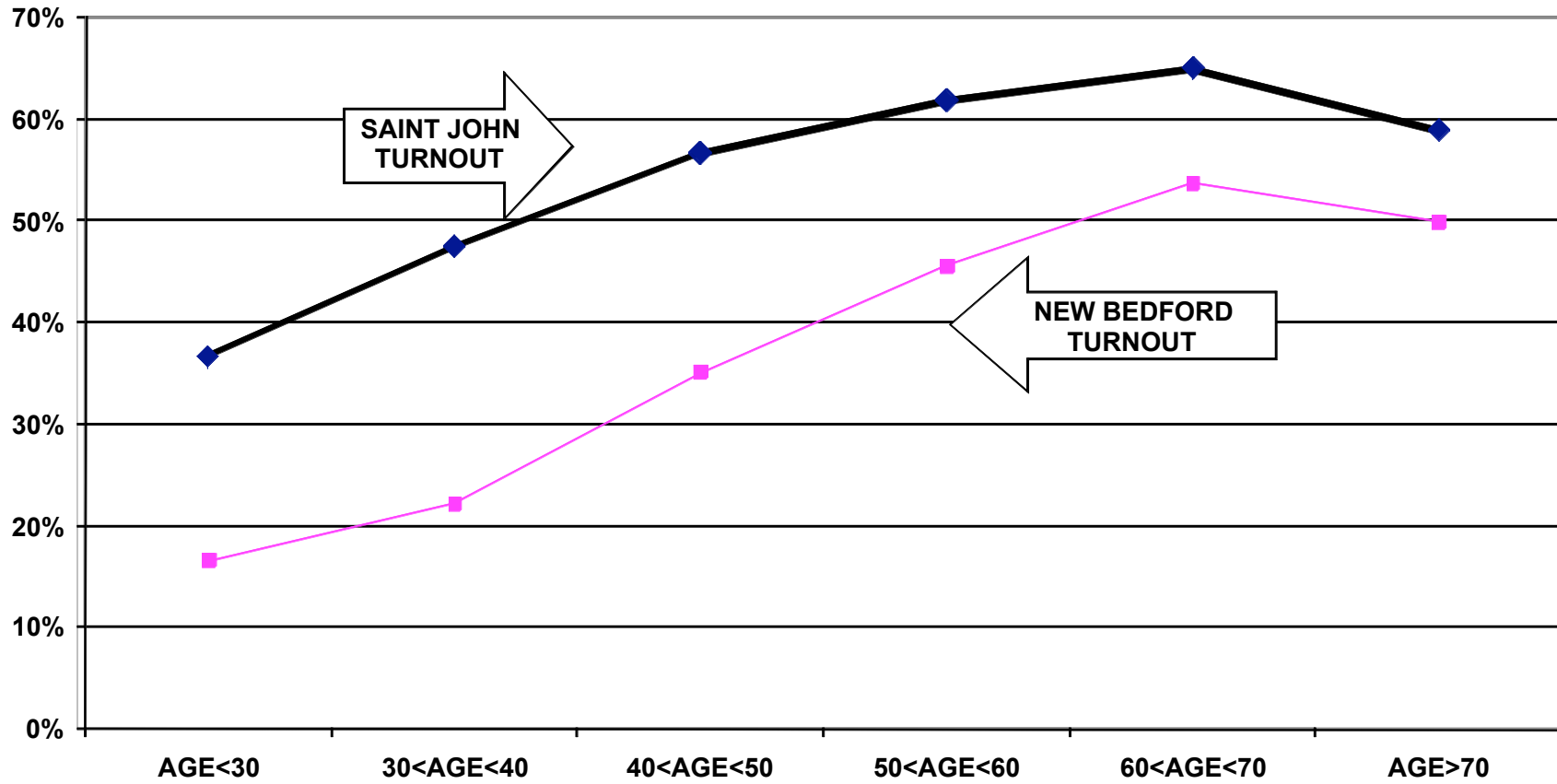
St. John voter turnout for the February, September, and November 2008 elections was consistently higher than citywide turnout. Heads of household turnout for the February Presidential Primary Elections was 59%, as compared to the city turnout of 32%. The St. John heads of household turnout for the September State Primary Elections was 35%, as compared to the city turnout of 14%. Heads of household turnout for the November 2008 Presidential Elections was 82%, as compared to the city turnout of 61%.

Voter turnout is not uniform across age groups. Voters under 30 years of age and even those between 30 and 40 years old had lower turnout rates than the older voters. This is true for the registered voters in the parish and true for the registered voters in the community at large.

