

2015 Neighborhood Board Diversity Survey

Neighborhood and Community
Relations Department
March 9, 2015



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Executive Summary

In November and December 2014, the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR) conducted an online survey, and contacted all 70 City-funded neighborhood organizations to request that individual board members respond to the survey. A printed copy could also be filled out and mailed to NCR. The following analysis reviews survey findings and compares them, where possible, to data from the U.S. Census Bureau for Minneapolis.

- * 428 of an estimated 820 neighborhood organization board members participated in the survey for a response rate of 52%.
- * Most survey participants (65%) have served on the neighborhood organizations for three years or less, and represent age groups comparable to the city as a whole.
- * They are less likely to have a disability (5.6% compared to 10.6% across Minneapolis) or to be renters (15.4% of survey participants compared to 52.8%).
- * Survey participants were more likely to report their race as “white alone” (81%) compared to Minneapolis (60%). The largest gap appears in those reporting as Hispanic/Latino heritage (2.3% of survey participants compared to 10.5% in Minneapolis).
- * 98% of survey participants reported having at least some formal education compared to 70% of Minneapolis residents. Almost 40% of survey participants have a post-graduate education, compared to 16.3% of Minneapolis residents.
- * Just over half of Minneapolis households (50.1%) have a household income of \$50,000 or less, compared to 25.5% of survey participants. Almost 60% of survey participants reported household income between \$50,000 and \$150,000 compared to 40.4% of Minneapolis households.
- * An analysis of survey data shows that achieving more equitable racial representation on neighborhood organization boards is within reach, requiring an average change of one or two individuals per neighborhood organization boards.
- * Further study is required to determine if survey participants are fully representative of all neighborhood organization board members. While the analysis shows that participation across the city was fairly uniform, with more diverse communities responding as much as less diverse communities, the analysis also seems to indicate that education, income, and homeowner status may influence who responds to the survey.
- * NCR should conduct further inquiries with neighborhood organizations with low participation in the survey to identify what factors may have inhibited individuals from responding.

Introduction

The City of Minneapolis benefits from the volunteer efforts of more than 800 residents who serve on 70 neighborhood organization boards across the City of Minneapolis. The City provides an annual funding allocation to these neighborhood organizations to identify and act on neighborhood priorities, influence City decisions and priorities, and increase involvement in the community.

Most board members are directly elected by residents and other community stakeholders, while a very small number may be appointed to fill vacancies between annual meetings. The funding guidelines require that funded neighborhood organizations be open to participation by all residents, and conduct activities that promote the inclusion of all age, ethnic and economic groups in the neighborhood's community participation efforts and in the decision-making processes of the organization.

The diversity of neighborhood organization boards is only one indicator of how effective neighborhood organizations are in broad community engagement and empowerment. This survey is not designed measure overall participation in neighborhood organizations which might occur through a number of other activities.

The 2015 Neighborhood Organization Board Diversity Survey is the first survey conducted by NCR to examine the demographic makeup of neighborhood organization boards. The survey design and analysis is intended to (1) create a baseline and characterize as accurately as possible the current makeup of neighborhood organization boards, (2) provide a basis for recommendations, (3) identify possible questions for further study.

Methodology

The Neighborhood Organization Board Diversity Survey was distributed to neighborhood organization boards during November and December 2014. Of approximately 820 neighborhood organization board members, 428 participated from 67 of the 70 funded neighborhood organizations for an overall response rate of 52%. While most neighborhood organizations had at least one participant, participation varied widely from neighborhood organization to neighborhood organization.

For the purposes of this report, Diversity includes gender, race, Hispanic/Latino origin, disability, home ownership status, formal educational attainment, age and income.

The Neighborhood Board Diversity Survey is voluntary. Respondents' participation is neither compulsory nor random. As a result, the survey is not scientific. Any propensity for one demographic group to participate or not participate is not weighted in the results. The validity of the survey is based on the response rate.

While participants were asked to report what neighborhood organization they represented on the survey, this data was used only to encourage participation from all neighborhoods. This data was separated from individual surveys during analysis to help protect confidentiality of individual participants and neighborhood organizations. Otherwise, all data from individual surveys was aggregated to the city-wide level.

Data from the survey was compared to data from the U.S. Census Bureau using American FactFinder (<http://factfinder2.census.gov>) generated February 23, 2015). Relative diversity of populations represented by neighborhood organizations was calculated using the Shannon Diversity Index, based on neighborhood data downloaded from Minnesota Compass on February 23, 2015.

Survey Findings

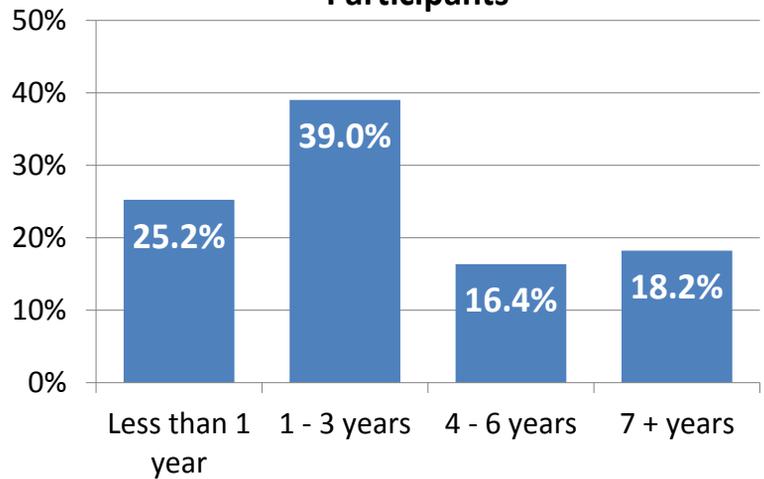
Length of Service:

While a small number of board members have served on their neighborhood board for more than seven years, a strong majority (66%) have served on neighborhood boards for three years or less.

