

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



**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH**  
**NEW BEDFORD, MA**

**EVALUATION**  
**OF**  
**THE 2006 ELECTIONS**

**July 24, 2007**

**SUPPORTED BY THE**  
**LUSO-AMERICAN**  
**FOUNDATION**

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## KEY STATISTICS

- **Number of Parishioners in New Bedford: 3,638**
- **Heads of Household registered to vote in New Bedford: 1,709 (47% of all parishioners in New Bedford)**
- **All Household Members registered to vote in New Bedford: 2,073**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout\* in September 2006 – 40% (citywide turnout 29%)**
- **Heads of Household voter turnout in November 2006 – 58% (citywide turnout 46%)**

## SUMMARY OF WORK

Immaculate Conception has been an active participant in the Portuguese American Citizenship Project since 2002.

For the September 2006 Primary Elections and the November 2006 General Elections, postcards in Portuguese and English were sent to all registered parish voters reminding them of the date, polling hours, and location of the assigned polling station for each election.

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\* 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

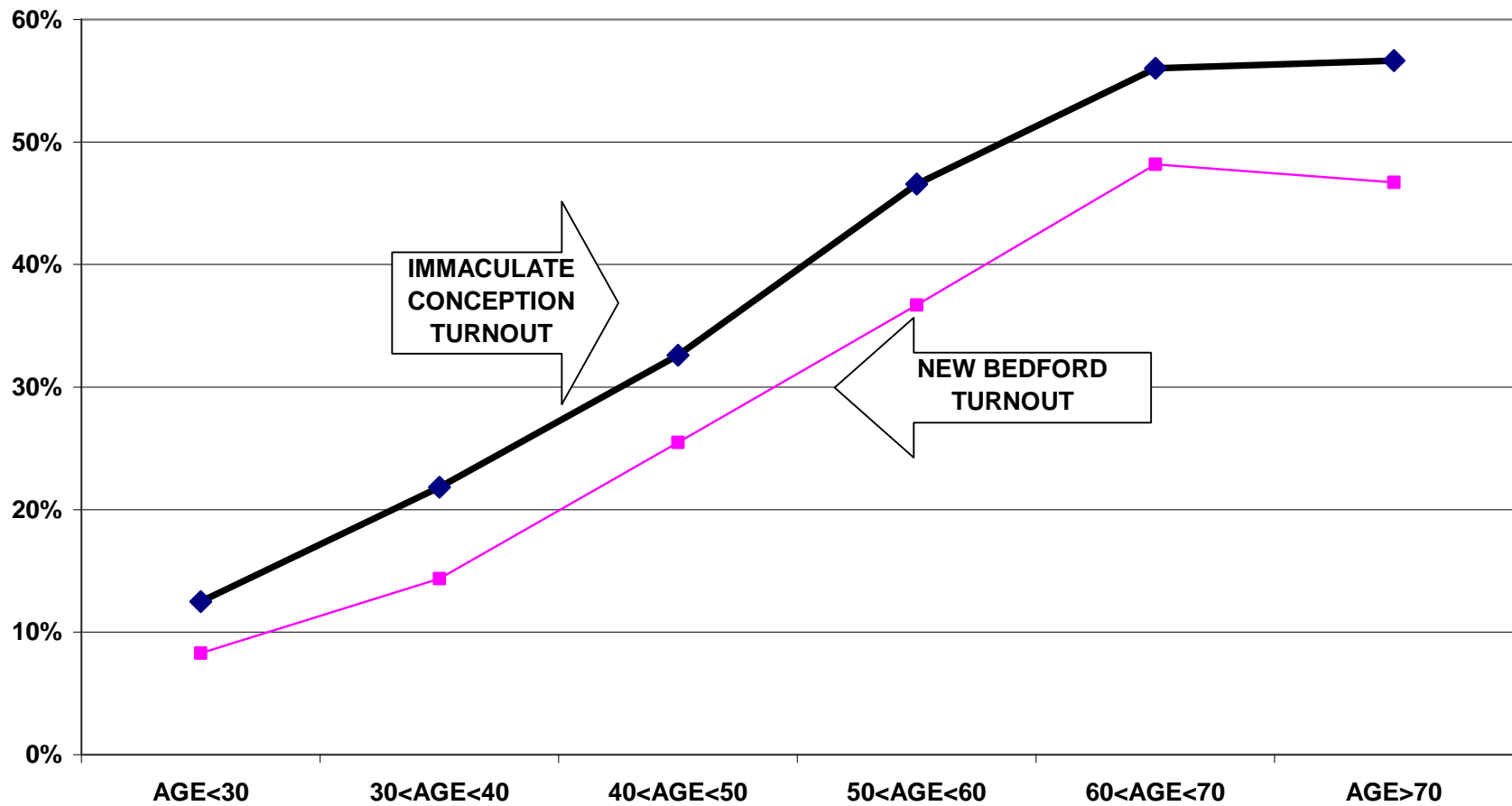
The Immaculate Conception voter turnout for the Fall 2006 elections was consistently higher than city-wide turnout. Heads of household turnout for the September 2006 Primary Elections was 40%, as compared to the city turnout of 29%. The Immaculate Conception heads of household turnout for the November 2006 General Elections was 58%, as compared to the city turnout of 46%.