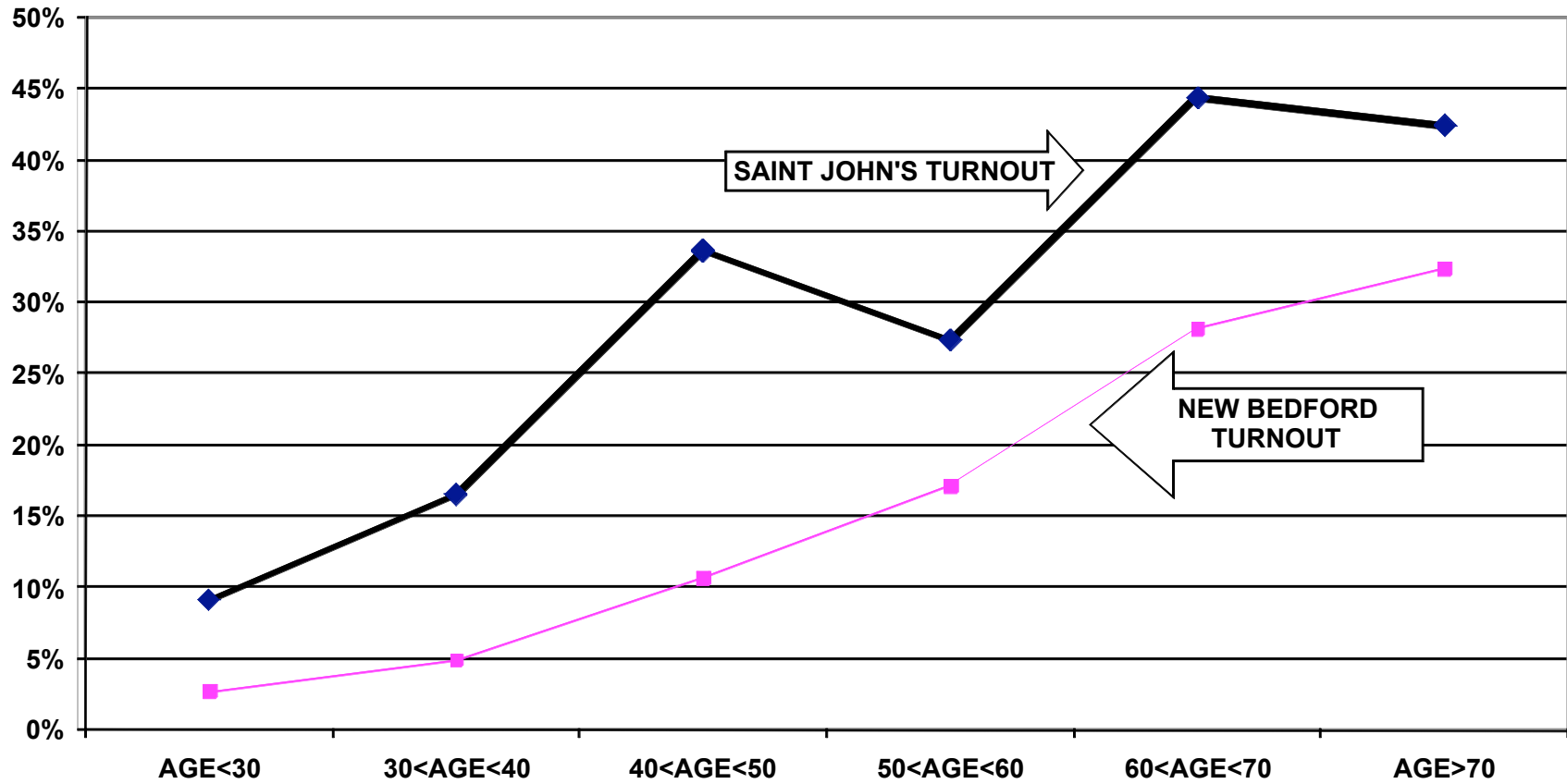
For example, voters under 30 years old associated with the parish had a 25% turnout rate in the February elections, while voters between 60 and 70 years old had a 70% turnout rate. For the September elections, the under 30 year old associated parishioners had an 7% turnout rate compared to a 43% turnout rate for voters between 60 and 70 years old. For the November Presidential elections, voters under 30 years old associated with the parish had a 63% turnout rate while voters between 60 and 70 years old had a 87% turnout rate.