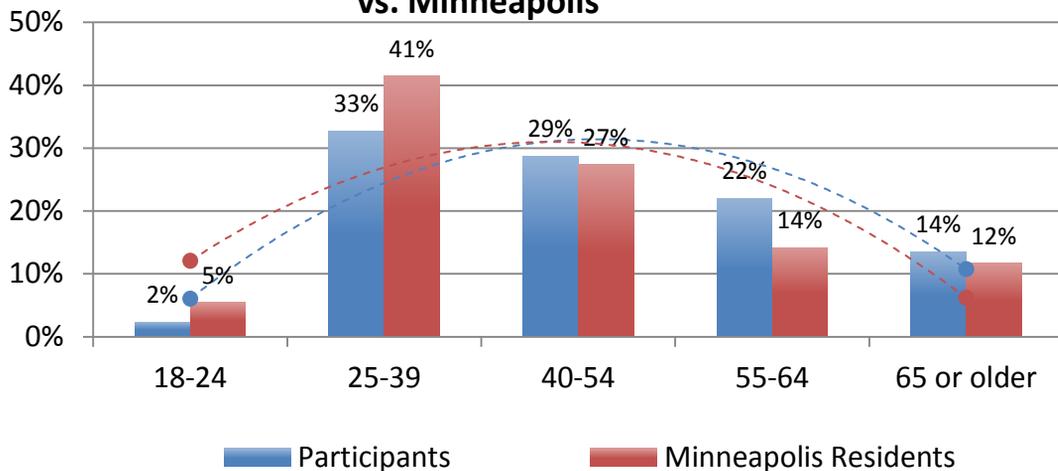
Age of Survey Participants Compared to Minneapolis

Most survey participants fell into the 25-39 age group. At the same time participants in the survey tended to over-represent categories of age 40 and above. Overall, the age of survey participants aligns closely with the City population profile.

Length of Service of Survey Participants



Age of Survey Participants vs. Minneapolis



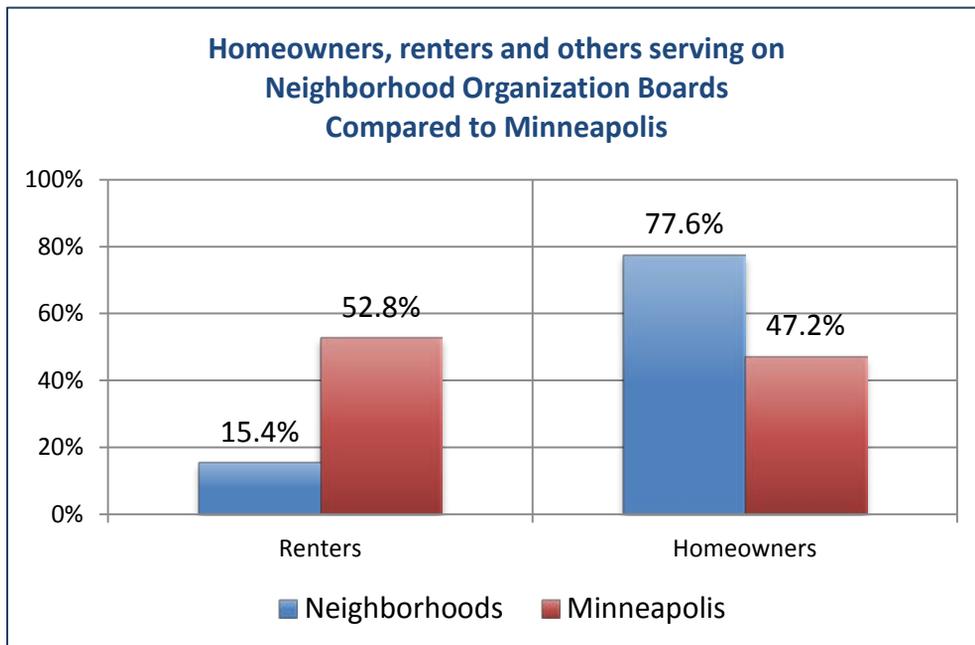
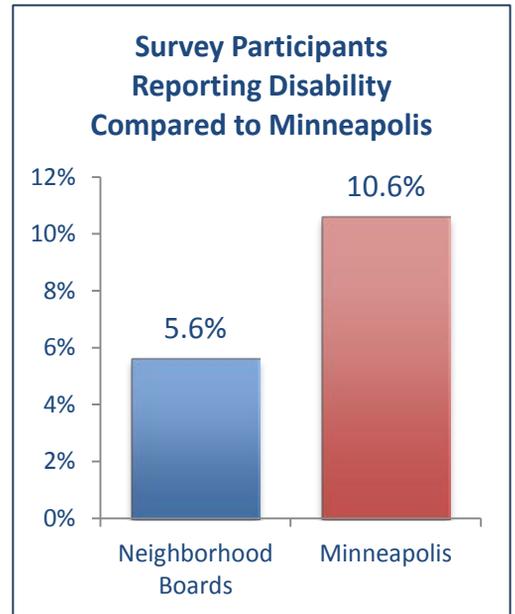
Survey Findings

Disability

5.6% of survey participants in the survey reported living with a disability, compared to 10.6% of Minneapolis residents living with a disability.

Homeowners and Renters

15.4% of survey participants reported that they are renters, compared to 52.8% of renters across the City. Other neighborhood board members reported they served as property or business owners, students, or workers. Property and business owners, students and workers made up another 6.3% of neighborhood organization boards.