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.

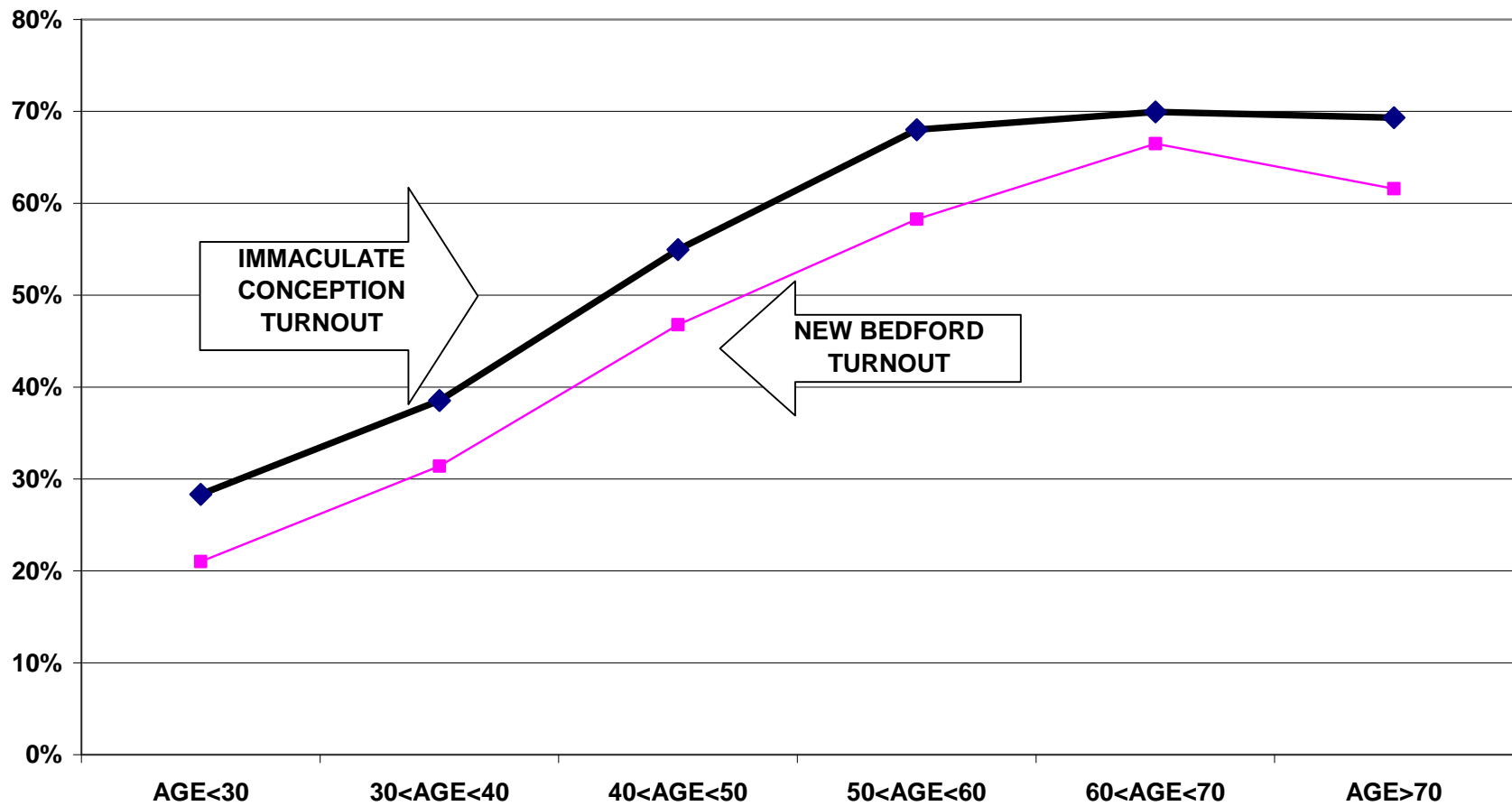
For example, voters under 30 years old had a 13% turnout rate in the September 2006 elections, while voters between 60 and 70 years old had a 56% turnout rate. For the November 2006 elections, the under 30 year old parishioners had a 28% turnout rate compared to a 70% turnout rate for voters between 60 and 70 years old.

