Population

Chapter 2: Population

INTRODUCTION TO POPULATION

Houston has experienced a dramatic demographic change during the past 20 years. In 2000 the population in the City of Houston was 1,953,631 persons, an increase of 20% since 1990. The indicators examined in this chapter provide insights on these 1.9 million people by examining household demographic characteristics relative to race, education, and language spoken. (See also Land Use and Demographic Profile, 2003 for additional details).

Much of the City's growth has taken place in the southwestern part of Houston along US 59: two-thirds of the City's population growth took place here outside Loop 610 between I-10 (Katy Freeway) and SH 288. Other areas with strong population growth include Kingwood to the northeast and Clear Lake to the southeast.

Relative to the entire City, Whites have declined in proportion to the rest of the population since 1990, but remain the single largest group (49% of the population – See Appendix B). Blacks also declined slightly in proportion to the total population and made up 25% of the population in 2000. Asians and persons of other race increased substantially during this time. The Hispanic population increased from 26% to 37% of the total population, becoming the largest ethnic group in the City. The number of Hispanics is expected to increase significantly over the next 10 years.

**Hispanic in this context is considered an ethnic group and include people who consider themselves to be of White, Black, Asian, or Other race.*

Despite Houston's overall diversity, the population tends to be geographically concentrated by race. The White population is the majority in Super Neighborhoods to the west of Downtown; the Black population is the majority in Super Neighborhoods to the south and northeast. The Hispanic population is the majority in areas to the southeast, north, and to a lesser degree the northwest. Most of the southwest, home to a large portion of the recent population growth, has no racial or ethnic majority.

Houston's growing Hispanic population is quite young and represents a disproportionately high percentage of school-age children. Hispanics represent 37% of the total population but 50% of those in Nursery School/ Kindergarten and 44% of those in grades 1-12.

As it has grown, Houston's population has proved very mobile. More than half of persons over 5 years (53%) lived in a different house in 1999 than in 1995. Much of this new population has come from outside the United States. In fact, the immigrant population increased from 17% to 26% of the total population between 1990 and 2000. Given this influx of people from outside the United States, it shouldn't be surprising that the number of non-English speakers has increased as well – people who speak English "not well" or "not at all" now account for 9% of the total population.

Chapter 2: Population

POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE BY RACE/HISPANIC ORIGIN

The population for the City of Houston was 1,953,631 persons in 2000, a 20% increase in ten years. A small part of this growth can be attributed to annexation of neighborhoods in the far northeast and on the west (5.2% of the total population growth). This population growth was unevenly distributed (see map); some areas experienced significant population growth, while others either lost population or remained basically the same.

Super Neighborhoods with increasing population

Citywide, more than three quarters of the Super Neighborhoods experienced increases in population. Super Neighborhoods outside Loop 610 experienced almost 90% of the total population growth.

Almost half of the total City population growth occurred in an arc between I-10 and Hwy 288, outside Loop 610. Sharpstown, Gulfton, and Alief all had strong growth in this area. The remainder occurred in neighborhoods in the southeast including Clear Lake, Greater Hobby, Kingwood, and Northside/ Northline. In the past ten years 75% of the City experienced moderate to strong population growth; largely along the edge of the City in Super Neighborhoods such as Central Southwest, Addicks Park Ten, and Greenspoint.

Super Neighborhoods with declining population

Almost 25% of the City (19 of 88 SN) experienced declining populations, primarily in the eastern half of the City. More than half of this decline in population occurred in Super Neighborhoods north of downtown, especially Acres Homes and Trinity/ Houston Gardens. The remainder occurred in Super Neighborhoods south and east of Downtown, including Sunnyside, Minnitex, Clinton Park/ Fidelity, and East Little York/ Homestead.

Race/ Hispanic Origin

Between 1990 and 2000 the White population grew by over 40,000. However, it became smaller as a percentage of the total because the population increases of other racial/ethnic groups were greater. People of other race increased the most, from 14% to 20% of the total population. Between 1990 and 2000 the Hispanic* population grew from 26% to 37% of the population.

**Hispanic in this context is considered an ethnic group and include people who consider themselves to be of White, Black, Asian, or Other race.*

White Population

In 2000, the White population constituted a majority (50% or more) in areas to the west of Downtown and to the far northeast and far southeast and a few Super Neighborhoods east of Downtown. These areas changed little from 1990, although the number of Super Neighborhoods with a White majority declined from 46 to 41. The largest White populations in 2000 were located in Kingwood, Clear Lake, Memorial, Greater Uptown, and Alief, much the same as in 1990.

Black Population

In 2000, Blacks constituted the majority of the population to the south and northeast of Downtown as well as Independence Heights and Acres Homes to the north. Since 1990, 3 (out of 23) Super Neighborhoods have lost their Black majority. In 2000, the Black population was in greatest numbers in the far southwest and South. Alief, Greater Fondren Southwest and Central Southwest Super Neighborhoods have the largest Black population. Although they did not make up a majority, the Black population in Alief, Braeburn, Greater Inwood, and Greater Greenspoint is quite large.

Asian Population

In 2000, the Asian population had several areas of especially high concentration: the Medical Center 38% , Westbranch 26% , and Alief 26% of total population. These three areas had the highest concentration of Asians in 1990 and they continued to increase with Medical Center increasing 22%, Westbranch 20%, and Alief 18%.)

The Asian population is largest to the southwest and in Northside/ Northline areas. This follows the larger population trend that has made these areas some of the most populous in the City.

"Other" Ethnic Category

Concentrations of the persons of "Other" race can be found particularly in the southeast as well as west and north of Downtown. Magnolia Park and Park Place have the highest concentrations in the City at almost half of the population. This represents a slight decline from 1990 when the "Other" racial group made up a majority in 3 Super Neighborhoods to the southeast, inside Loop 610. (Only Magnolia Park is in common, which fell from 63% to less than 50% in the "Other" category.) In 2000 more people in the "Other" racial category lived in 4 Super Neighborhoods than anywhere else: Northside/ Northline, Gulfgate, Sharpstown, Alief.

** Hispanic in this context is considered an ethnic group and may include people from all of the above categories. Because of this it must be considered separately in terms of its proportion of the total population.*

Table 2.1
Population by Race

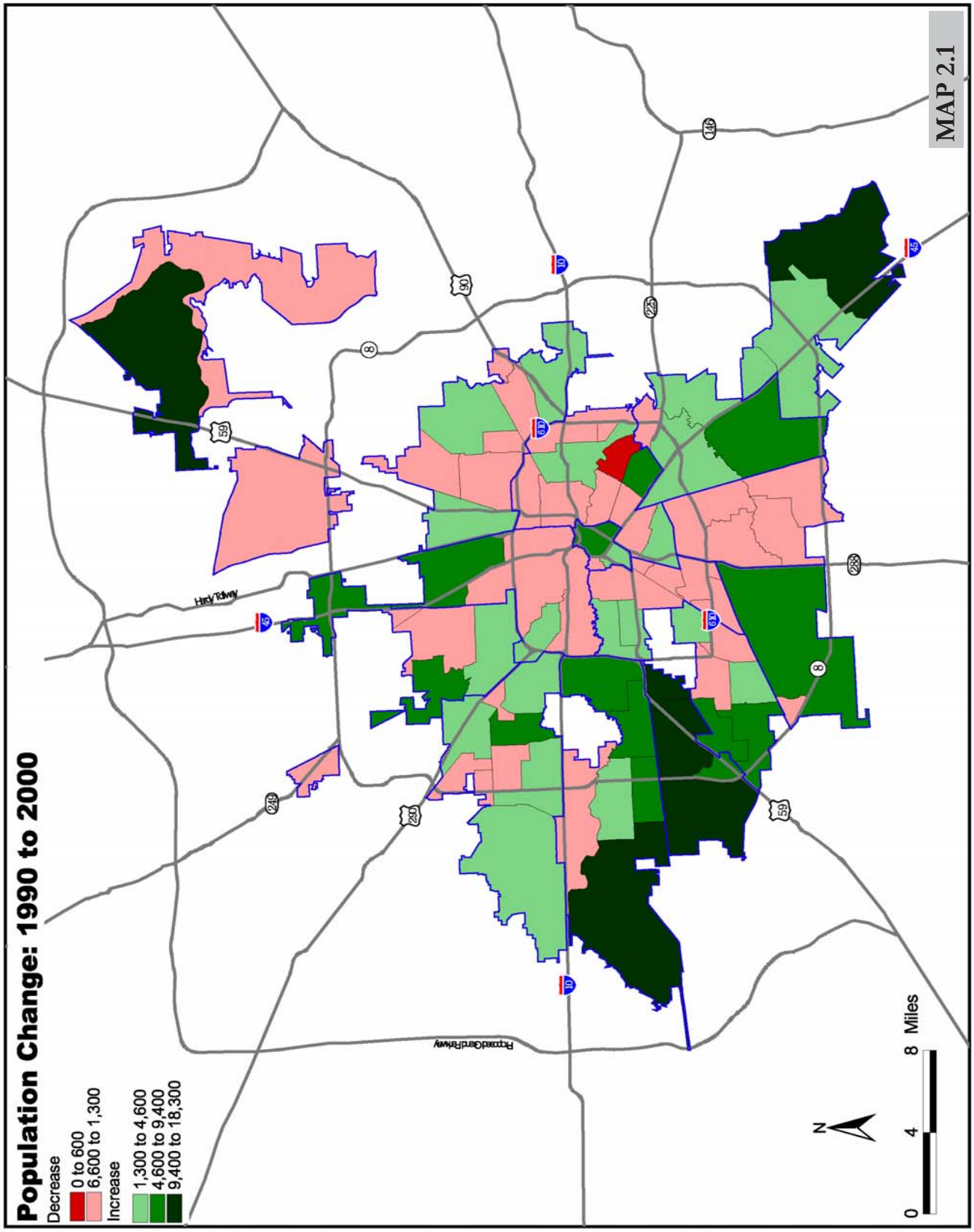
	2000	*1990*	Change	Percent Change
White	963,437	*922,955*	40,482	4.4%
Black	493,149	*464,324*	28,825	6.2%
Asian	111,626	*74,542*	37,084	49.7%
Other	386,636	*244,776*	141,860	58.0%
Total	**1,954,848**	***1,706,597***	**248,251**	**14.5%**

Population by Hispanic Origin

	2000	*1990*	Change	Percent Change
Hispanic	731,680	*448,438*	283,242	63.2%
Non-Hispanic	1,223,168	*1,258,178*	(35,010)	-2.8%
Total	**1,954,848**	***1,706,597***	**248,251**	**14.5%**

Hispanic

In contrast to 1990 when the Hispanic population was concentrated within Loop 610, in 2000, the Hispanic population was a majority in the southeast and in a number of Super Neighborhoods to the north and northwest outside Loop 610. The Hispanic population grew considerably citywide between 1990 and 2000 and areas that had the largest Hispanic populations in 1990 generally continued to have the largest Hispanic populations in 2000. The Hispanic population in 2000 was largest in Northside/ Northline, Sharpstown, Gulfton, and Alief. Although all of these Super Neighborhoods had large Hispanic populations in 1990, only Northside/ Northline was in the top four Super Neighborhoods for highest Hispanic population.