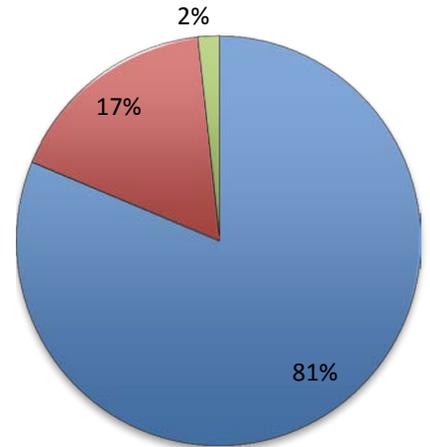
Survey Findings

Survey Participants by Race and Ethnicity

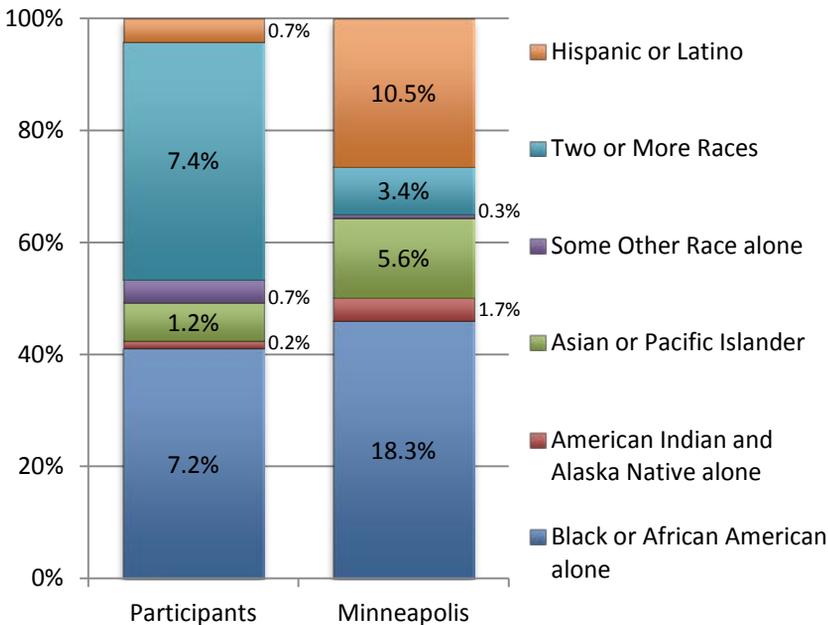
Survey participants were more likely to report race as White/European than Minneapolis as a whole (83% compared to 60%). Individuals who reported “two or more races” or “some other race” also were far more frequent among survey participants than in the City overall.

Hispanic/Latino representation was very low among survey participants (0.7% compared to 10.5% in Minneapolis), with African American and Asian/Pacific Islander residents also under-represented in the survey sample.

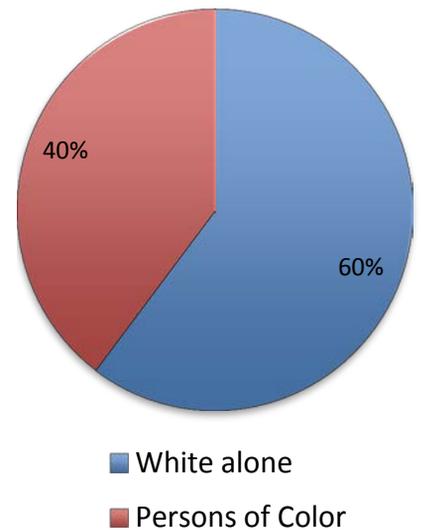
Survey Participants



Persons of Color: Survey Participants Compared to Minneapolis



Minneapolis



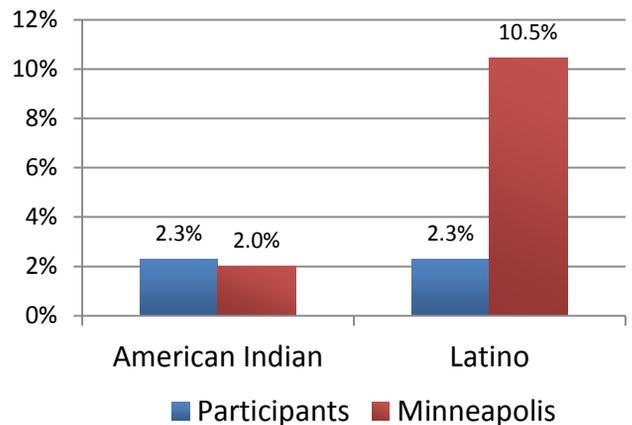
Survey Findings

American Indian and Hispanic/Latino

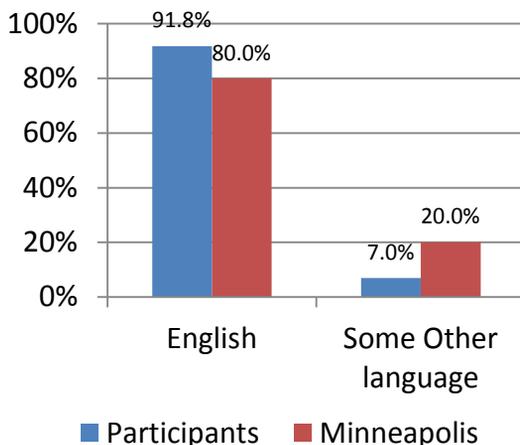
7.9% of survey participants reported their race as “other” or as “two or more races.” Many of these survey participants reported some or all American Indian or Hispanic/Latino heritage. Overall 2.3% of participants reporting some or all American Indian heritage identified membership in several tribes, including Athabascan/Lakota, Choctaw, Kiowa, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Lenape and Piegan, and Ojibwa. This compares to 2% across the City.

Only 2.3% of survey participants reported some or all Latino heritage, compared to 10% city-wide.

Survey Participants of American Indian and Hispanic/Latino Heritage Compared to Minneapolis



Primary Language Spoken at Home



Language Spoken at Home

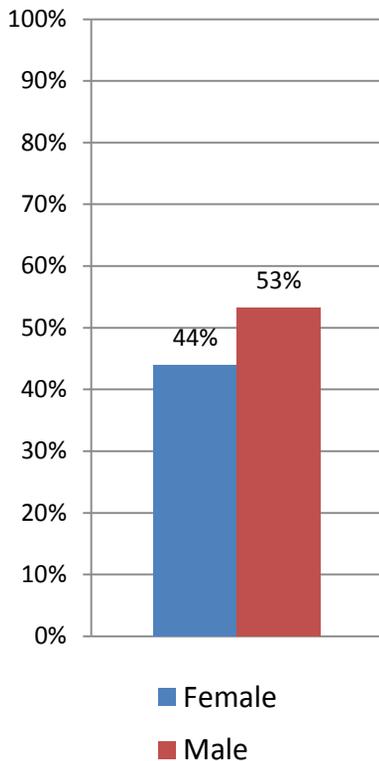
Most survey participants reported speaking English at home, compared to 80% of Minneapolis. Only 7% of survey participants reported speaking some other language at home, compared to 20% across the City.

Survey Findings

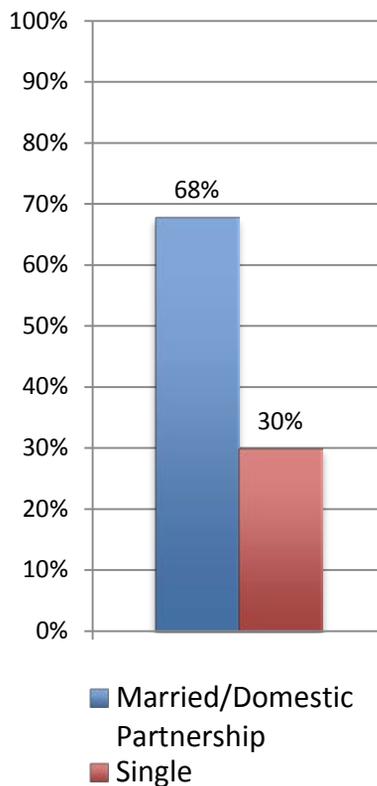
Gender, Marital Status, Sexual Orientation

More survey participants were male (55%), and 69% of survey participants indicated they were married or in a domestic partnership. Most reported being heterosexual, with 9% reporting as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual or transgender.