The following graphs for the September and November 2006 elections illustrate the relationship between turnout rates and age. These graphs refer to all family members associated with the parish, not just heads of household.

**TURNOUT BY AGE SEPTEMBER 2006  
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**



**TURNOUT BY AGE NOVEMBER 2006  
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The parish should examine measures to increase voter turnout in the under 30 year old and 30 to 40 year old categories. While low voter turnout rates for those under 40 years old is not a problem unique to Immaculate Conception, it is important to discuss ways the parish can address this issue so as to increase their efforts towards faithful citizenship.
- Immaculate Conception is one of the largest collections of registered voters in the city of New Bedford. The parish should examine the possibility of staging a Candidates' Night to publicize the parishioners' political demands. This could be done alone or in cooperation with another parish such as St Anthony.

# APPENDIX

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- Registered Voters vs. Actual Voters September 2006 Bar Graph 13
- Registered Voters vs. Actual Voters November 2006 Bar Graph 14

**HISTORICAL DATA: IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH  
REGISTRATION - VOTING**

**MEMBERS RESIDENT IN NEW BEDFORD 3,638**

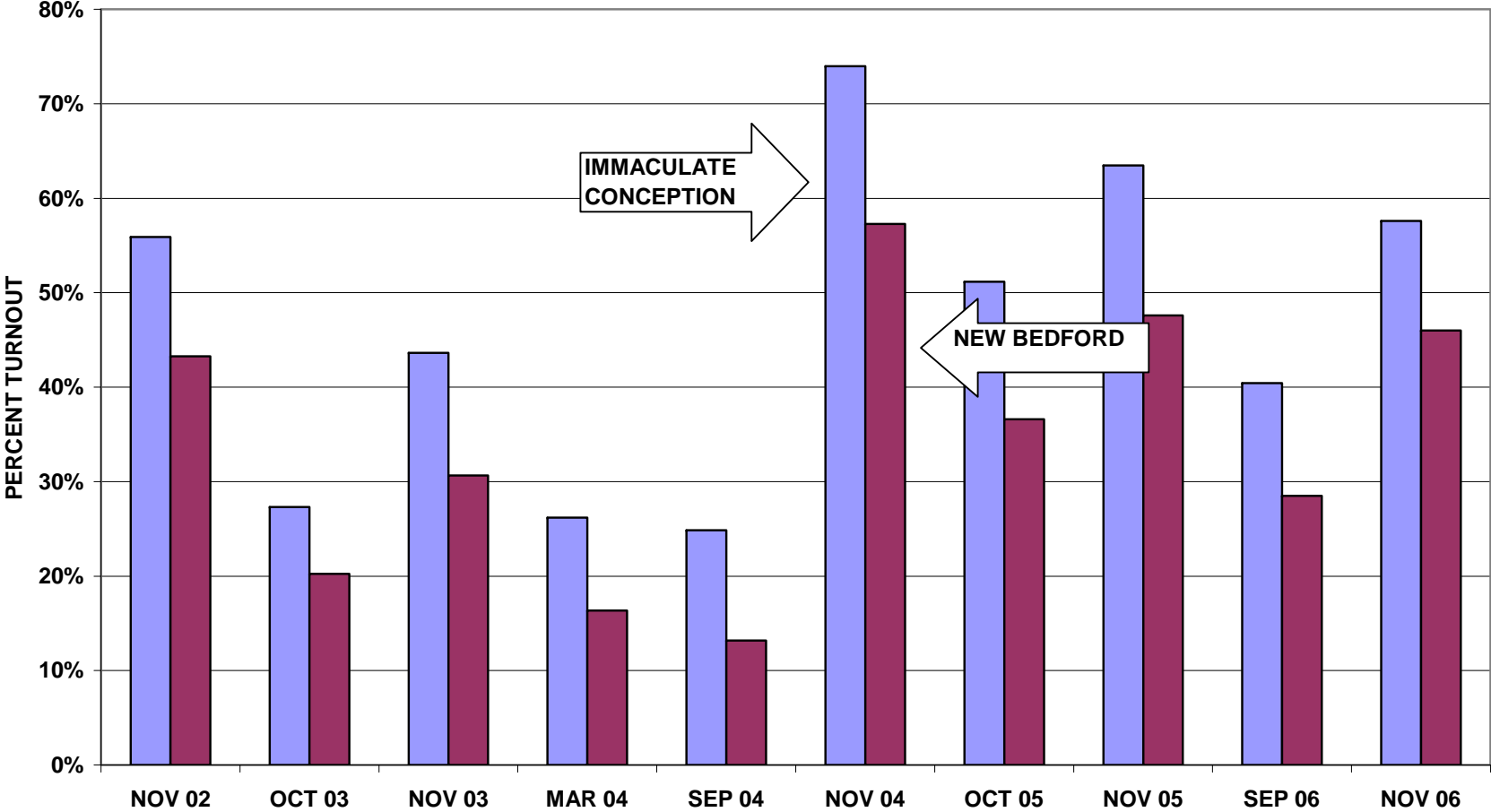
**MEMBERS REGISTERED TO VOTE IN CITY OF NEW BEDFORD 1,709 HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD**