The following graphs for the February, September, and November 2008 elections, illustrate the relationship between turnout rates and age. These graphs are for all voters associated with the parish, not just the heads of household.

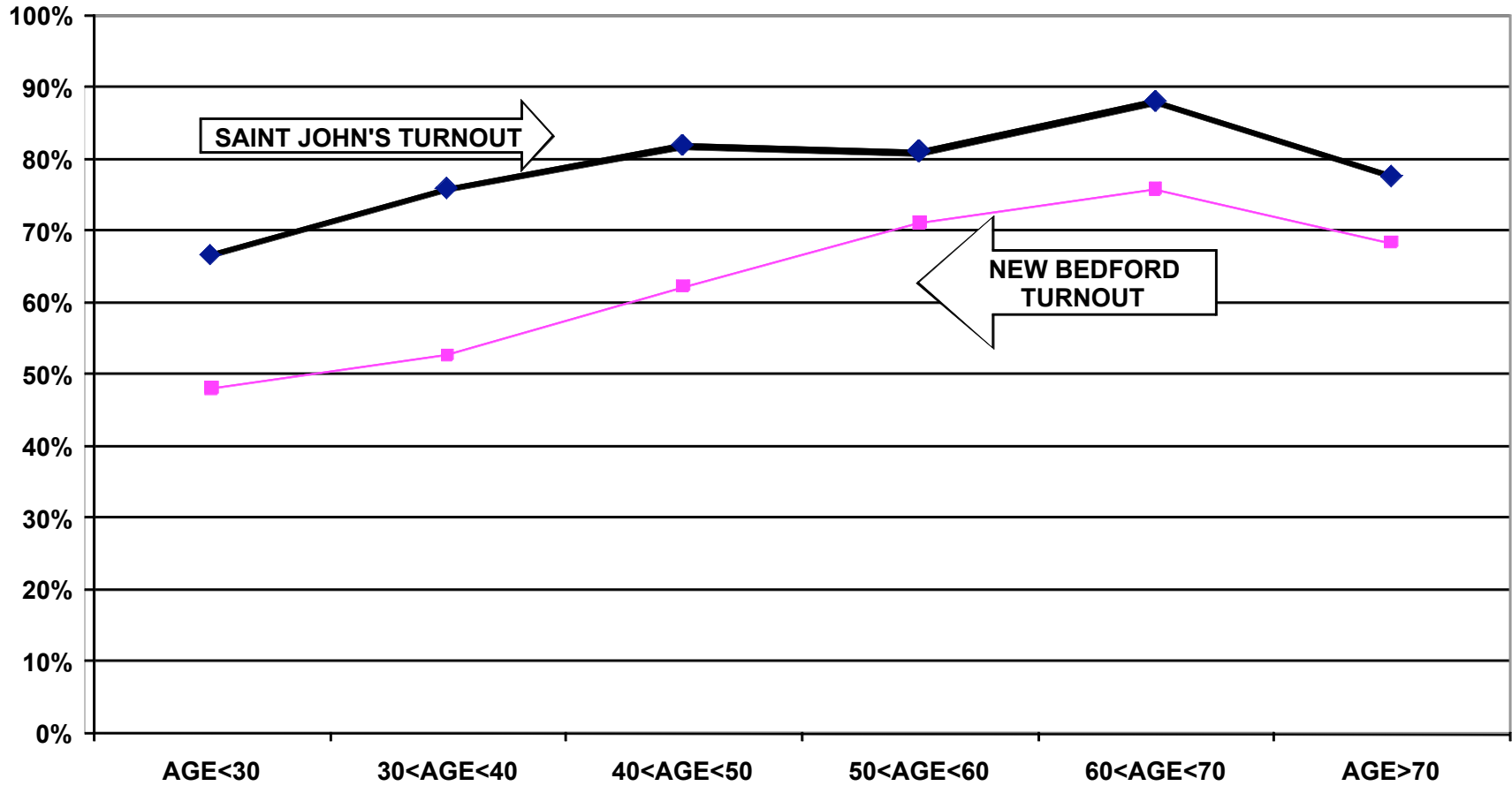
TURNOUT BY AGE FEBRUARY 2008 SAINT JOHN'S PARISH ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



TURNOUT BY AGE SEPTEMBER 2008 SAINT JOHN'S PARISH ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



TURNOUT BY AGE NOVEMBER 2008 SAINT JOHN'S PARISH ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



RECOMMENDATIONS

- The parish must determine if and how it will provide funding for the costs of participation in the Citizenship Project. The Luso American Foundation has completed 10 years of financial support for the Project but will terminate this support for 2009 and beyond. In 2009, the Project will continue to provide data processing and assist in the preparation of voter cards. With a mailing permit, the cost of printing and mailing the cards for a September Primary, and November City elections is approximately \$600.
- If the parish cannot provide the financial support for this mailing and/or cannot accomplish the logistics of printing and mailing the voter cards, interested members of the community should examine the accomplishments of the past ten years and determine how to build on these achievements using alternative methods of promoting civic participation.