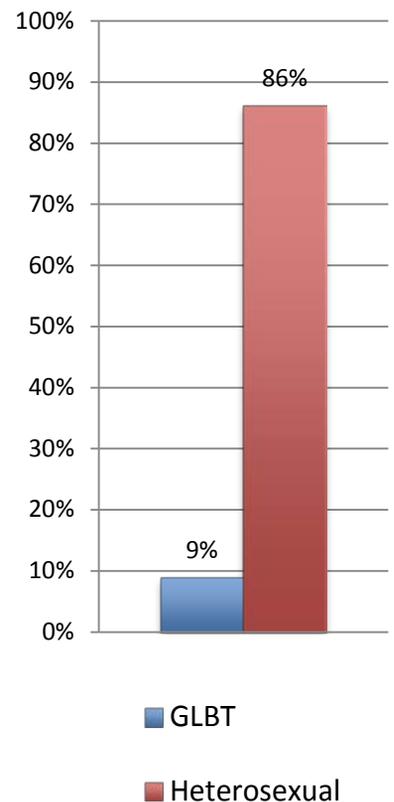
Gender of Survey Participants



Marital Status of Survey Participants



GLBT Status of Survey Participants

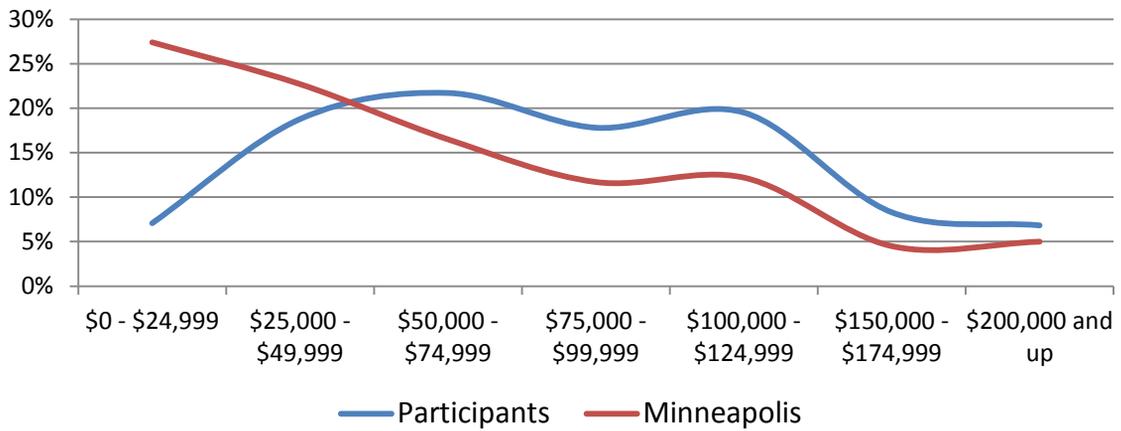


Survey Findings

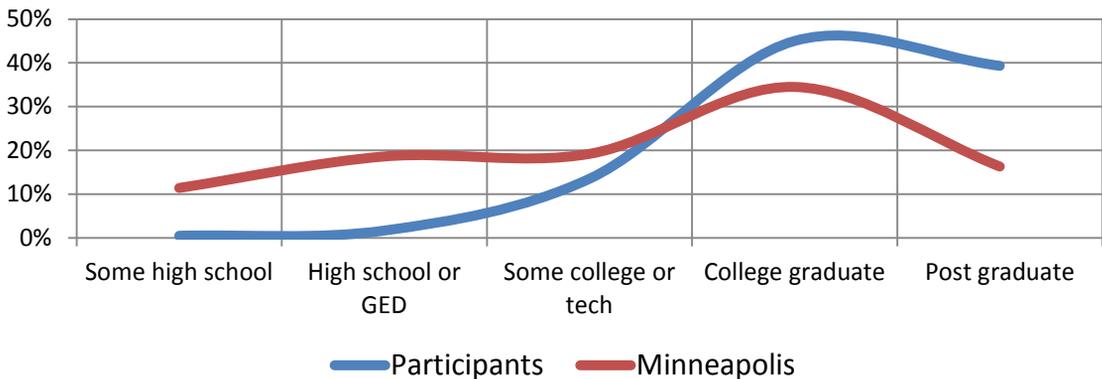
Household Income and Education

Survey participants tended to have higher household income compared to residents of Minneapolis, and higher education levels. Very few survey participants reported very low household income or less than some college for education level.

Household Income of Participants Compared to Minneapolis



Education Level of Survey Participants Compared to Minneapolis



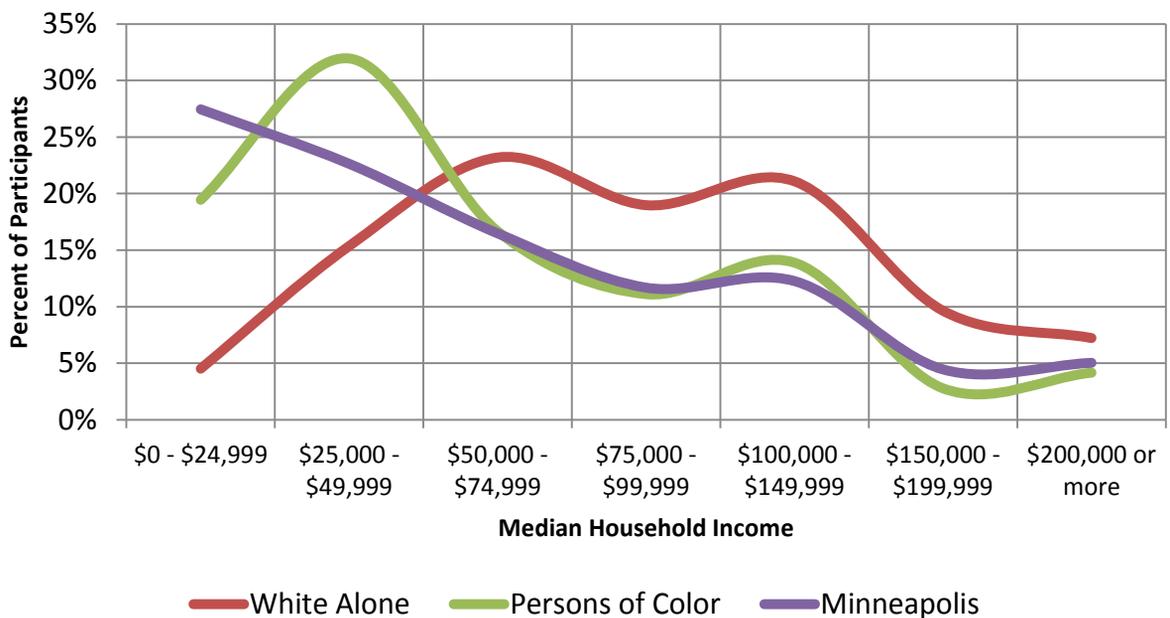
Analysis

Household Income and Participation in Neighborhood Organization Boards

The chart below shows participants' reported household income compared to Minneapolis household income.