Population Change: 1990 to 2000
Decrease
0 to 600
6,600 to 1,300
Increase
1,300 to 4,600
4,600 to 9,400
9,400 to 18,300
Hardy Toll Way
Ringgold Gerd Fwy
0
4
8 Miles
N

MAP 2.1

Figure 2.1
Population by Race: 2000

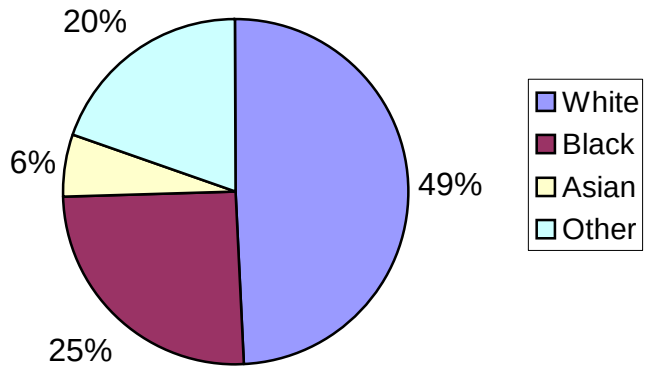
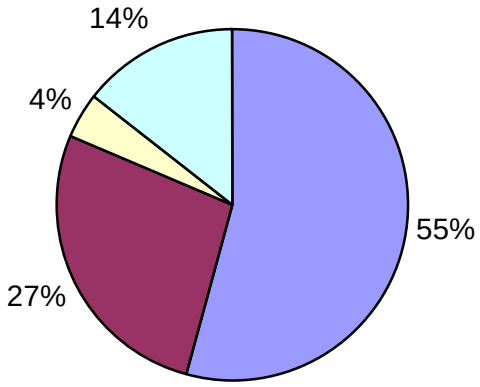
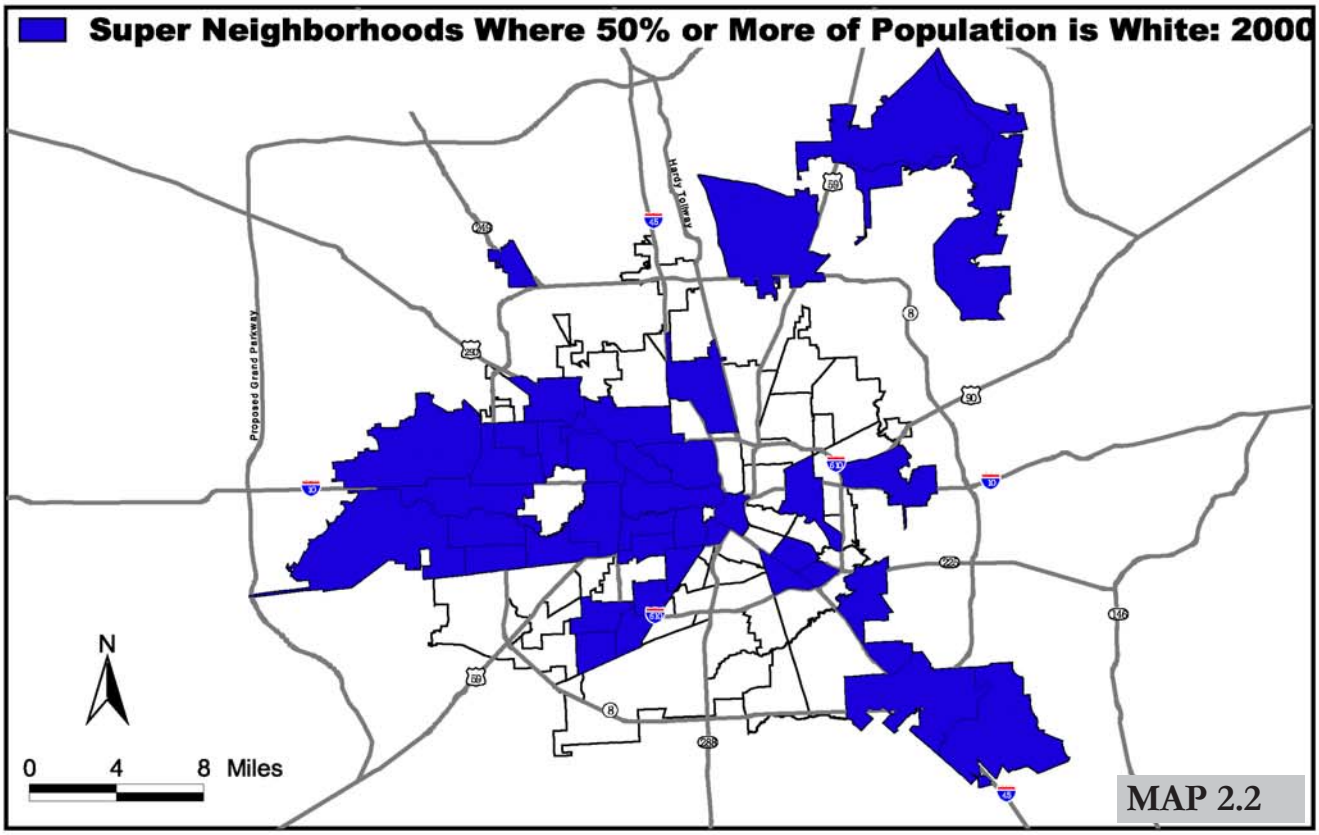
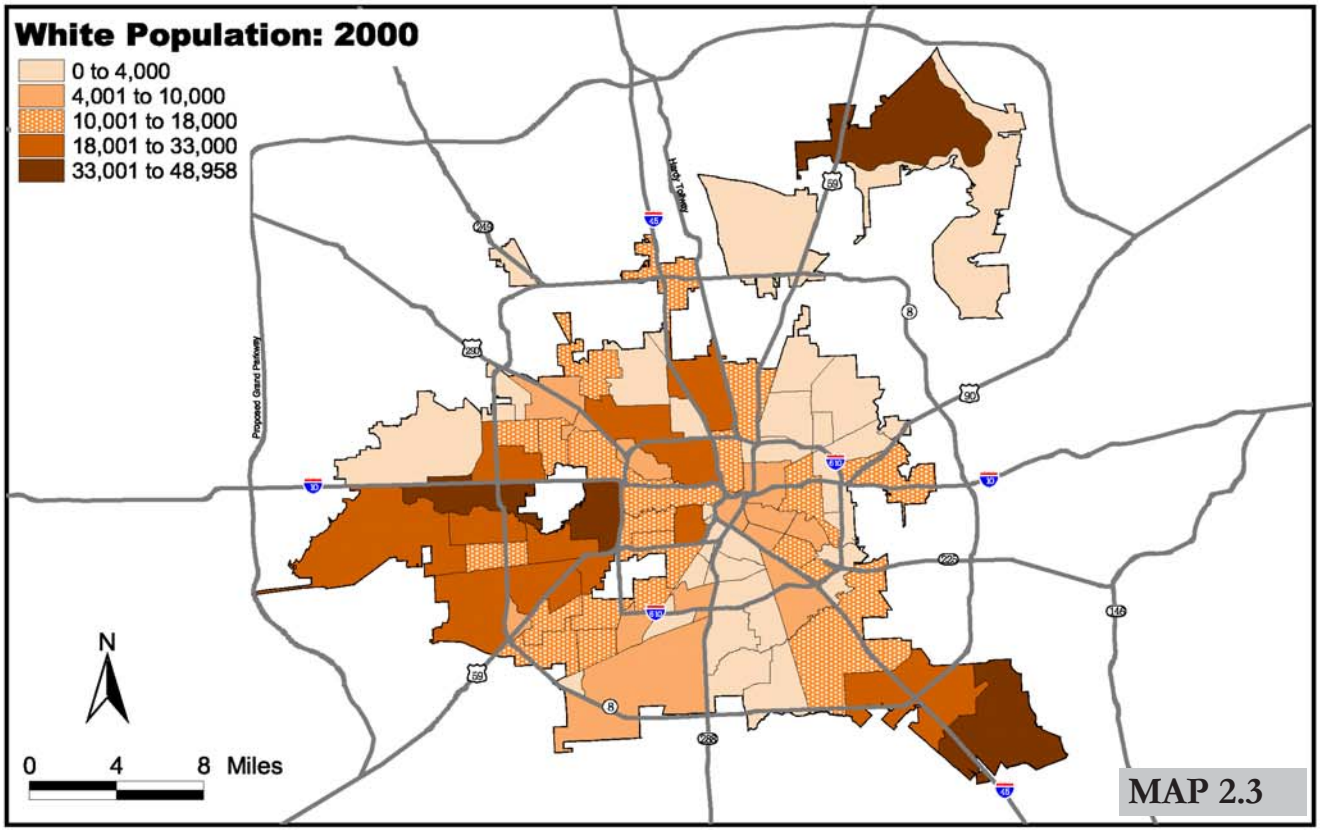


