

# Milwaukee Polling Locations: Comparing 2020 and 2024 Elections

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# Motivation

- Inspired by [reading](#) on voter turnout maps highlighting polling location reductions in Milwaukee during COVID-19 in 2020.
  - Building off previous analysis by including 2024 election and other demographic variables
- Interested in investigating how these reductions affected Black neighborhoods and potentially impacted voter turnout.



# Data

- **Polling Locations:**
  - Data for 2020, and 2024 from city-provided PDFs by ward.
- **Race Population Concentration:**
  - Census-based demographics for each voting ward provided by the City of Milwaukee. (All maps use the same year)
- **Voter Turnout:**
  - Historical turnout data by year, obtained from City of Milwaukee records.
  - No race-specific turnout data
- **Census Variables**
  - Most recent/closest in time: Poverty (2021, 2022), Transportation (2020, 2022)



# Method

- **Spatial Analysis and Mapping:**
  - Using ArcGIS to visualize polling locations for 2020 and 2024.
  - Overlaying maps with Black and White population density for comparative analysis across elections.
  - Poverty and Transportation by block groups in relation to polling locations.

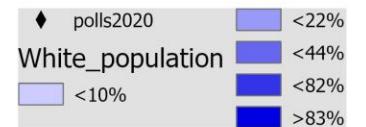
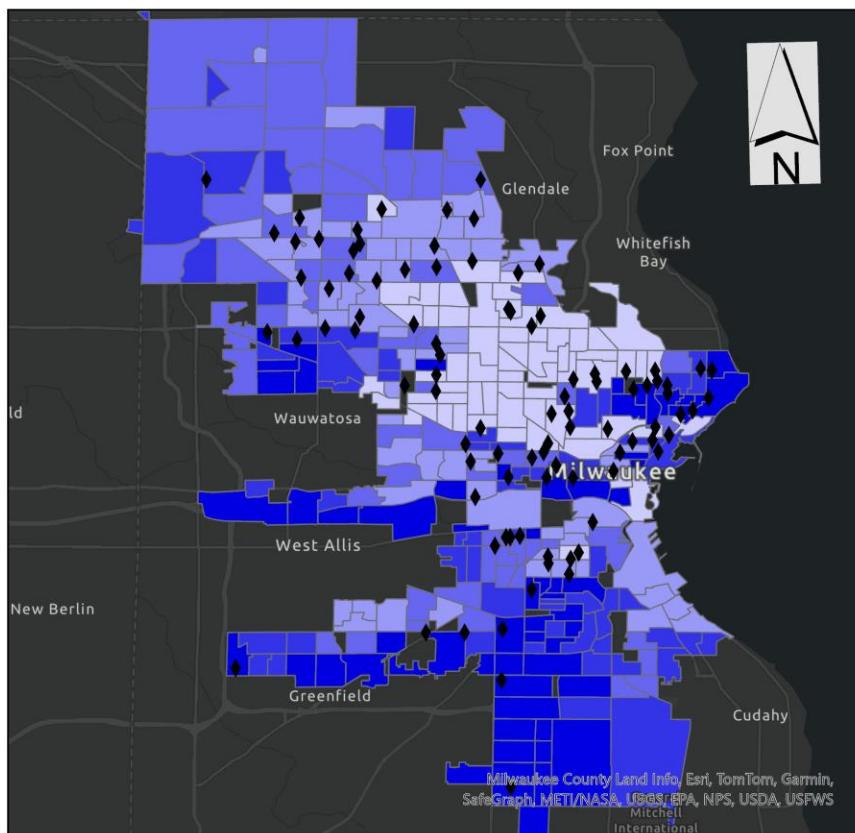