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- Registered Voters vs. Actual Voters February 2008 Graph 14
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- Registered Voters vs. Actual Voters November 2008 Graph 16

**HISTORICAL DATA: ST. JOHN PARISH
REGISTRATION - VOTING**

MEMBERS RESIDING IN NEW BEDFORD 1,349

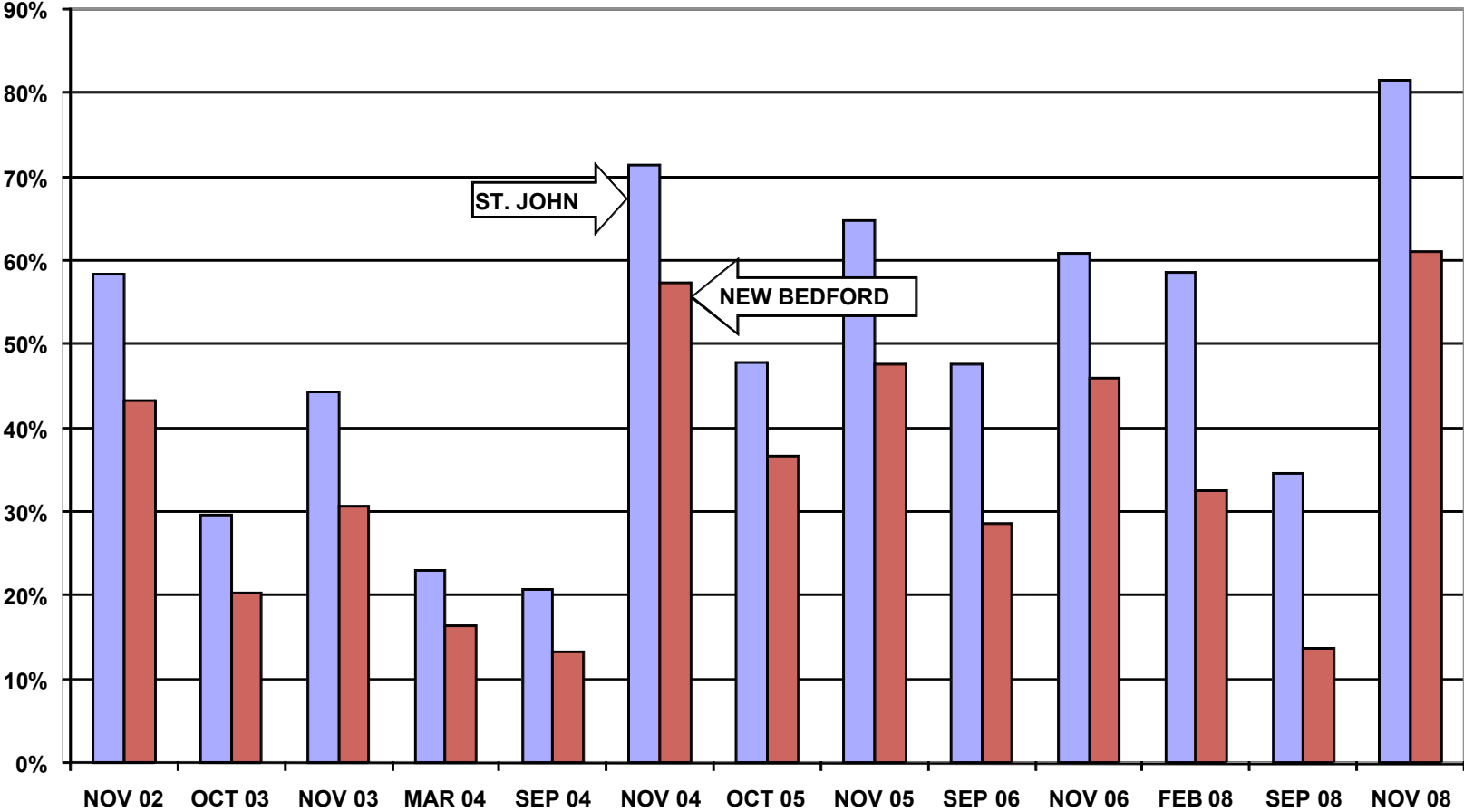
**MEMBERS REGISTERED
TO VOTE IN NEW BEDFORD 617 HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD**