Figure 2.2
Population by Race: 1990

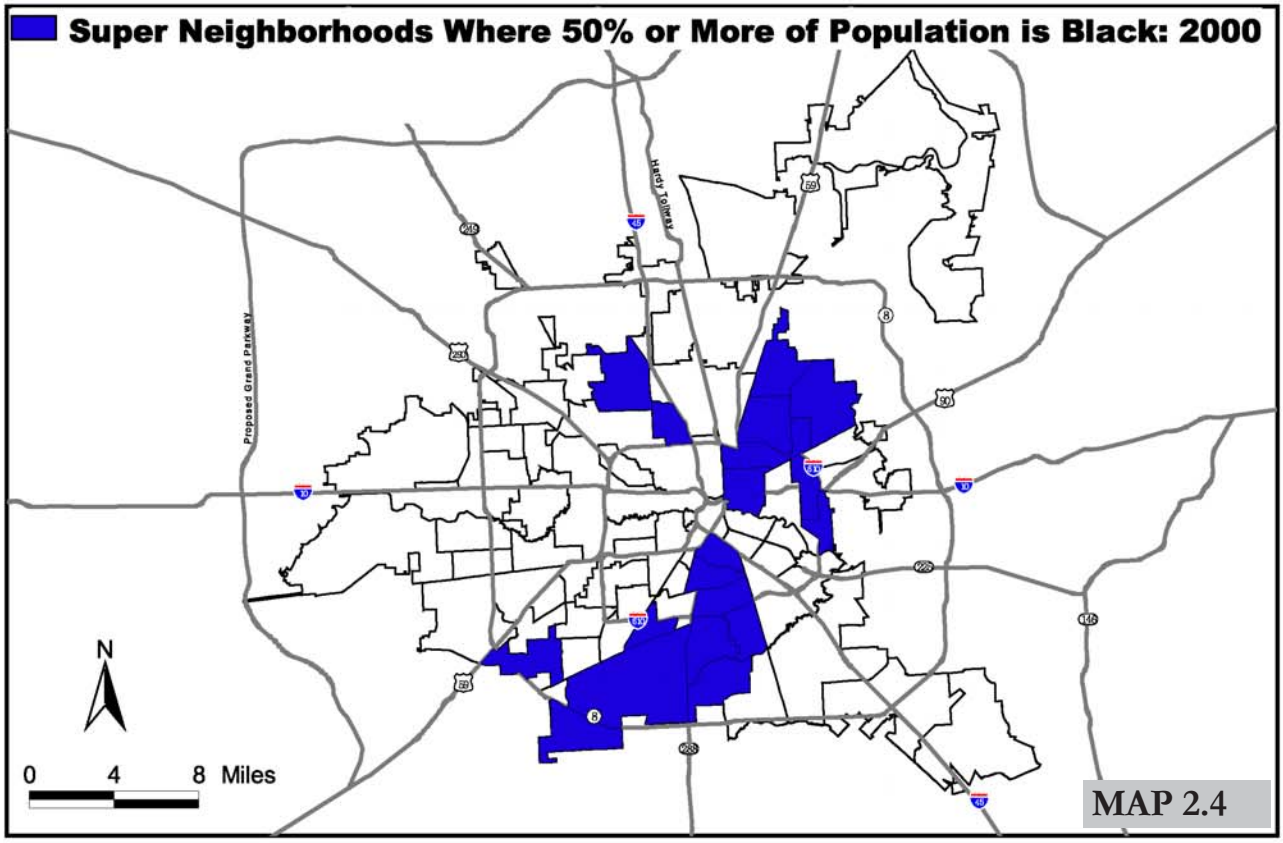



Super Neighborhoods Where 50% or More of Population is White: 2000
Hardy Toll Way
Proposed Grand Parkway
N
0 4 8 Miles

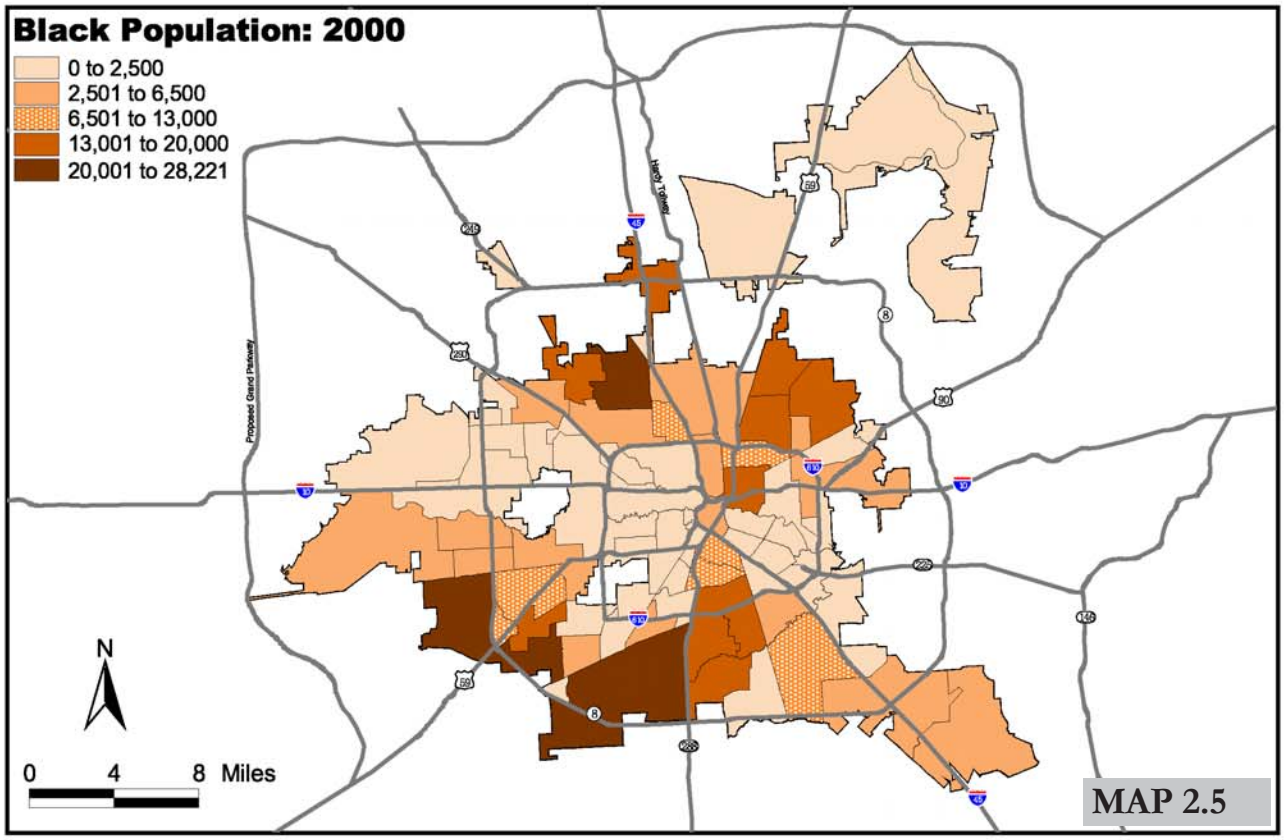
MAP 2.2


White Population: 2000
0 to 4,000
4,001 to 10,000
10,001 to 18,000
18,001 to 33,000
33,001 to 48,958
Hardy Toll Way
Proposed Grand Parkway
N
0 4 8 Miles

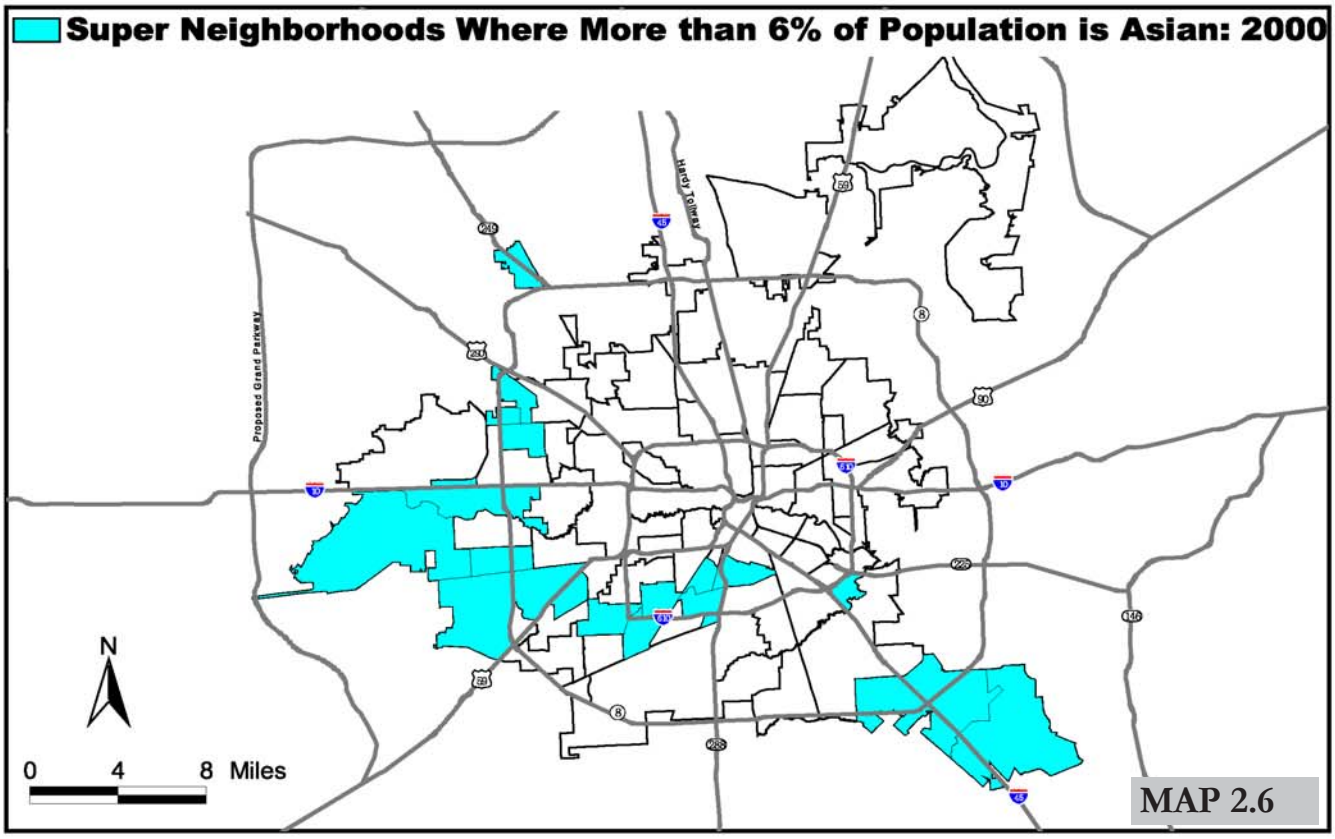
MAP 2.3


Super Neighborhoods Where 50% or More of Population is Black: 2000
Hardy Tollway
Proposed Grand Parkway
N
0 4 8 Miles