# Questions

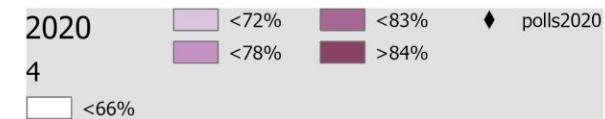
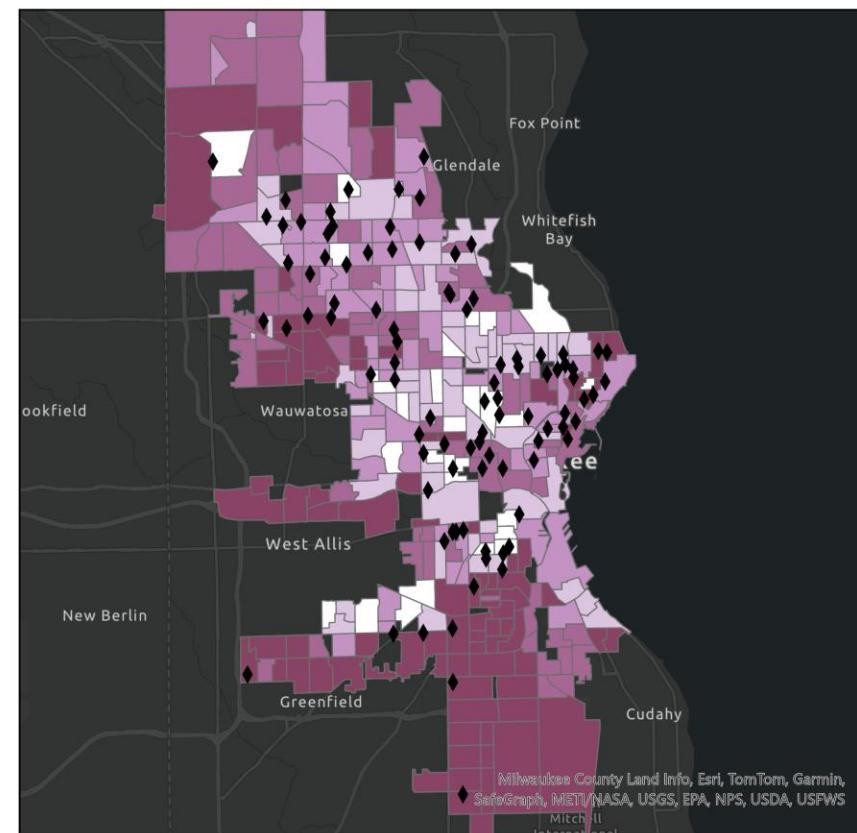
- Is there a correlation between polling locations and highly dense black voting ward?
- Are polling locations closer to block groups that use their own transportation to work?
- Are block groups with higher poverty rates correlations to less poll locations?
- How do these all differ in the 2020 election and 2024 election?



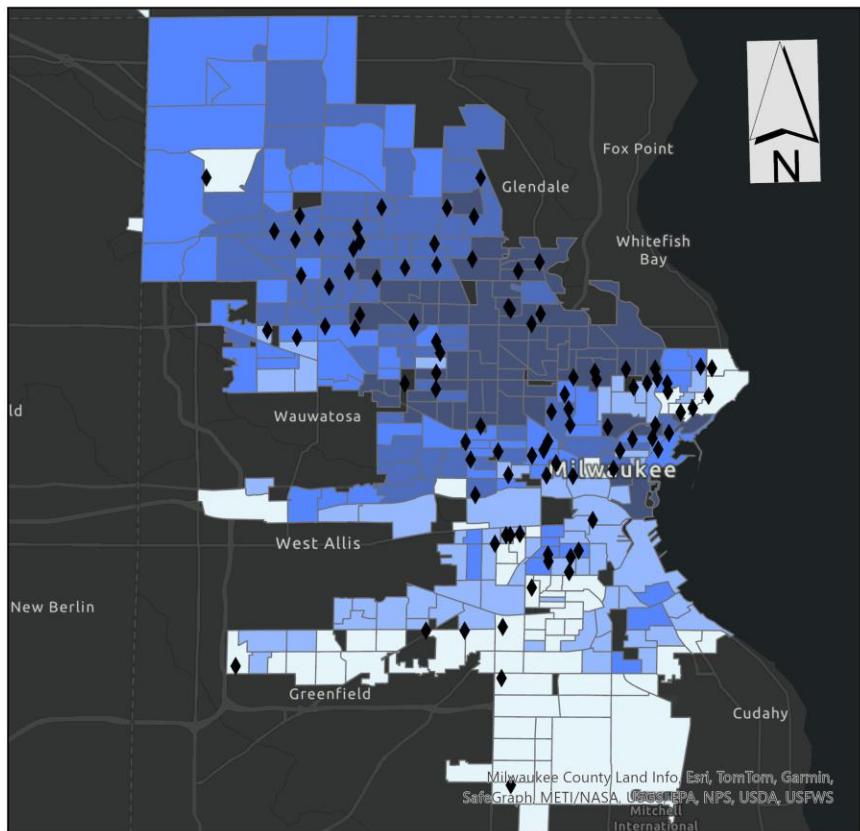
Percent of White People in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2020)