- * More than half (51.4%) of persons of color serving on neighborhood organization boards reported median household incomes of less than \$50,000.
- * Almost two-thirds (63.3%) of white alone participants reported median household income of between \$50,000 and \$150,000.
- * Persons of color serving on neighborhood boards were more highly correlated to Minneapolis median household income.

Participation in Neighborhood Boards by Race and Household Income compared to Minneapolis

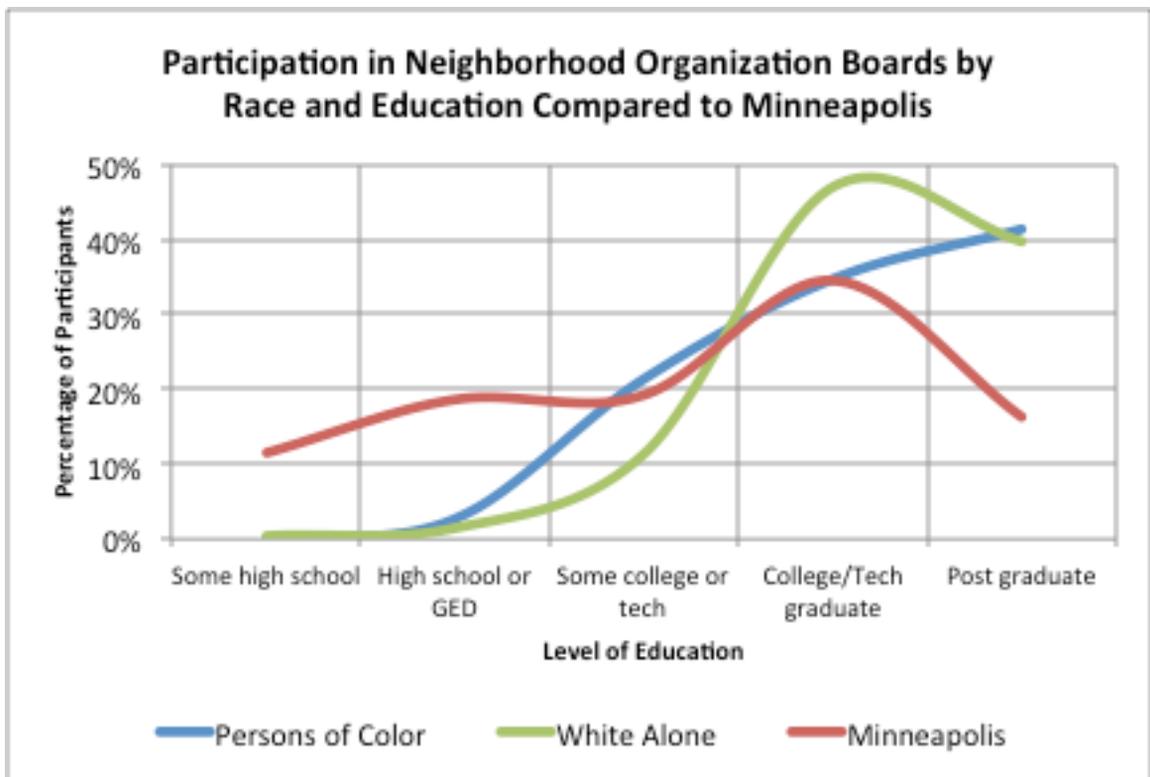


Analysis

Education

Education appears to be the most important indicator of participation on neighborhood organization boards.

- * More than three-quarters (76%) of persons of color serving on neighborhood organization boards reported having college or post-graduate degrees, with 41% reporting post-graduate education.
- * Fewer than 5% of all participants reported having only a high school diploma or GED or only some high school.
- * More than 96% of participants reported having at least attended college, with more than 83% reporting degrees or advanced degrees.



Analysis

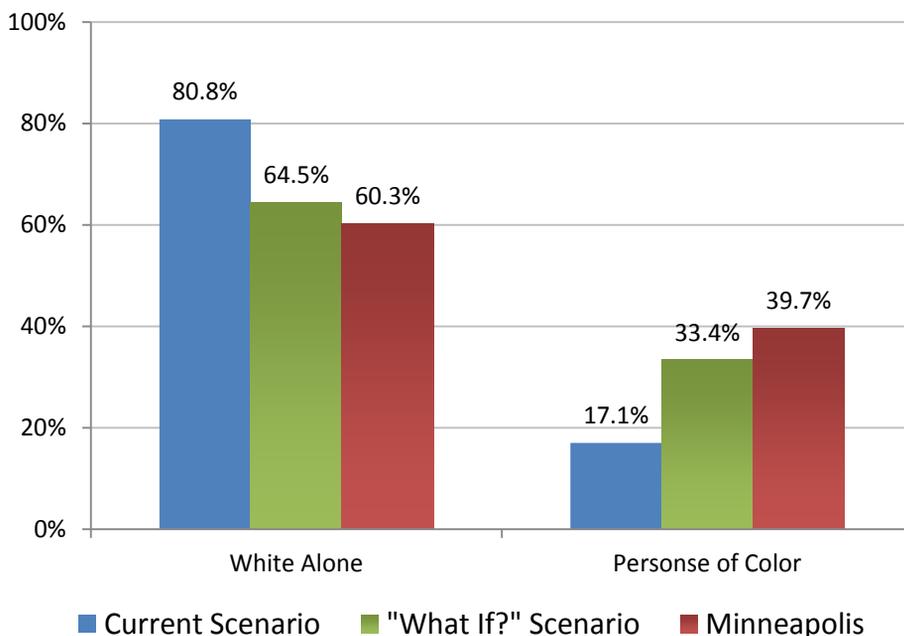
Achieving Racial Diversity on Neighborhood Organization Boards

If we assume that the survey sample is representative of the entire population of neighborhood organization board members, what would it require to achieve more racial diversity on neighborhood organization boards?