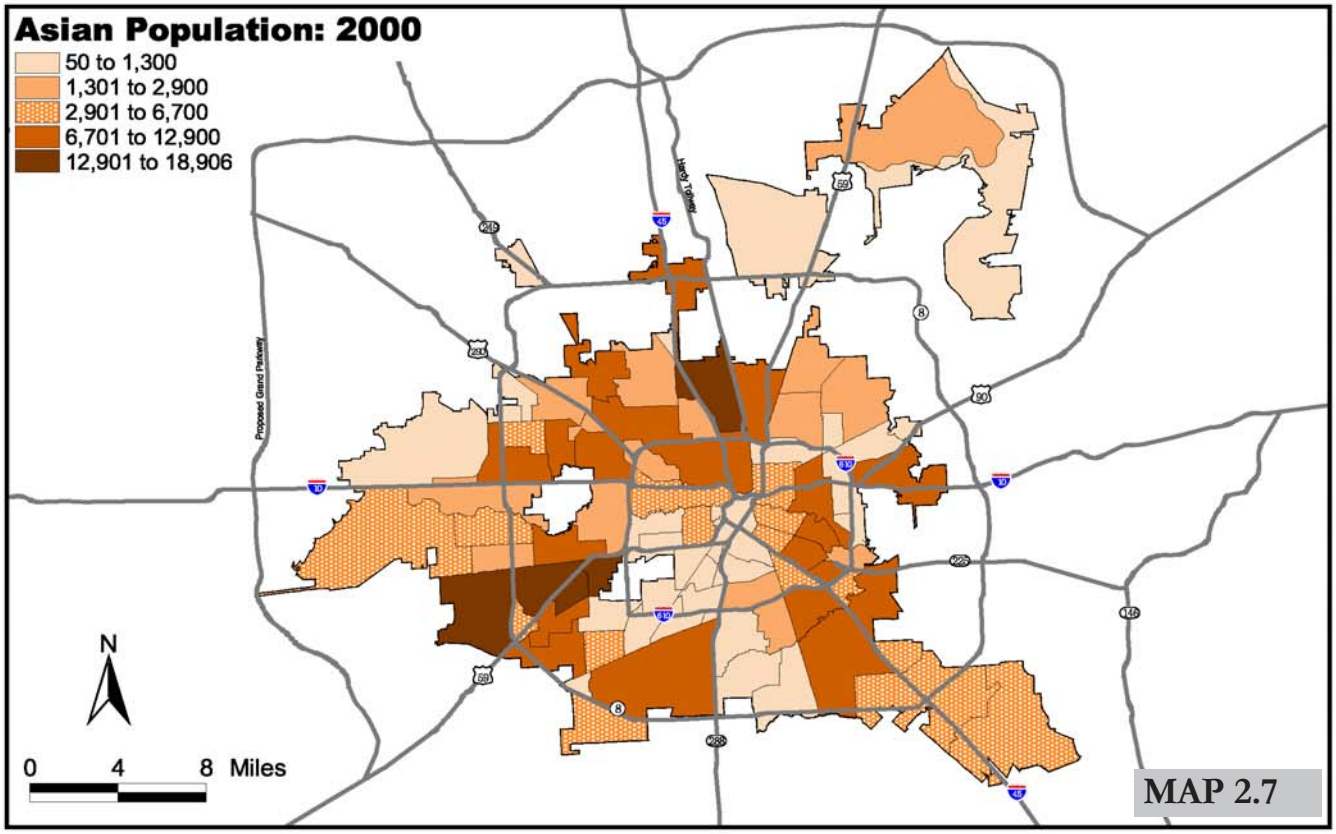
MAP 2.4


Black Population: 2000
0 to 2,500
2,501 to 6,500
6,501 to 13,000
13,001 to 20,000
20,001 to 28,221
Hardy Tollway
Proposed Grand Parkway
N
0 4 8 Miles

MAP 2.5

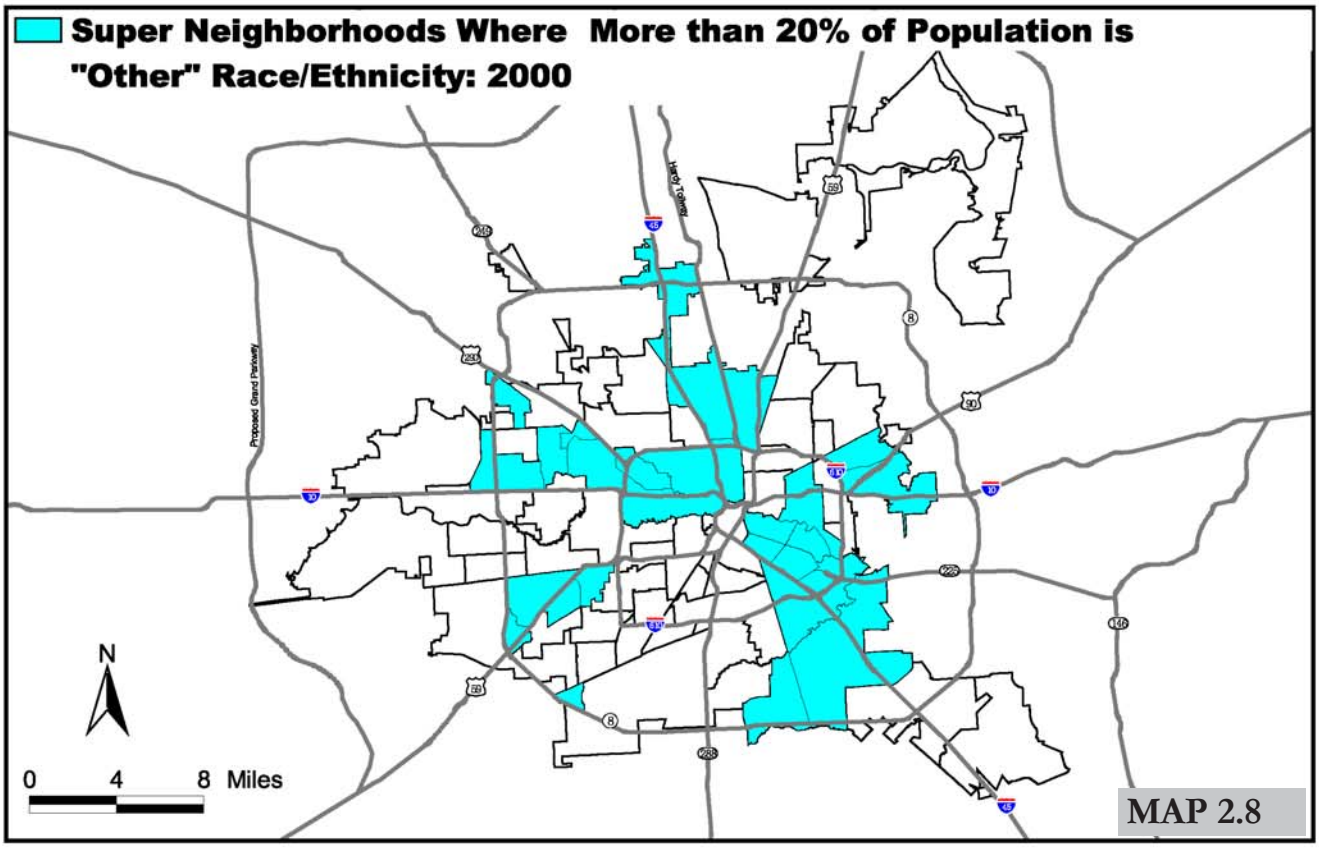


MAP 2.6

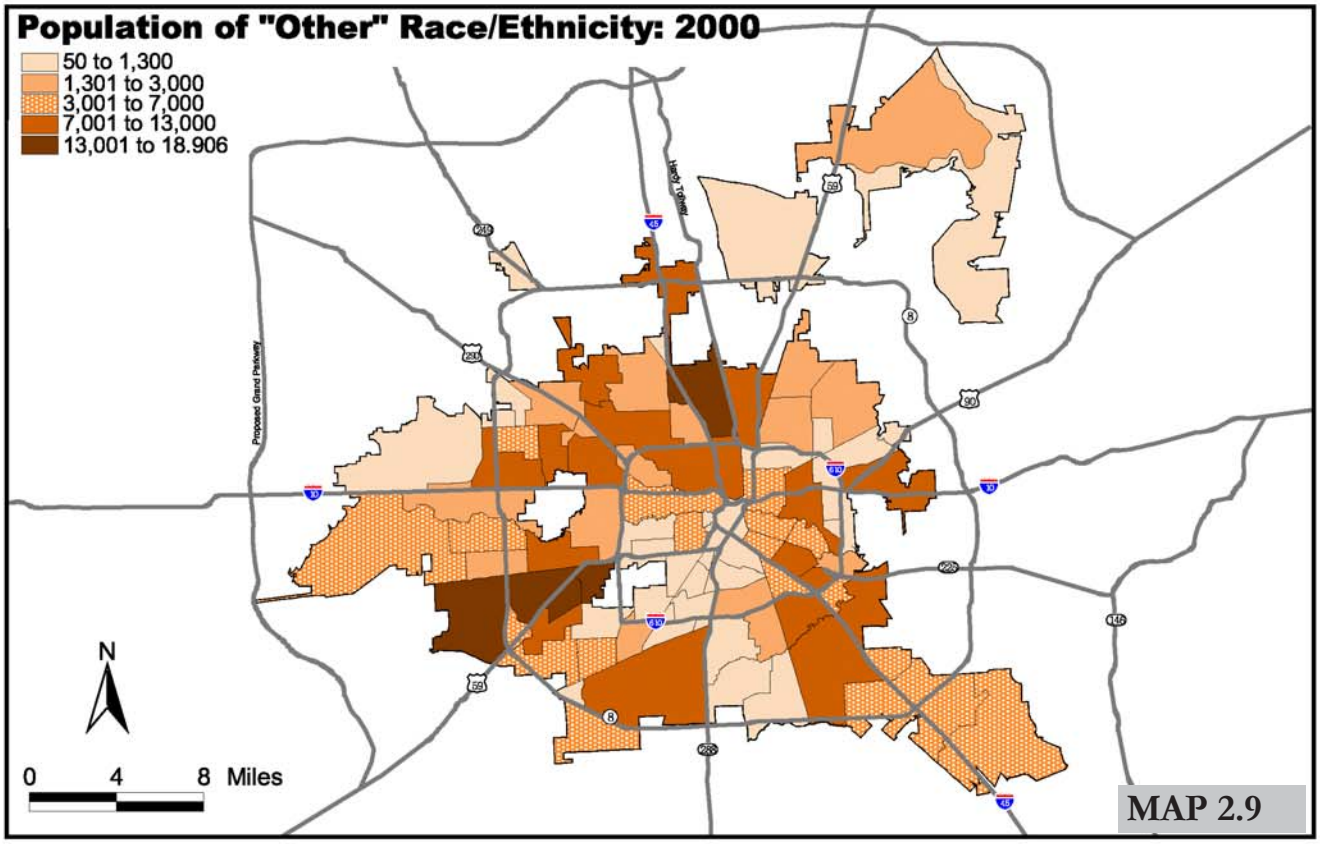


MAP 2.7

Houston Housing and Households 2000 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)
City of Houston Planning and Development Department, Long-Range Planning Division