732 ALL FAMILY MEMBERS

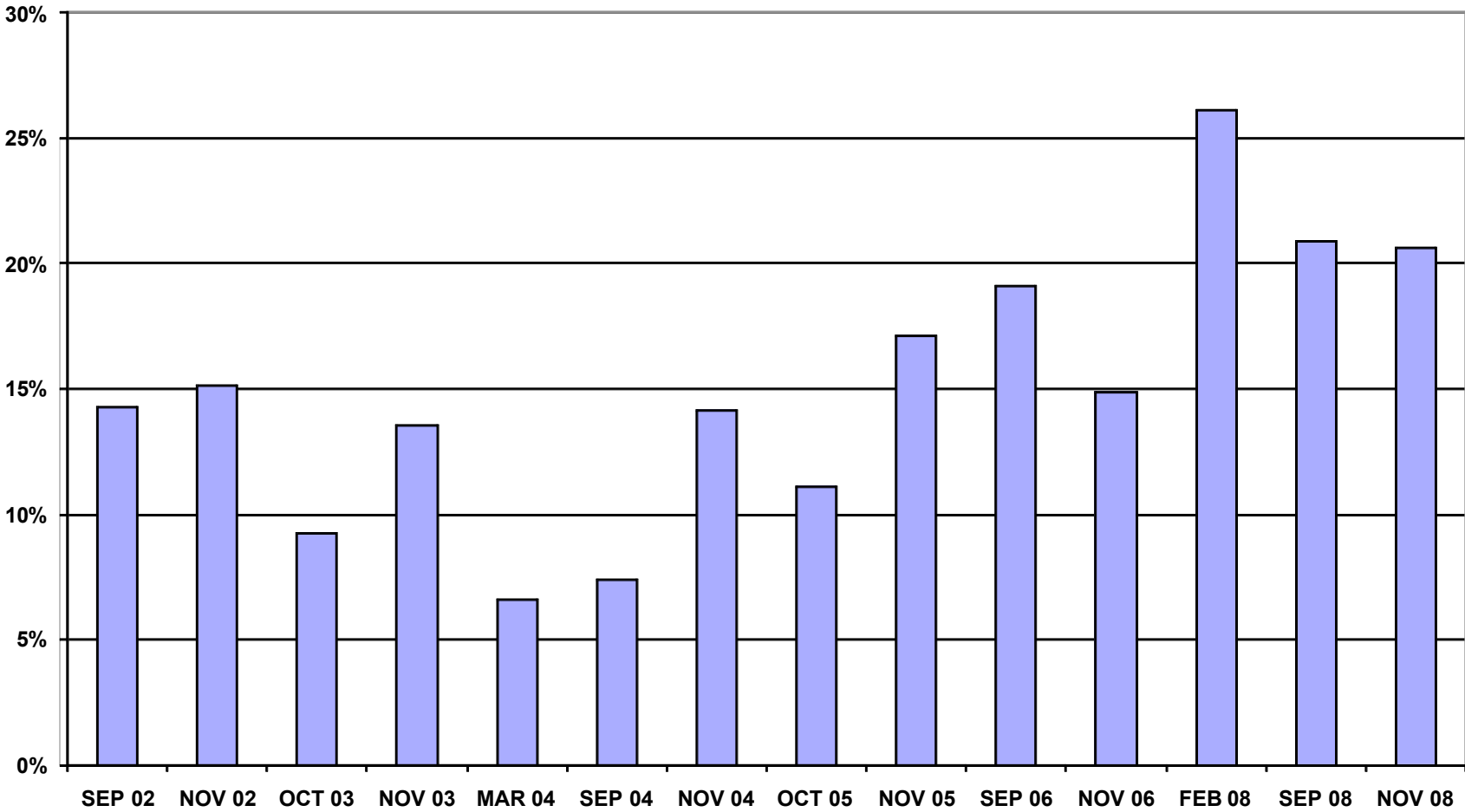
VOTING PERFORMANCE OF NEW BEDFORD RESIDENTS

	HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD	AS PERCENT OF ALL REGISTERED MEMBERS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE	CITYWIDE VOTING HISTORY AS PERCENT OF ALL REGISTERED VOTERS
		COMPARABLE STATISTICS	
VOTERS NOV 2002	669	58.4%	43.3%
VOTERS OCT 2003	338	29.5%	20.2%
VOTERS NOV 2003	506	44.1%	30.6%
VOTERS MAR 2004	263	22.9%	16.4%
VOTERS SEP 2004	236	20.6%	13.2%
VOTERS NOV 2004	818	71.4%	57.3%
VOTERS OCT 2005	500	47.7%	36.7%
VOTERS NOV 2005	678	64.7%	47.6%
VOTERS SEP 2006	477	47.6%	28.5%
VOTERS NOV 2006	610	60.9%	46.0%
VOTERS FEB 2008	357	58.5%	32.4%
VOTERS SEP 2008	211	34.6%	13.7%
VOTERS NOV 2008	498	81.6%	61.0%

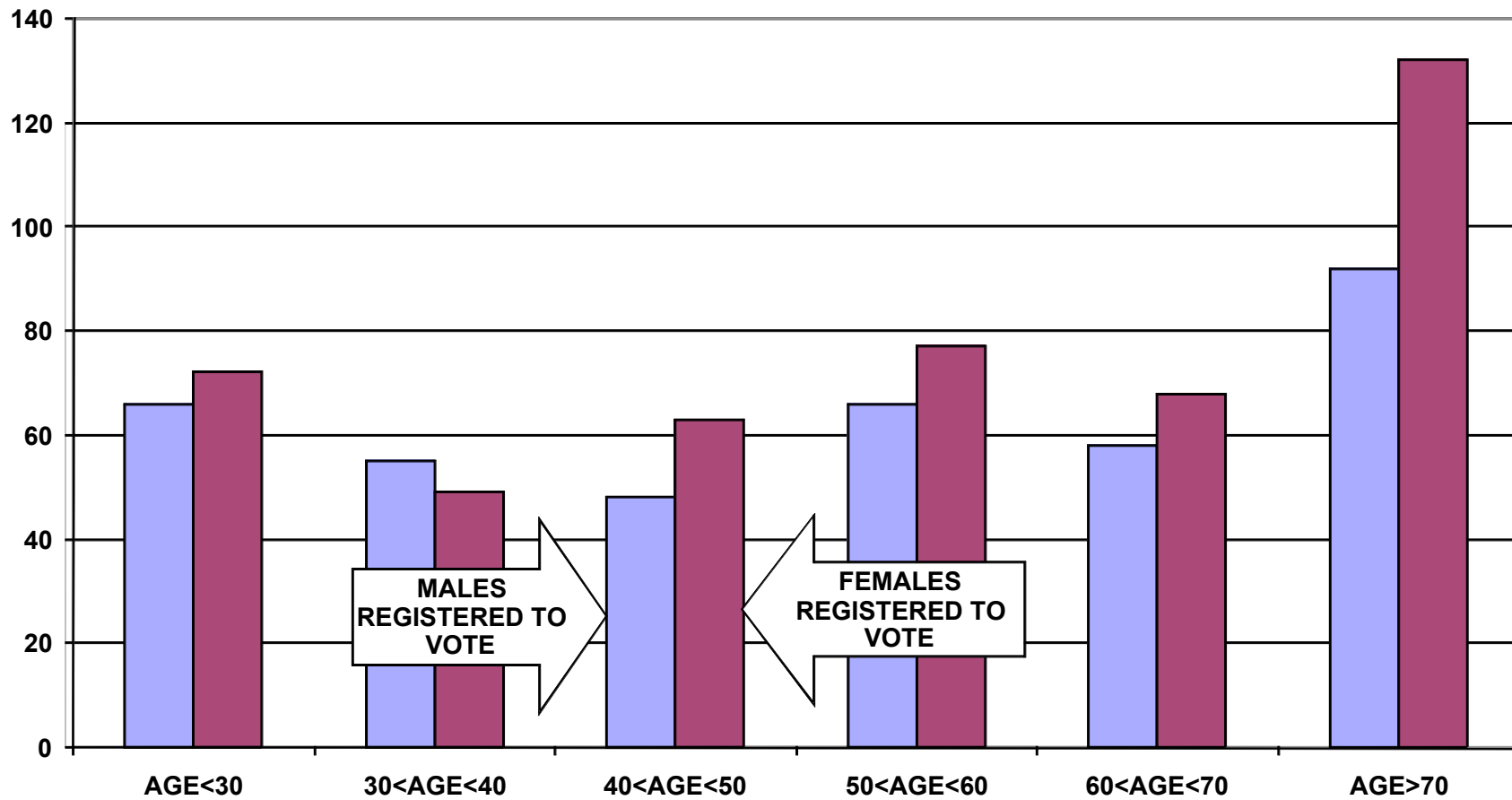
REGISTERED VOTER TURNOUT COMPARISON BETWEEN NEW BEDFORD AND ST. JOHN HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD



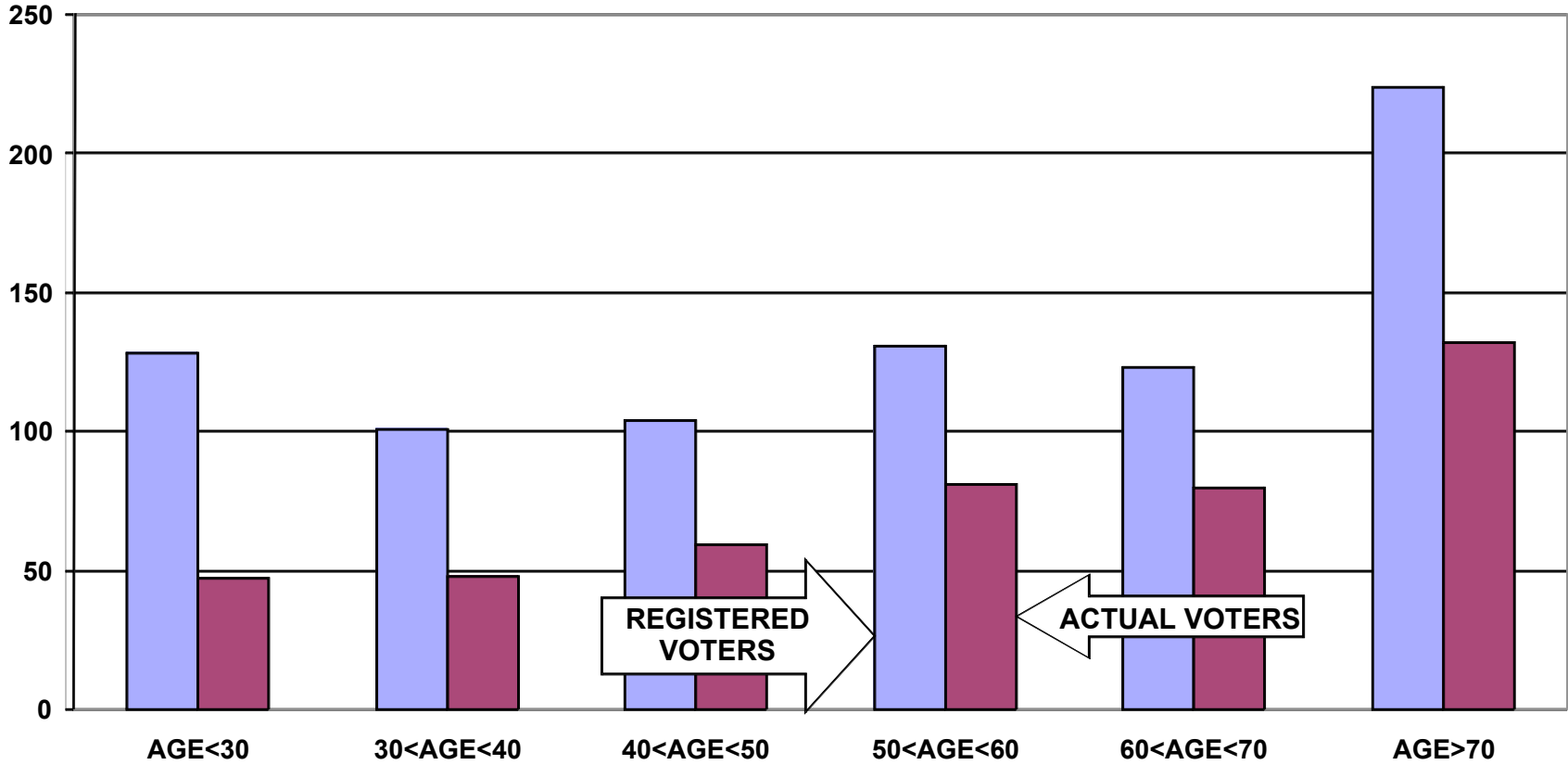
**DIFFERENCE IN VOTER TURNOUT BETWEEN
ST. JOHN VOTERS AND NEW BEDFORD VOTERS
HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD**