A simple “what if?” test can help answer this question. Given the sample size n=428, what if there is a change of just one person per neighborhood organization? Redistributing 70 participants from the “White Alone” column to “Persons of Color” results in a much more representative sample.

Extending this to the larger population of board members suggests a change of 1-2 individual per board.

Neighborhood Board Diversity: Current Scenario Compared to "What If" Scenario and Minneapolis Residents

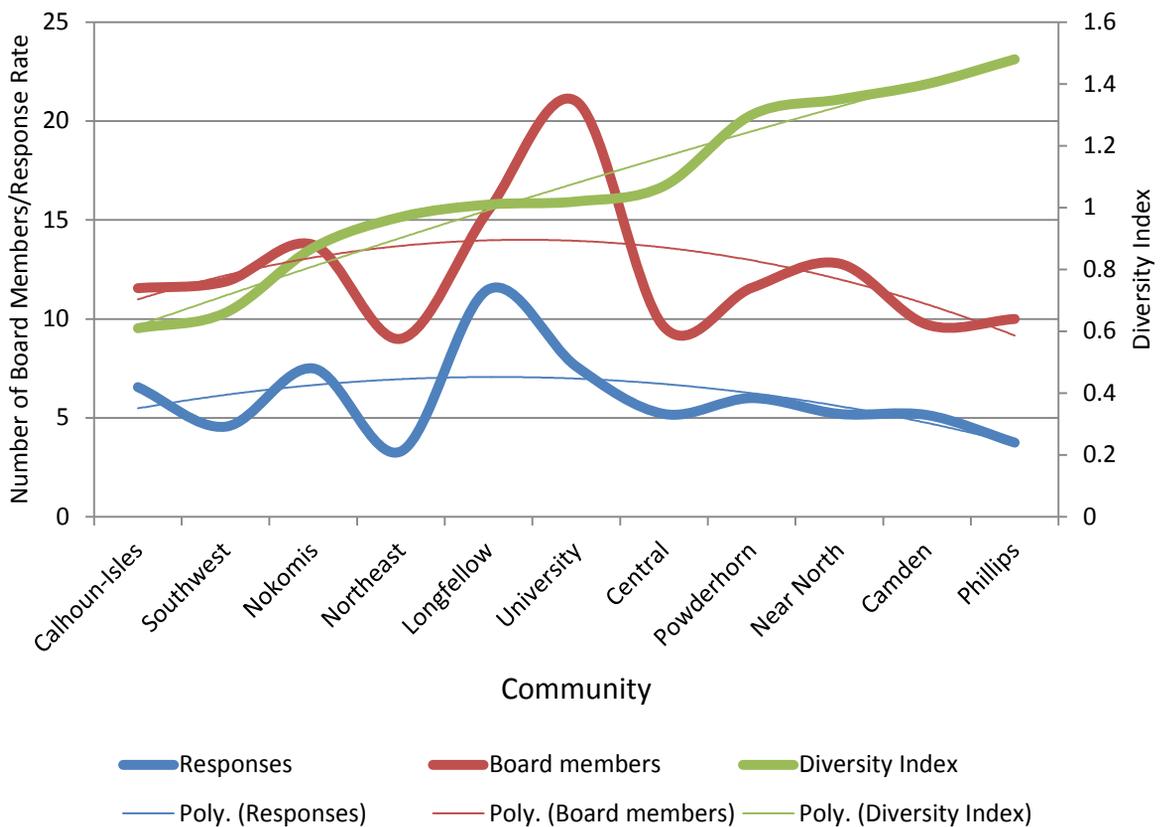


Analysis

Response Rates by Community

Minneapolis neighborhood organizations are grouped in 11 communities of between four and 13 neighborhood organizations in each community. As the table below shows, the average size of neighborhood organization boards and participation in the survey is not impacted by diversity of the community.

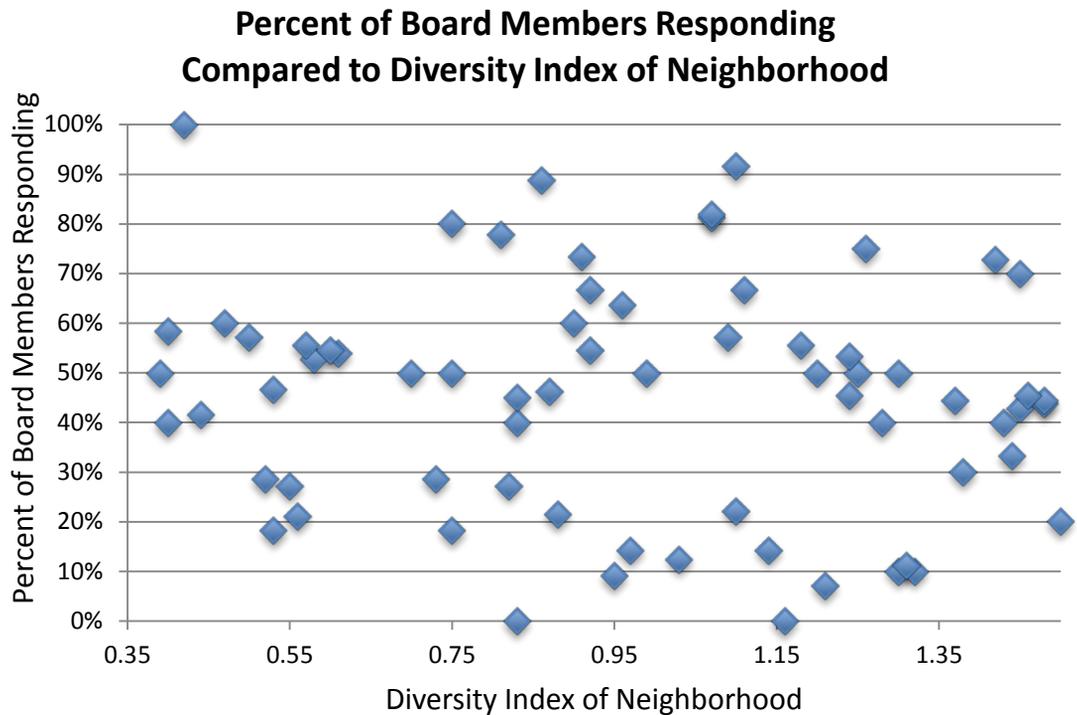
Participation in Survey Compared to Community Diversity



Analysis

Response Rates by Neighborhood Organization

While participation by community was relatively uniform, participation from neighborhood organization to neighborhood organization was very inconsistent, with some neighborhood organization boards having no or very low participation, while others had 100% participation. The response rate by neighborhood had little correlation with the diversity of the neighborhood itself, as shown in the scatter plot below.