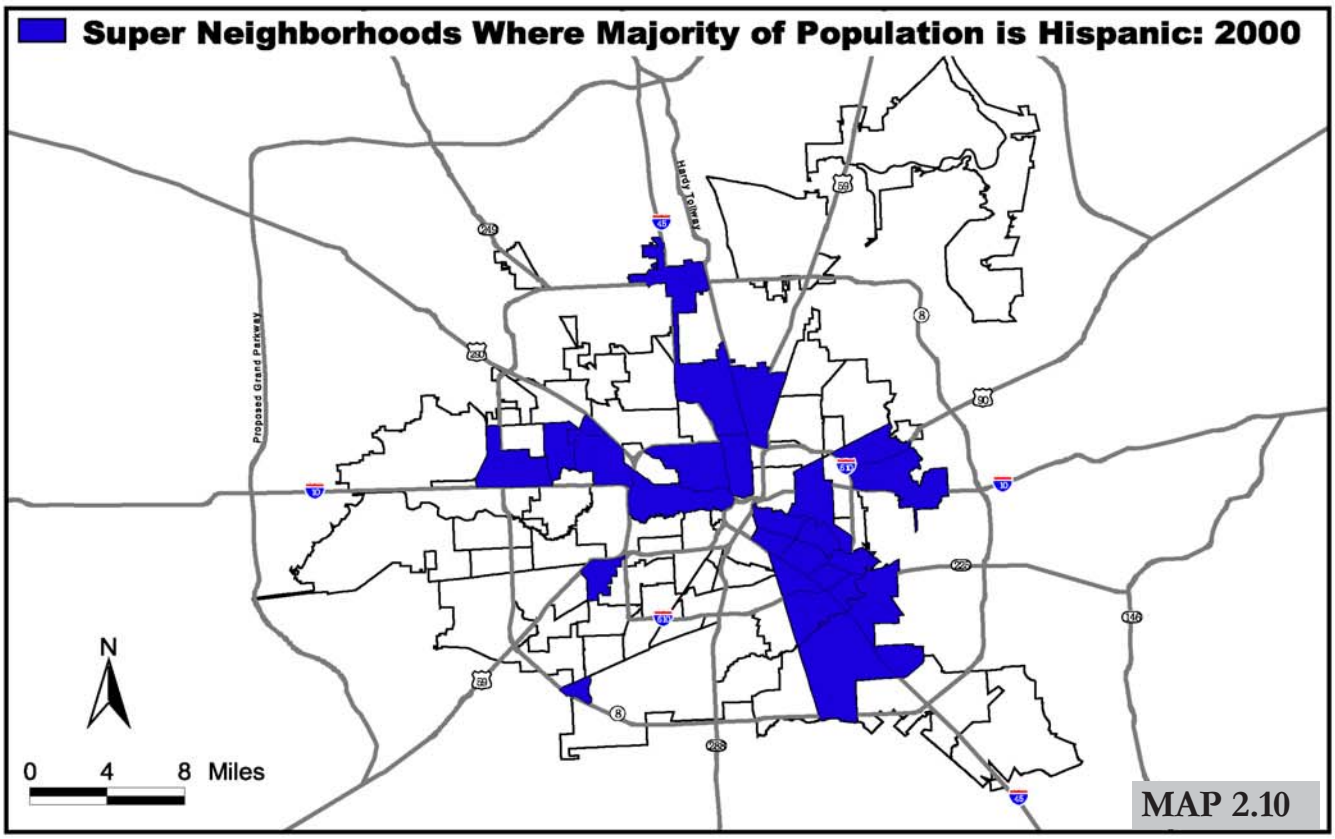


MAP 2.8

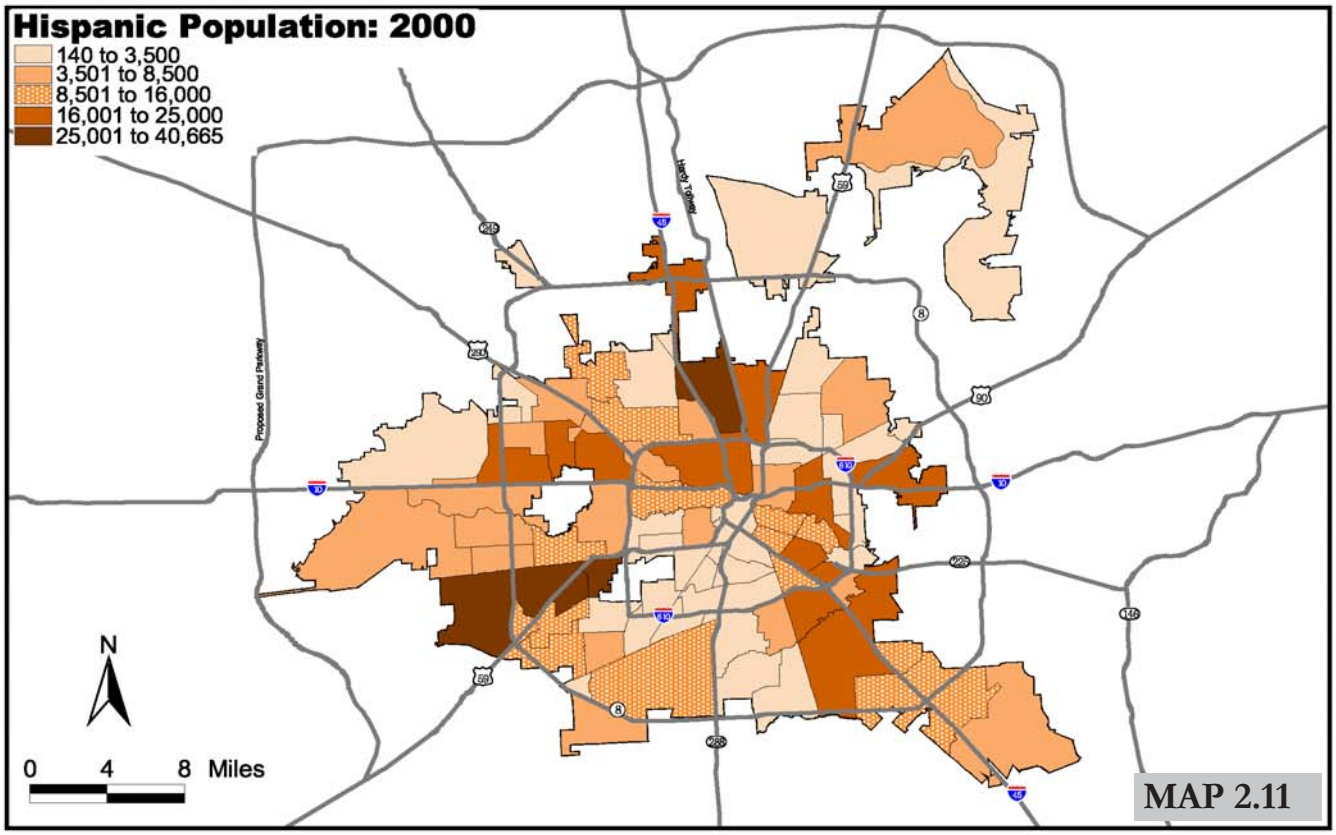


MAP 2.9

Houston Housing and Households 2000 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)
City of Houston Planning and Development Department, Long-Range Planning Division



MAP 2.10



MAP 2.11

NATIVE AND FOREIGN BORN POPULATION

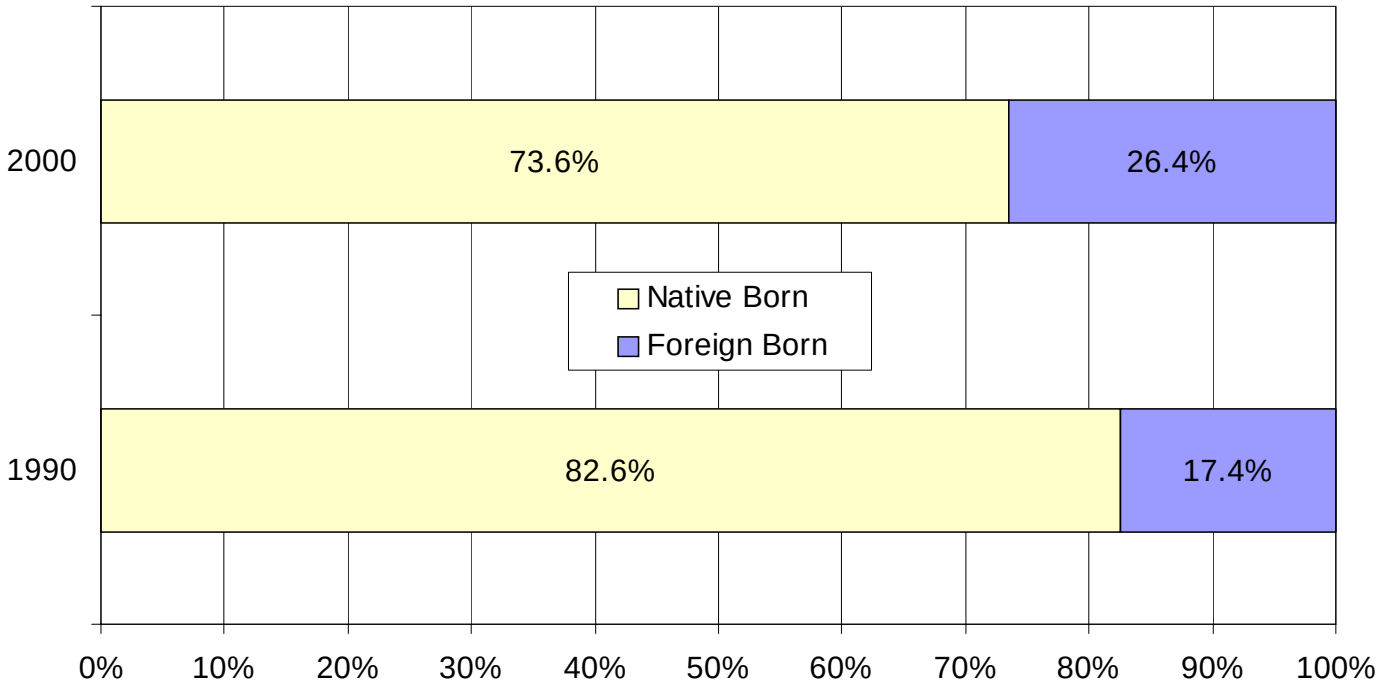
Per the Census Bureau, the native population includes anyone who was a U.S. citizen at birth. It includes people born in the United States, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Island Areas (such as Guam). People who were born in a foreign country but have at least one American (U.S. citizen) parent also are included in this category.

Foreign-born people are those who indicated they were either a U.S. citizen by naturalization or were not a citizen of the United States.

In 2000, almost three quarters of Houston's population was native born, while the remainder was foreign-born. Between 1990 and 2000, the foreign-born population increased by 74%, which is much faster than other major U.S. cities. Of those who are Foreign Born, only a quarter are citizens.