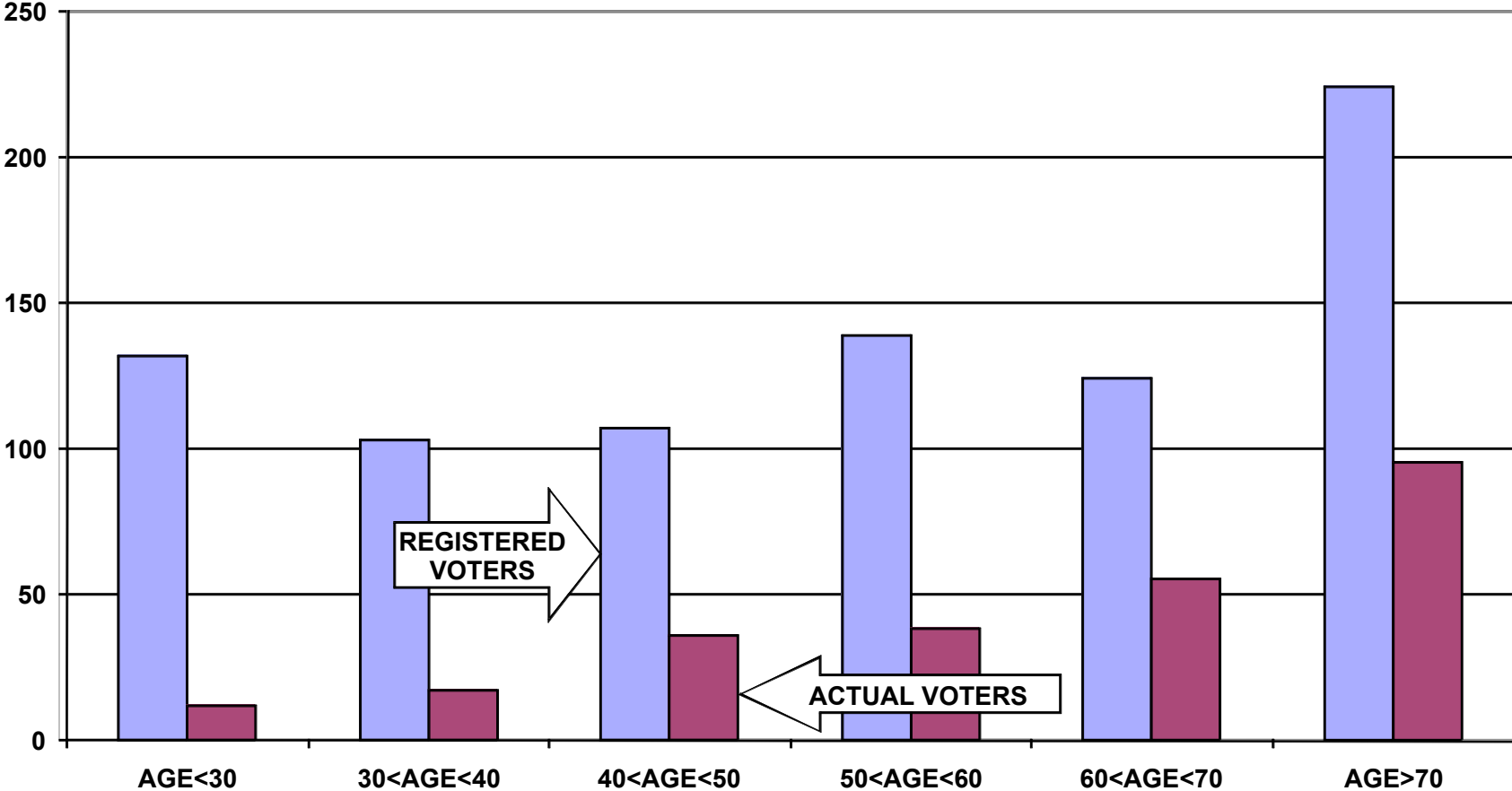
**VOTER REGISTRATION BY AGE AND GENDER
SAINT JOHN'S PARISH
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**



**REGISTERED VOTERS VERSUS ACTUAL VOTERS FEBRUARY 2008
SAINT JOHN'S PARISH
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**



**REGISTERED VOTERS VERSUS ACTUAL VOTERS SEPTEMBER 2008
SAINT JOHN'S PARISH
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**



**REGISTERED VOTERS VERSUS ACTUAL VOTERS NOVEMBER 2008
SAINT JOHN'S PARISH
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