Analysis

Survey Limitations:

- Because the survey was purely voluntary, we do not know to what extent the survey is truly representative of all neighborhood organization board members. It does provide important clues about the makeup of neighborhood organization boards.
- While participation rate of all board members was high (estimated at more than 50% of all neighborhood organization board members) and fairly uniform by community, it was not at all uniform on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis. Some neighborhood organizations had 100% participation, others had no or very little participation in the survey.
- A high percentage of survey participants have formal educations, much more so than the City as a whole. This finding may indicate that education, and to a lesser degree, household income, may have a greater impact on ability to participate in a neighborhood organization board than race or ethnicity. It may also indicate a bias of the survey process towards individuals with formal education.
- We do not know why those who did not participate in the survey chose not to participate. Because survey participants across the board tended to be highly educated, they may have been more responsive to an online survey, even though paper surveys were distributed at some neighborhood organization board meetings. There may also be cultural or income barriers to participation in the survey. For example, some individuals contacted NCR by phone or email to object to questions about sexuality or income, and to express concern that specific individuals could potentially be identified by providing information about what neighborhood organization board they served on, possibly disclosing sensitive information about sexuality, household income or education.
- As noted earlier, this survey does not measure all participation in neighborhood organizations, just the demographic makeup of neighborhood organization boards.

Recommendations

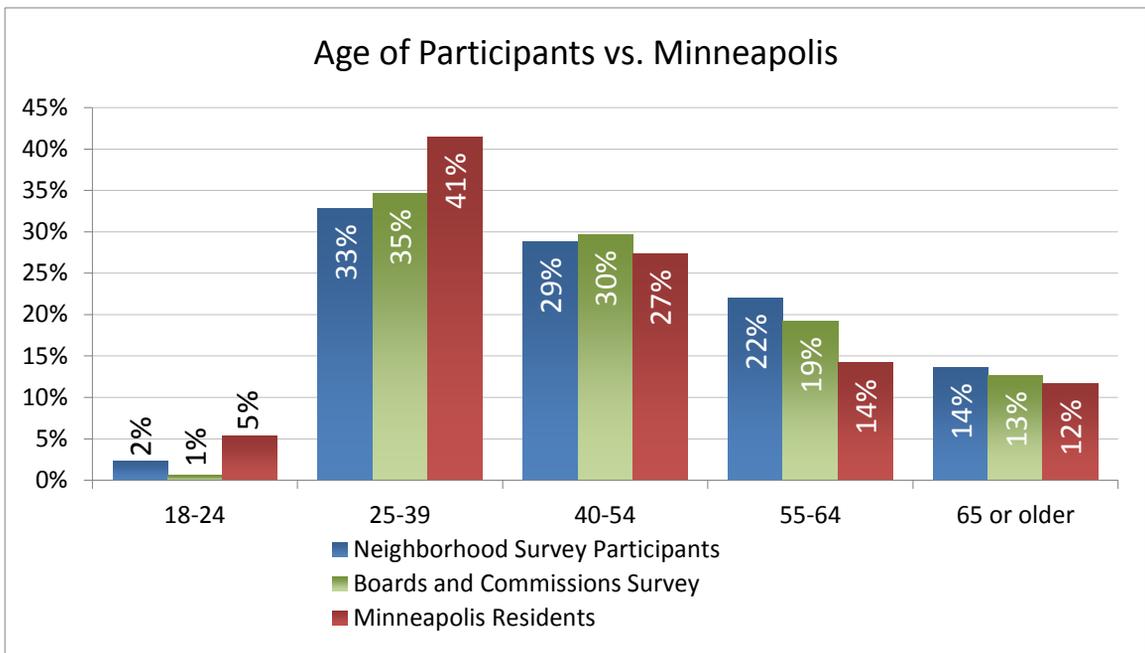
Achieving more equitable racial inclusion on neighborhood organization boards appears to be attainable, and the survey findings can help identify both potential weaknesses and strengths of neighborhood organization inclusion. The current findings and related questions lead to the following recommendations for further development:

- * The 2015 Neighborhood Board Diversity Survey findings can be used as baseline data for the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement.
- * NCR and NCEC should promote and communicate simple goals for recruitment, and develop tools, ideas and resources for neighborhood organizations to improve inclusion.
- * NCR and NCEC should work with neighborhood organizations to identify best practices for board recruitment, retention, and succession planning.
- * NCR should follow up with neighborhood organizations that had little or no participation in the survey to identify what barriers may have prevented individuals from participating in the survey.
- * NCR and NCEC should examine questions arising from some of the unexpected findings, such as reported household income and education levels. Are individuals with higher education more attracted to service on neighborhood organization boards? Do the demands of service on boards make it more difficult for individuals with lower education or income to participate? Or do these findings represent a survey bias?
- * NCR should consider training and coaching for prospective candidates for neighborhood organization boards.
- * NCR should continue to conduct an annual survey of neighborhood organization boards to monitor trends and provide better insights for decision makers and neighborhood organization leaders about inclusion and representation. The survey process should be regularly evaluated to improve participation from as many board members as possible.

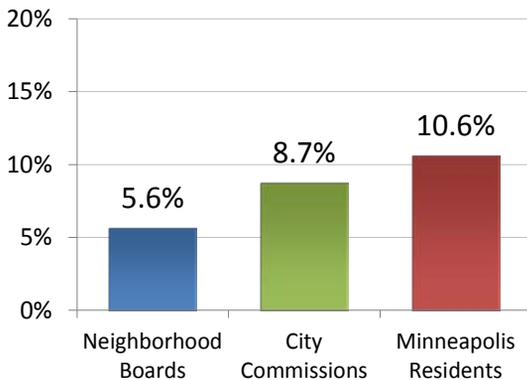
Appendix

Comparison of Neighborhood Board Survey to Minneapolis Boards and Commissions

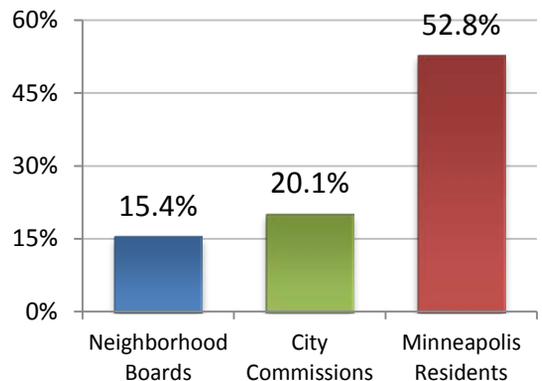
Findings from both the 2014 Boards and Commissions Survey and the 2015 Neighborhood Board Diversity Survey will be incorporated into the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement.