Over a quarter of the foreign born population entered the country between 1980 and 1990, while over a half entered the country between 1990 and 2000. The largest numbers of recent immigrants, those who arrived between 1990 and 2000 are in the southwest, though areas to the north and

Figure 2.3
Native and Foreign Born Population: 1990 and 2000



Native-Born

In 2000 as well as in 1990, 90% or more of the native born population is concentrated in a group of Super Neighborhoods extending south from Downtown as well as another group northeast of Downtown (including Lake Houston and Kingwood). Alief, Kingwood and Clear Lake have the largest native-born populations. Fourth Ward, Carverdale, and Medical Center, all with fairly small populations, had the fewest native- born residents.

Foreign-Born

More than 40% of the population is Foreign Born in three areas; east (Gulfgate and Lawndale/ Wayside), southwest (Alief, Sharpstown, and Gulfton), and northwest (Spring Branch area). This represents a major change from 1990 when only one Super Neighborhood (Gulfton) had more than 40% of its population as foreign born. In two Super Neighborhoods, the foreign-born population makes up a majority of the total population; Gulfton (61%), Pecan Park (52%).

Both in 1990 and 2000, the foreign born population remained concentrated in largely the same areas of the City: southwest, north side of I-10 extending west outside Loop 610, and the southeast.

Alief, Sharpstown, and Gulfton had the largest foreign-born populations throughout the decade between 1990 and 2000. A number of Super Neighborhoods on the east side of Houston including Clinton Park/ Fidelity, Lake Houston, and Settegast had fewer than 150 foreign-born residents.

Foreign Born Citizen

Foreign-born citizens make up less than 50% of the total population in every Super Neighborhood except: Gulfton (61%) Pecan Park (52%), and Gulfgate/ Pine Valley (50%).

Table 2.2
Native and Foreign Born Population

	Persons		% of total	
	2000	*1990*	**2000**	***1990***
Native-Born	1,439,329	*1,409,894*	73.6%	*82.6%*
Foreign-Born Population	517,091	*296,718*	26.4%	*17.4%*
Total	1,956,420	*1,706,612*	100.0%	*100.0%*

Change in Native and Foreign Born Population

	Persons		#	%
	2000	*1990*	**change**	**change**
Native-Born	1,439,329	*1,409,894*	29,435	2.1%
Foreign-Born Population	517,091	*296,718*	220,373	74.3%
Total	1,956,420	*1,706,612*	249,808	14.6%

Foreign Born Non Citizen

Foreign-born non-citizens account for a third of the total foreign-born population in the southwest, northeast, and east side of the City.

In 1990, population of foreign-born citizens was not differenciated from foreign-born non citizens. A total of foreign-born population was estimated.

Table 2.3
Foreign Born Population by Citizenship

	Persons	
	2000	*1990*
Foreign Born Citizens	136,677	*n/a*
Foreign Born Non Citizens	380,356	*n/a*
Total Foreign-Born Population	**517,091**	***296,718***

YEAR OF ENTRY OF FOREIGN BORN POPULATION

The foreign born population that arrived in the 1970s or before was spread in pockets around the City. Higher concentrations of foreign-born population that arrived in the 1980s tends to live in the southern part of Houston and in the Airport Super Neighborhood. Those that arrived in the U.S. in the 1990s tended to locate in the southwest, far west, and areas south of Downtown inside Loop 610.

Arrived between 1990 and 2000

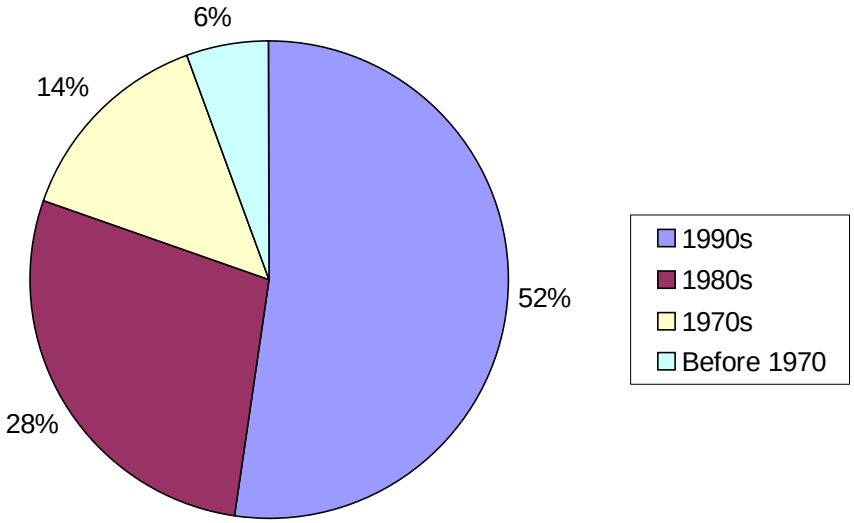
The foreign-born population that arrived between 1990 and 2000 accounts for more than half of the foreign-born population in the City. Where foreign-born populations are largest, most notably the southwest, the concentration of those who arrived between 1990 and 2000 are also the largest. In these Super Neighborhoods between 20% and 30% of the total population (Foreign Born and Native Born) entered the United States between 1990 and 2000.

In Gulfgate, 40% of the total population is recently immigrated (foreign born, that entered the country between 1990 and 2000).

Arrived between 1980 – 1990

The foreign-born population that arrived between 1980 and 1990 accounts for more than a quarter of all foreign-born population in the City. Notable concentrations (40%+) of the foreign born population arrived between 1980 and 1990 occur in three Super Neighborhoods to the south (Fort Bend Houston, South Acres, Crestmont Park, South Park) and in the Airport Area to the north. As in the period between 1990 and 2000, the southwest continued to have the largest foreign-born population.

Figure 2.4
Year of Entering Country for Foreign-Born Population



Arrived between 1970 and 1980

Generally speaking, those entering the U.S. during the 1970s make up less than one quarter of the foreign born population. A few Super Neighborhoods stand out for higher concentrations. In South Acres/ Crestmont Park almost one third of the foreign born population arrived during the 1970s. In a few other Super Neighborhoods approximately one quarter of the Foreign Born population arrived during this time period: Lake Houston, Eldorado/ Oates Prairie, Pleasantville Area, and Minnetex.

As in the period between 1980 and 1990, the southwest continued to have the largest foreign-born population in this category.

Arrived before 1970

Only 6% of the citywide foreign-born population entered before 1970. Many of the higher concentrations of foreign born population that arrived before 1970 are found inside Loop 610. While concentrations vary between 1970 and 2000, the major areas that are home to foreign born populations in this category changed little.

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME BY ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH

The US Census Bureau measures the use of different languages in the nation by using several indicators. For example, 'language spoken at home' measures the current use of languages other than English, while 'ability to speak English' measures the varying levels of proficiency in the use of the English language for persons 5+ years that *do not speak English at home*. This is based on the ability to speak English either "Very Well", "Well", "Not Well", or "Not at All". (See Appendix A for more details).

In 2000, the people of Houston spoke more than 60 languages, attesting to the rich diversity of culture and ethnic backgrounds. The majority of Houstonians speak only English at home (59%); one third speak Spanish at home; the remainder speaks another language.

Between 1990 and 2000, the proportion of people who speak English at home dropped significantly from 70% to 59% of the population and the proportion of people who do not speak English at home increased from 30% to 41%. Of those who speak a language

Table 2.5
Language Spoken at Home

	Persons		% of total	
	2000	***1990***	**2000**	***1990***
Total Population 5 Years and Older	1,794,753	*1,565,365*		
Speak English Only	1,053,207	*1,097,919*	58.7%	*70.1%*
Speak Spanish	597,000	*365,481*	33.3%	*23.3%*
Spanish - Speak English "Well" or "Better"	461,583	*253,897*	25.7%	*16.2%*
Spanish - Speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All"	135,417	*111,584*	7.5%	*7.1%*
Speak Other including Asian	144,546	*101,965*	8.1%	*6.5%*
Other and Asian - Speak English "Well" or "Better"	119,710	*87,199*	6.7%	*5.6%*
Other and Asian - Speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All"	24,836	*14,766*	1.4%	*0.9%*

Change in Language Spoken at Home

	Persons		#	%
	2000	***1990***	**change**	**change**
Total Population 5 Years and Older	1,794,753	*1,565,365*	229,388	14.7%
Speak English Only	1,053,207	*1,097,919*	(44,712)	-4.1%
Speak Spanish	597,000	*365,481*	231,519	63.3%
Spanish - Speak English "Well" or "Better"	461,583	*253,897*	207,686	81.8%
Spanish - Speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All"	135,417	*111,584*	23,833	21.4%
Speak Other including Asian	144,546	*101,965*	42,581	41.8%
Other and Asian - Speak English "Well" or "Better"	119,710	*87,199*	32,511	37.3%
Other and Asian - Speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All"	24,836	*14,766*	10,070	68.2%

other than English at home, just over 20% speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All", while the remainder speaks English "Very Well" or "Well".

Overall, in 2000, people with low levels of English proficiency (ability to speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All") constitute 9% of the total population 5 years and older, a slight increase from 8% since 1990. More people in this category live in Sharpstown (16,833), Gulfton (16,282), Alief (13,953) and Northside/ Northline (11,724) than anywhere else.

Highest concentrations occurred in southwest and southeast, and to a lesser degree in the north and northwest, where 20% to 40% of the population had low levels of English proficiency. These areas are largely the same as those with the largest number of people in this category. In 1990, the number of areas with 20% of the population and low English

Table 2.6

Ability to Speak English of all Persons 5 Years and Older

	Persons		% of total	
	2000	***1990***	**2000**	***1990***
Speak English "Well" or "Very Well"	1,634,500	*1,439,015*	91.1%	*91.9%*
Speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All"	160,253	*126,350*	8.9%	*8.1%*
Total	**1,794,753**	***1,565,365***	**100.0%**	***100.0%***

Change in Ability to Speak English of all Persons 5 Years and Older

	Persons		#	%
	2000	***1990***	**change**	**change**
Speak English "Well" or "Very Well"	1,634,500	*1,439,015*	195,485	20.3%
Speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All"	160,253	*126,350*	33,903	100.7%
Total	**1,794,753**	***1,565,365***	**229,388**	**14.7%**

Table 2.7

Ability to Speak English of Persons Who Speak Language Other Than English at Home

	Persons		% of total	
	2000	***1990***	**2000**	***1990***
Speak English "Well" or "Very Well"	581,293	*341,096*	22.0%	*27.0%*
Speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All"	160,253	*126,350*	78.0%	*73.0%*
Total	**741,546**	***467,446***	**100.0%**	***100.0%***

Change in Ability to Speak English of Persons Who Speak Language Other Than English at Home

	Persons		#	%
	2000	***1990***	**change**	**change**
Speak English "Well" or "Very Well"	581,293	*341,096*	33,903	9.9%
Speak English "Not Well" or "Not at All"	160,253	*126,350*	240,197	190.1%
Total	**741,546**	***467,446***	**274,100**	**58.6%**

proficiency was much smaller and confined to Super Neighborhoods to the southeast and Gulfton in the southwest.