**2,073 ALL FAMILY MEMBERS**

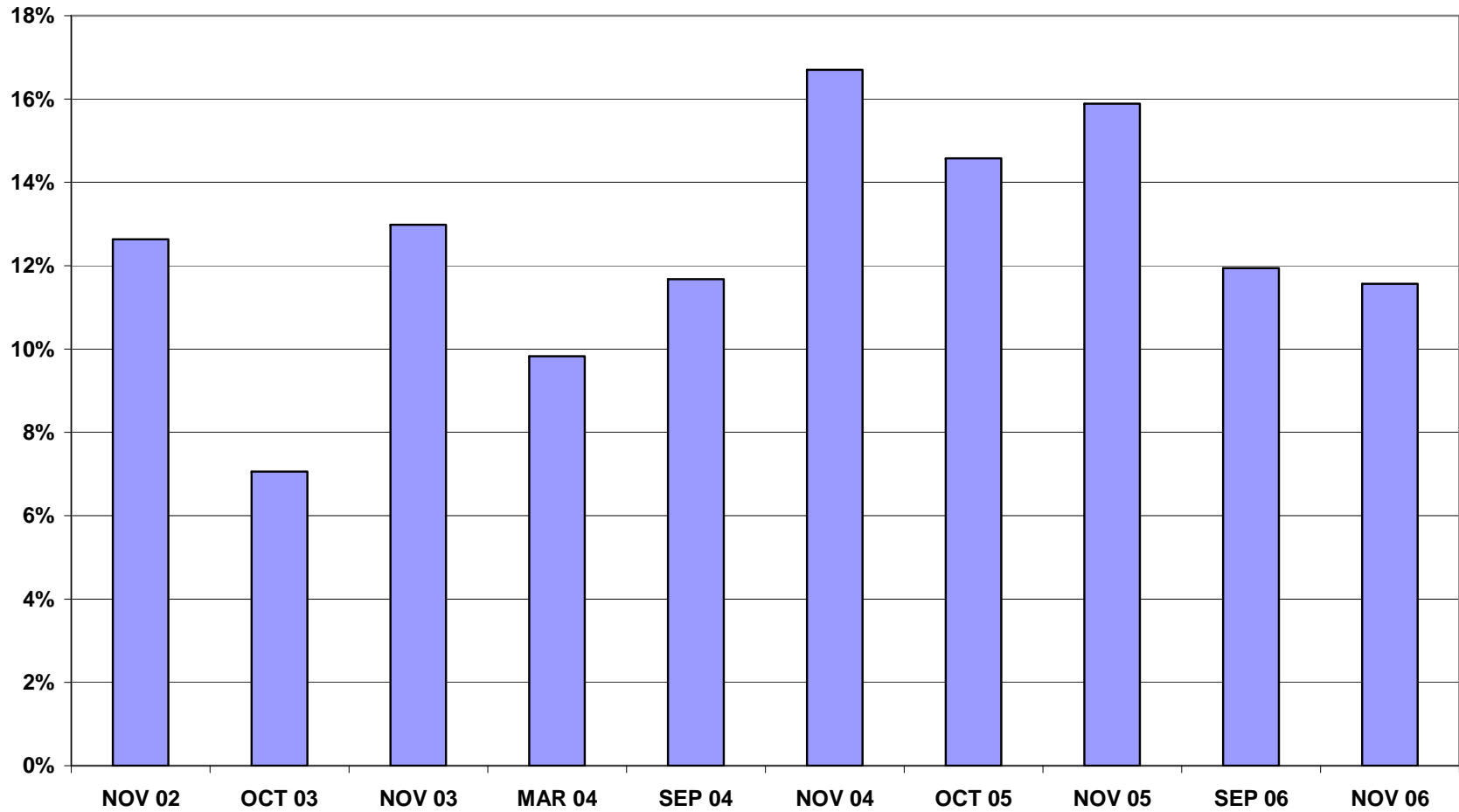
**VOTING PERFORMANCE OF NEW BEDFORD RESIDENTS**

	<b>HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD WHO VOTED</b>	<b>AS PERCENT OF ALL REGISTERED MEMBERS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE</b>	<b>CITY WIDE VOTING HISTORY AS PERCENT OF ALL REGISTERED VOTERS)</b>
	<b>COMPARABLE STATISTICS</b>		
<b>VOTERS NOV 2002</b>	<b>1048</b>	<b>55.9%</b>	<b>43.3%</b>
<b>VOTERS OCT 2003</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>20.2%</b>
<b>VOTERS NOV 2003</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>43.6%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>
<b>VOTERS MAR 2004</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>26.2%</b>	<b>16.4%</b>
<b>VOTERS SEP 2004</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>24.9%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>
<b>VOTERS NOV 2004</b>	<b>1387</b>	<b>73.9%</b>	<b>57.3%</b>
<b>VOTERS OCT 2005</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>51.2%</b>	<b>36.6%</b>
<b>VOTERS NOV 2005</b>	<b>1001</b>	<b>63.5%</b>	<b>47.6%</b>
<b>VOTERS SEP 2006</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>38.5%</b>
<b>VOTERS NOV 2006</b>	<b>984</b>	<b>57.6%</b>	<b>46.0%</b>