Disability

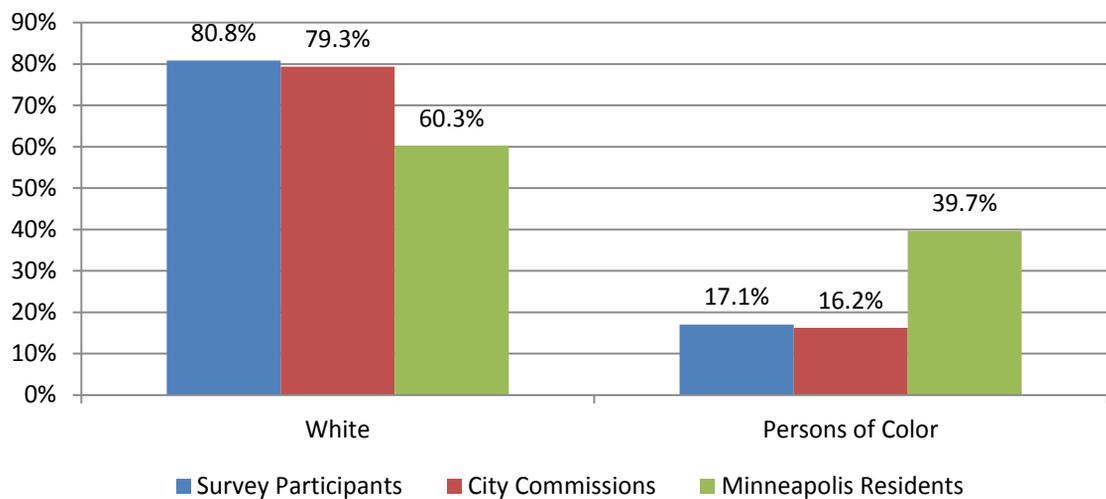


Renters

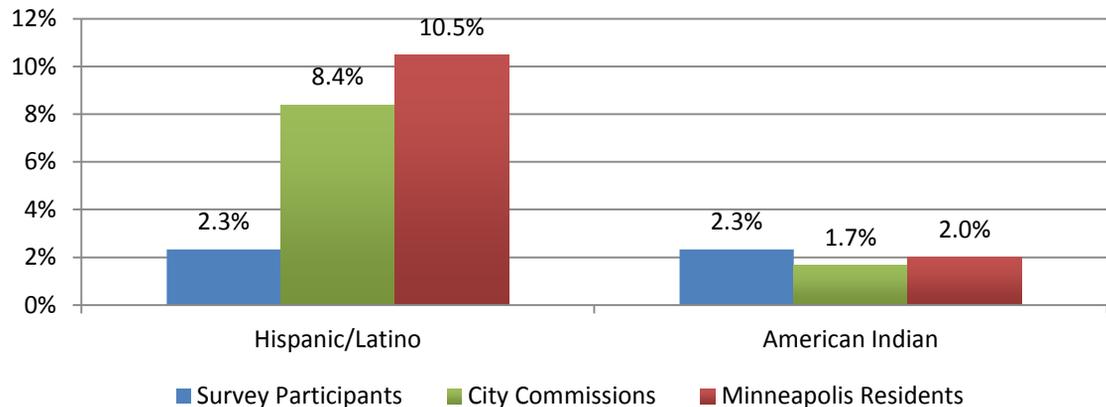


Appendix

Percent Persons of Color: Neighborhood Board Survey compared to City Commissions and Minneapolis Residents

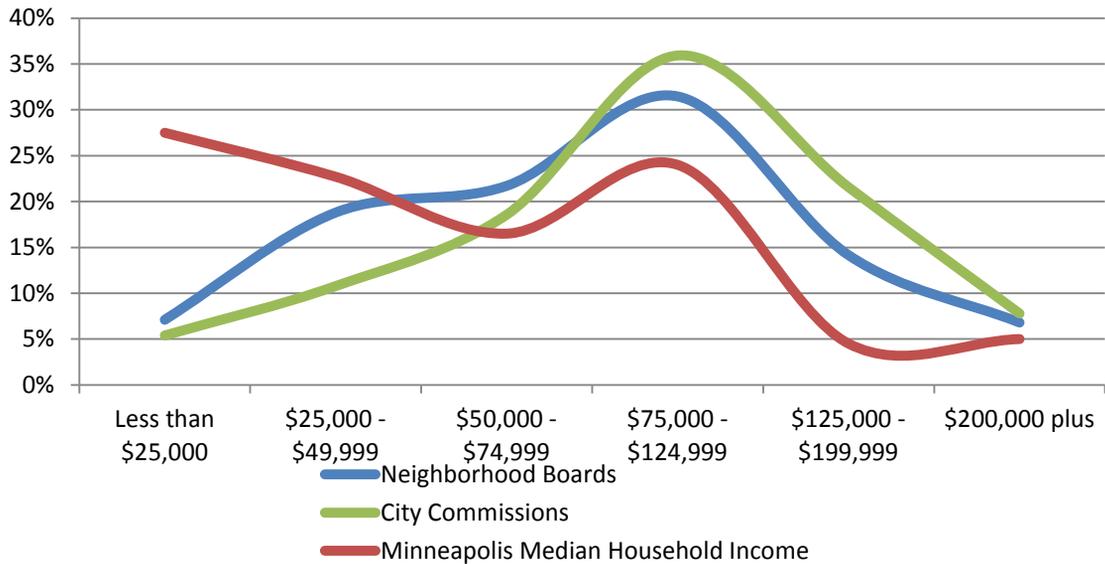


Hispanic/Latino: Neighborhood Board Survey compared to City Commissions and Minneapolis Residents



Appendix

Household Income: Neighborhood Boards Compared to City Commissions and Minneapolis Median Household Income



Education: Neighborhood Boards Compared to City Commissions and Minneapolis Residents