Speak English at Home

Both in 1990 and 2000, the English-speaking population was concentrated south of Downtown and extending to the northeast from Downtown, where more than 85% of the population spoke English at home.

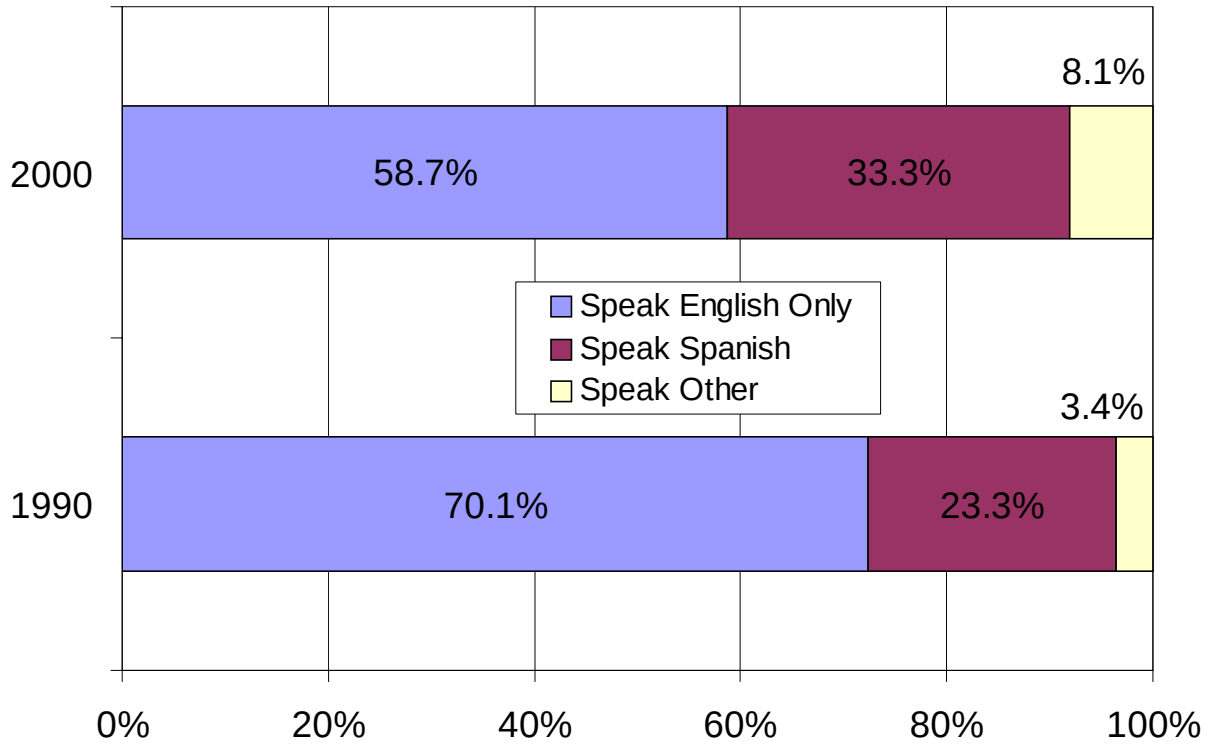
Speak Spanish at Home

The majority of the population immediately north of Downtown and to the east and southeast of Downtown speak Spanish at home. More than 20% of the population in most Super Neighborhoods in Houston except Kingwood, Clear Lake and parts of the south, west speak Spanish at home. Between 1990 and 2000, people who speak Spanish at home increased both in concentration and number, most notably in the southwest and northwest.

Speak English "Not Well" or "Not At All"

The number of people who speak Spanish at home and English "not well" or "not at all" increased between 1990 and 2000, but not as fast as the Spanish Speaking population. In 2000, 22% of the Spanish-speaking population had low levels of English proficiency, compared to 30% in 1990.

Figure 2.5
Language Spoken at Home



Speak Other Language at Home

Areas with large populations of people who speak languages other than English or Spanish at home are primarily in the southwest, far southeast, and Kingwood. Areas of concentration above the citywide percentage are largely in the same areas as those with larger populations in this category. The Medical Center (41%) and Astrodome (29%) Super Neighborhoods stand out with high concentrations of their population speaking a language other than English or Spanish at home.

Speak English "Not Well" or "Not At All"

In 1990 14% of those persons who spoke another language at home spoke English "not well or not at all". By 2000 the population had grown to 17%.