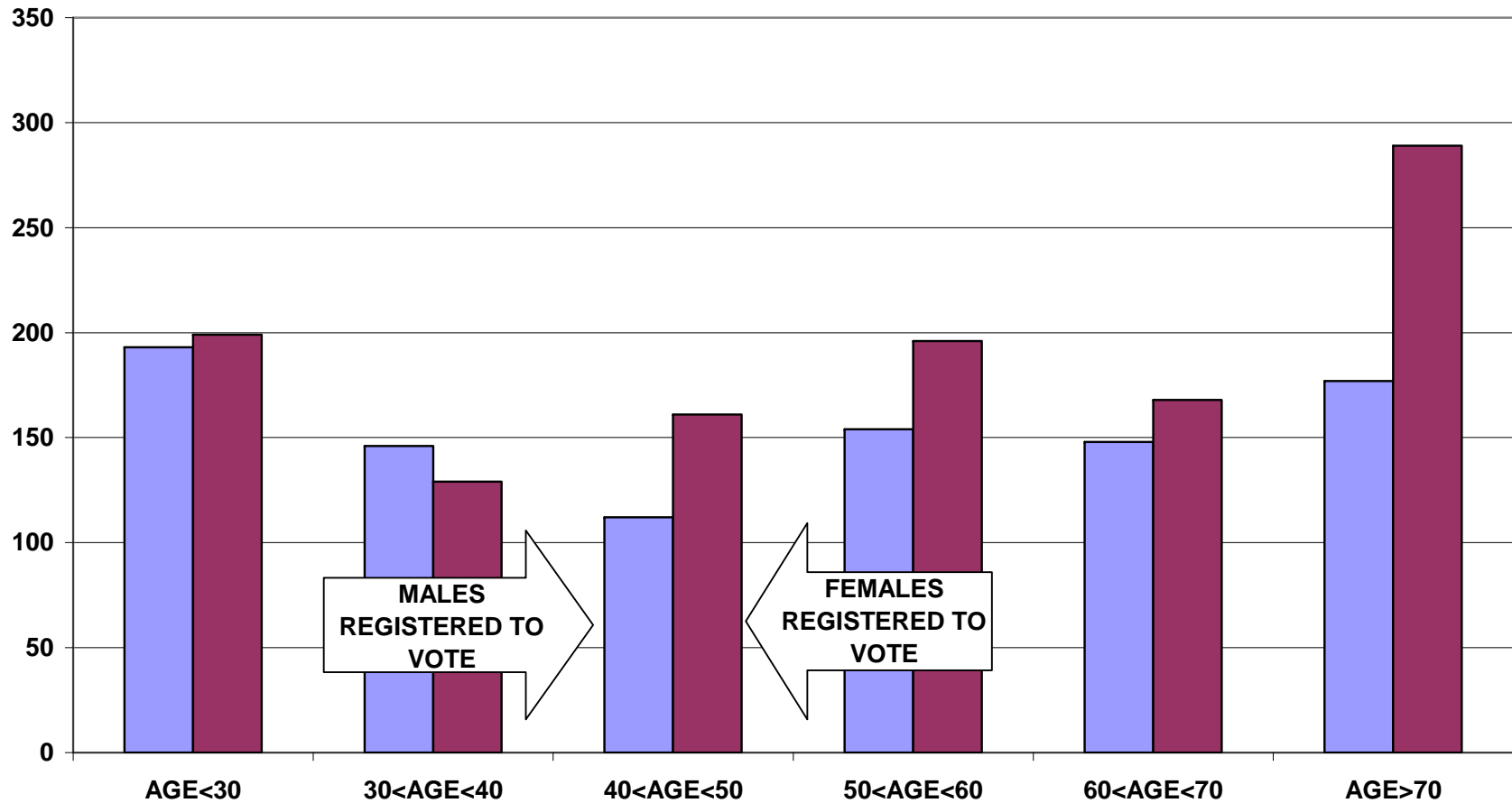
### REGISTERED VOTER TURNOUT COMPARISON BETWEEN NEW BEDFORD AND IMMACULATE CONCEPTION HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD



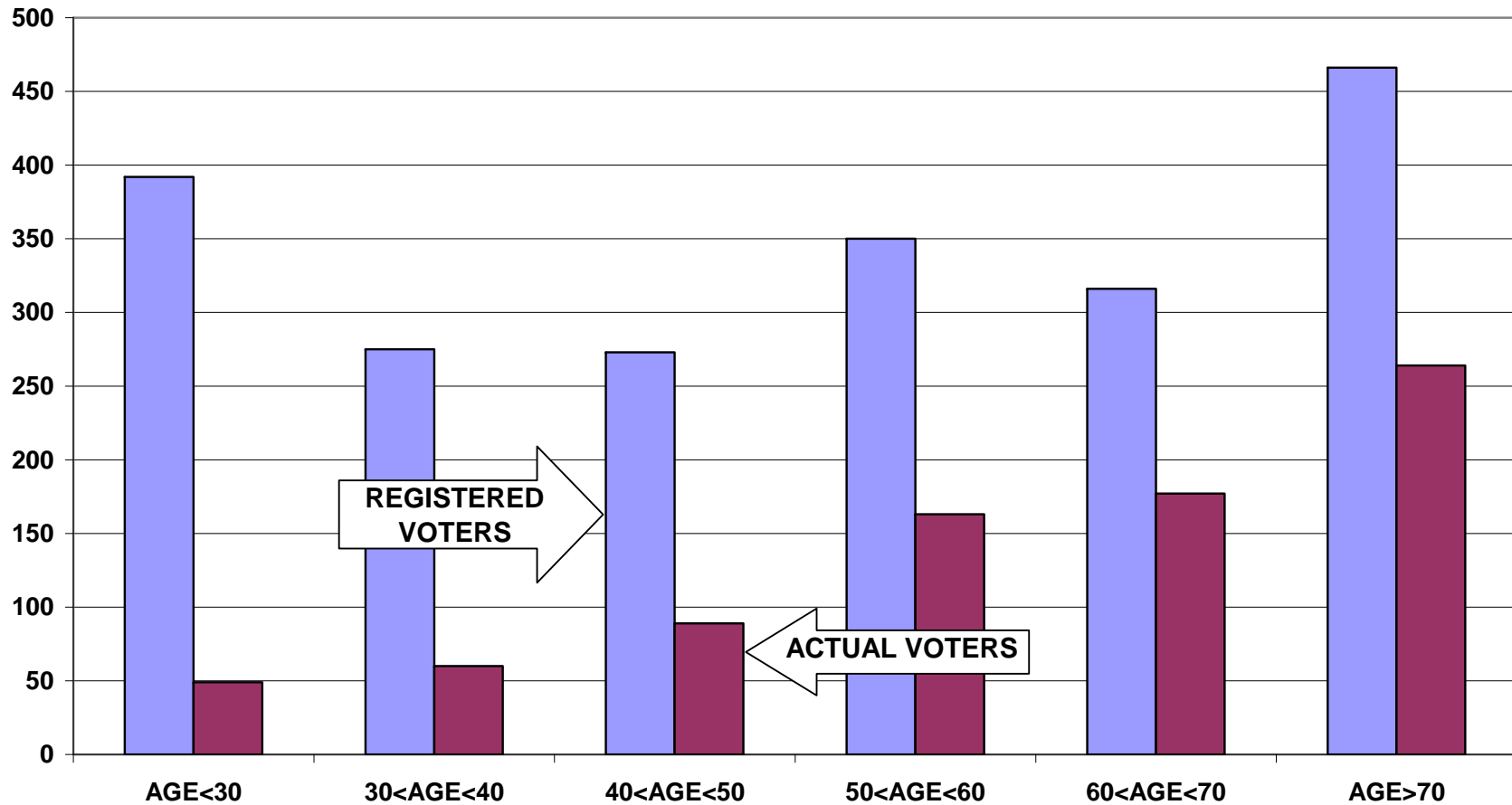
### DIFFERENCE IN VOTER TURNOUT BETWEEN IMMACULATE CONCEPTION VOTERS AND NEW BEDFORD VOTERS HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD



**VOTER REGISTRATION BY AGE AND GENDER  
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**



**REGISTERED VOTERS VERSUS ACTUAL VOTERS SEPTEMBER 2006  
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMEBERS**



**REGISTERED VOTERS VERSUS ACTUAL VOTERS NOVEMBER 2006  
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMEBERS**