Figure 2.6
Ability to Speak English for All Persons 5 Years and Over

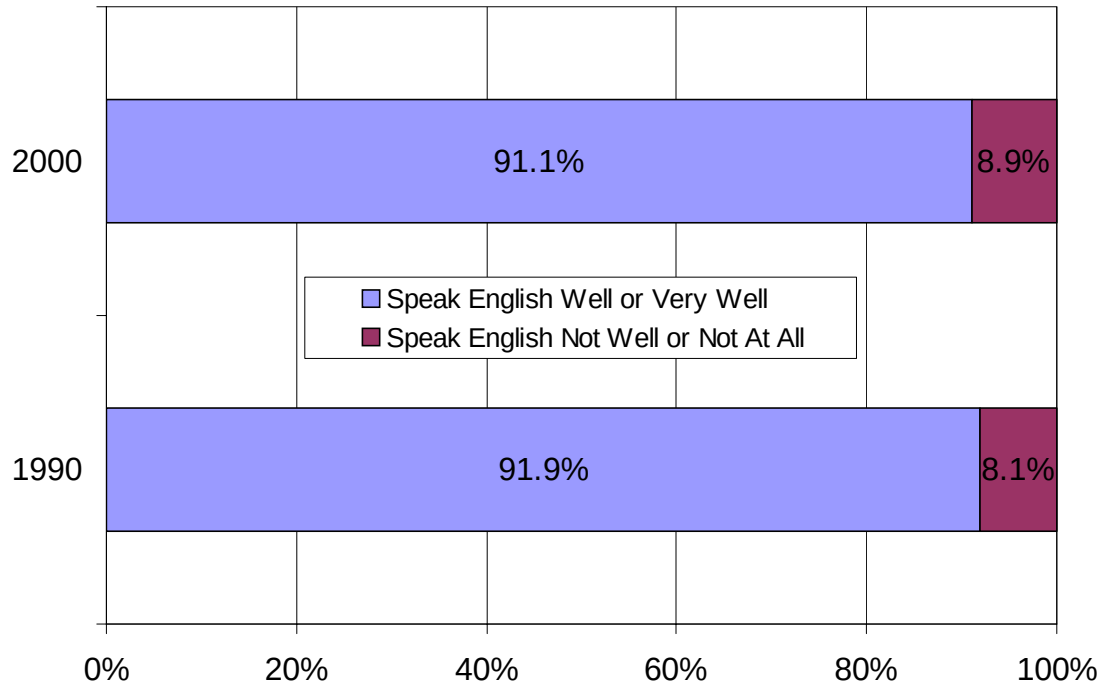
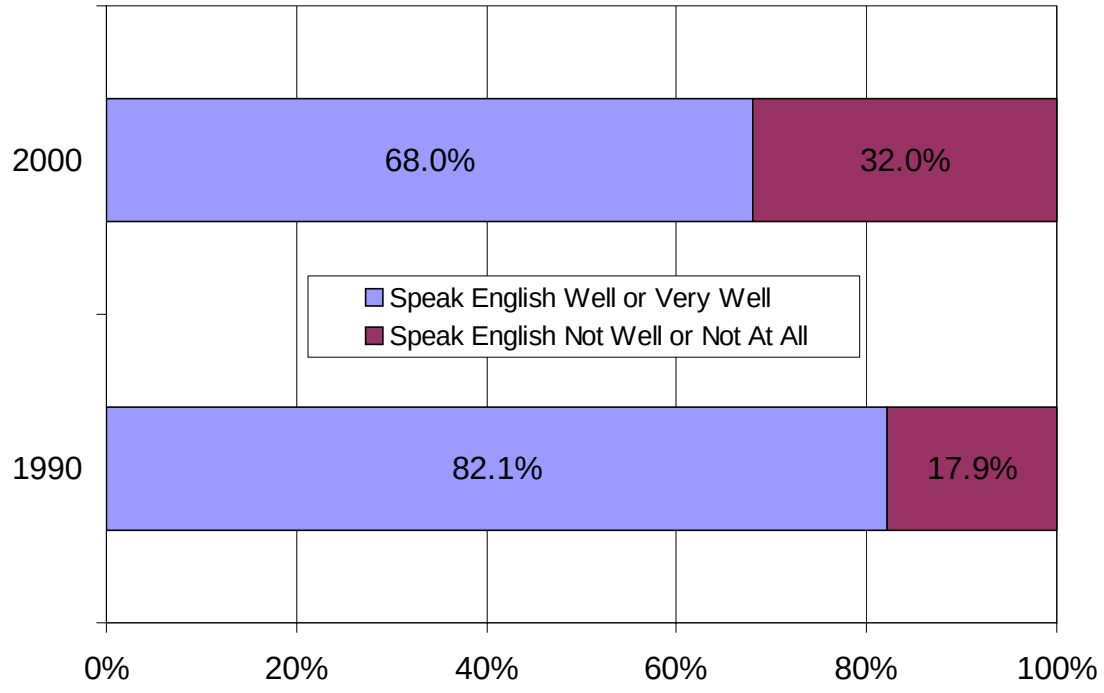
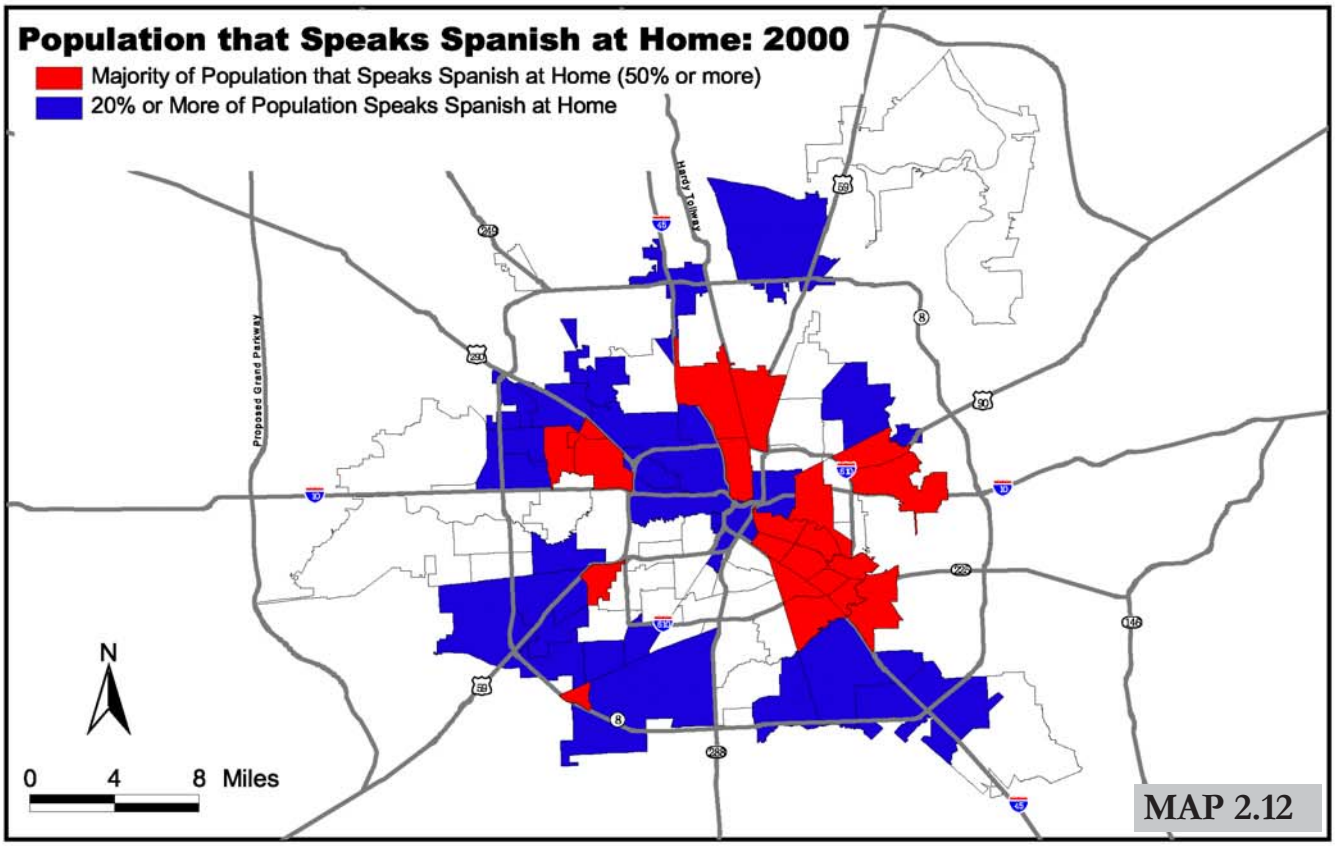
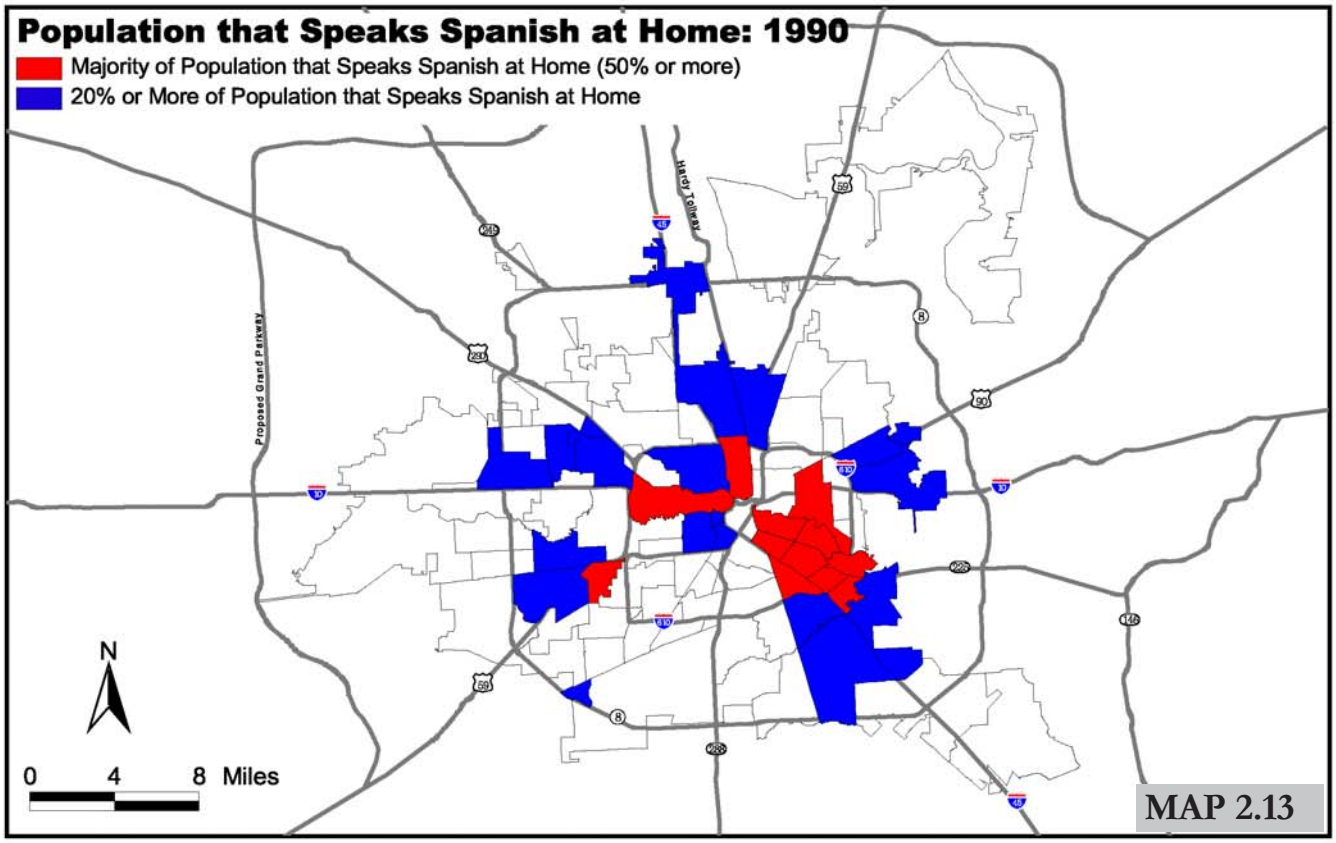


Figure 2.7
Ability to Speak English for Persons Who Speak a Language Other than English at Home



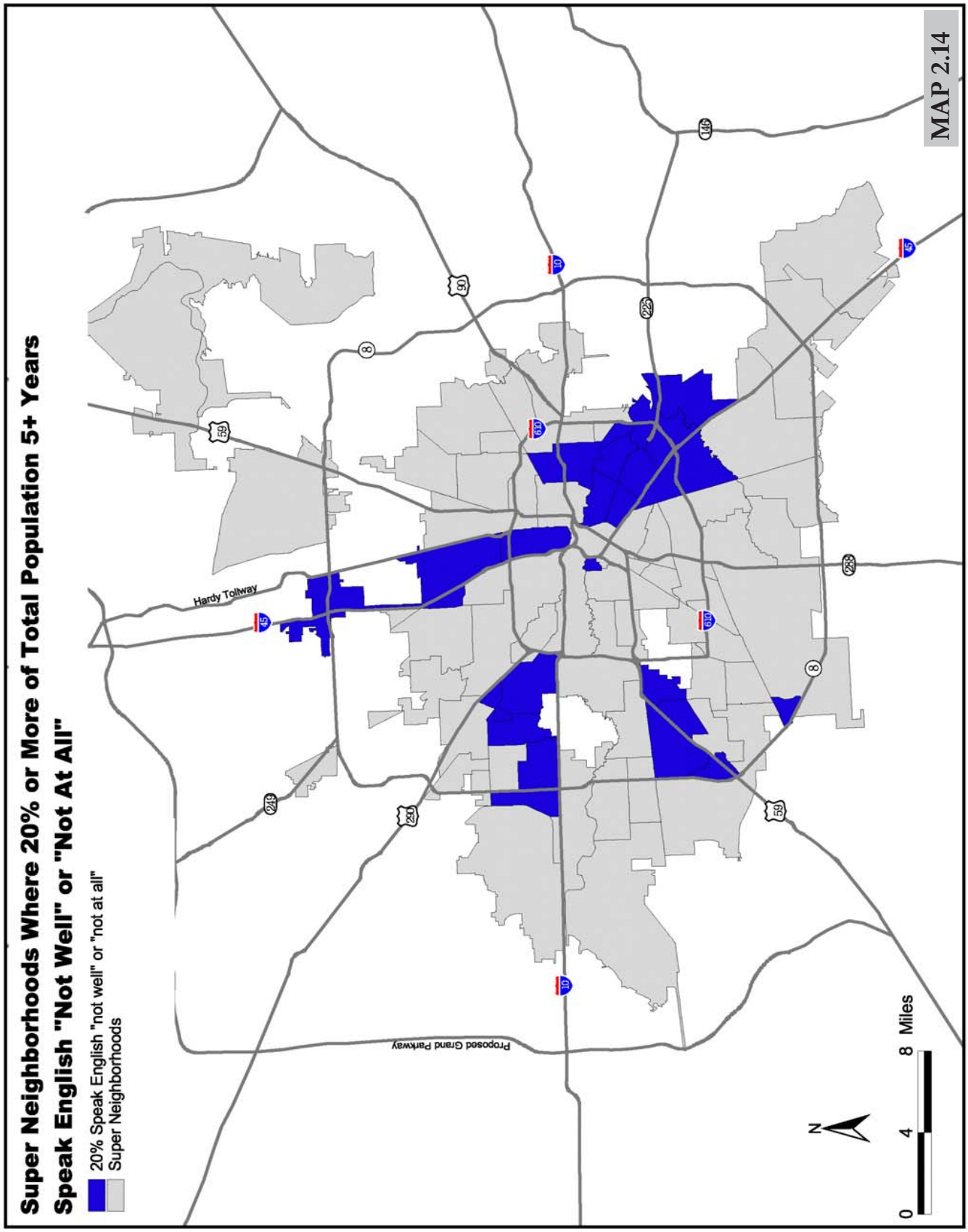


MAP 2.12



MAP 2.13

Houston Housing and Households 2000 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)
City of Houston Planning and Development Department, Long-Range Planning Division


Super Neighborhoods Where 20% or More of Total Population 5+ Years Speak English "Not Well" or "Not At All"
20% Speak English "not well" or "not at all"
Super Neighborhoods
Hardy Tollway
Proposed Grand Parkway
N
0
4
8 Miles

MAP 2.14