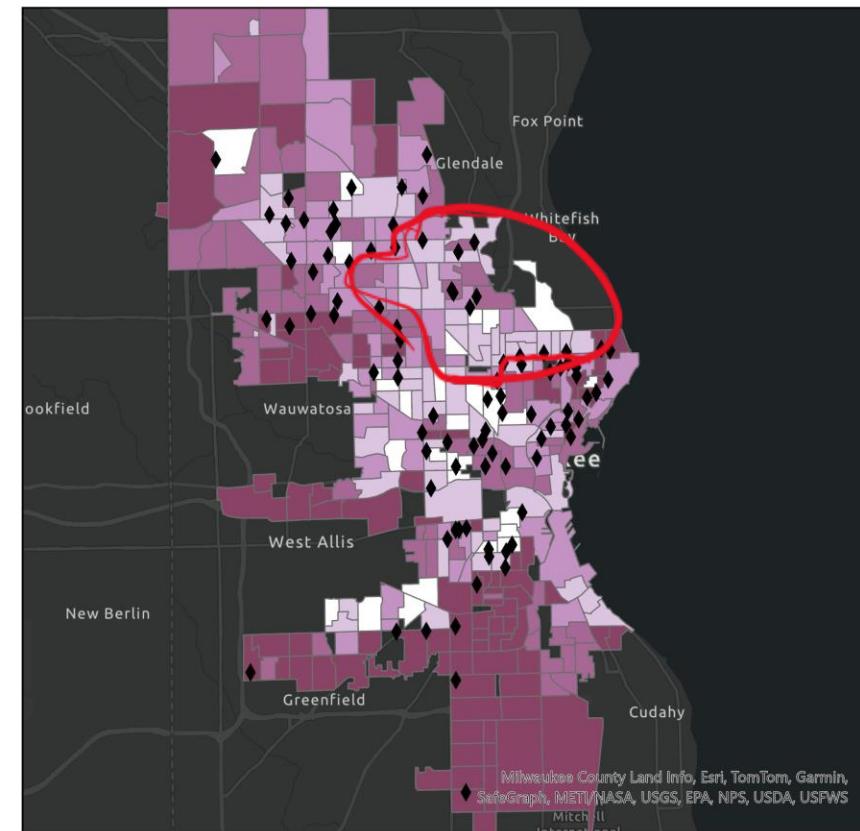
Voter Turnout in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2020)



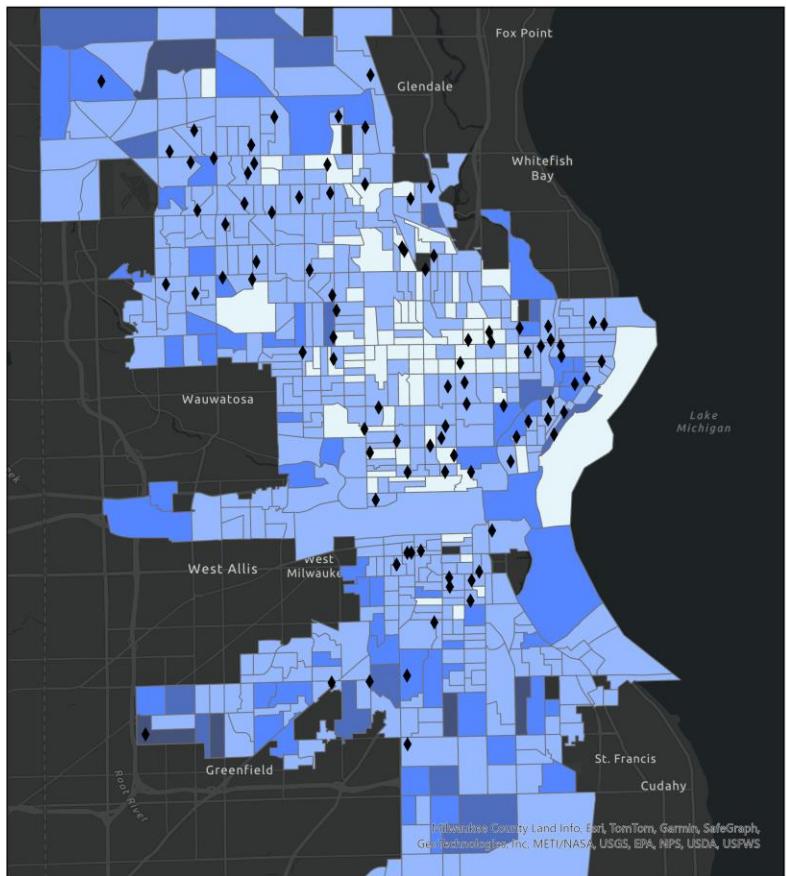
Percent of Black People in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2020)



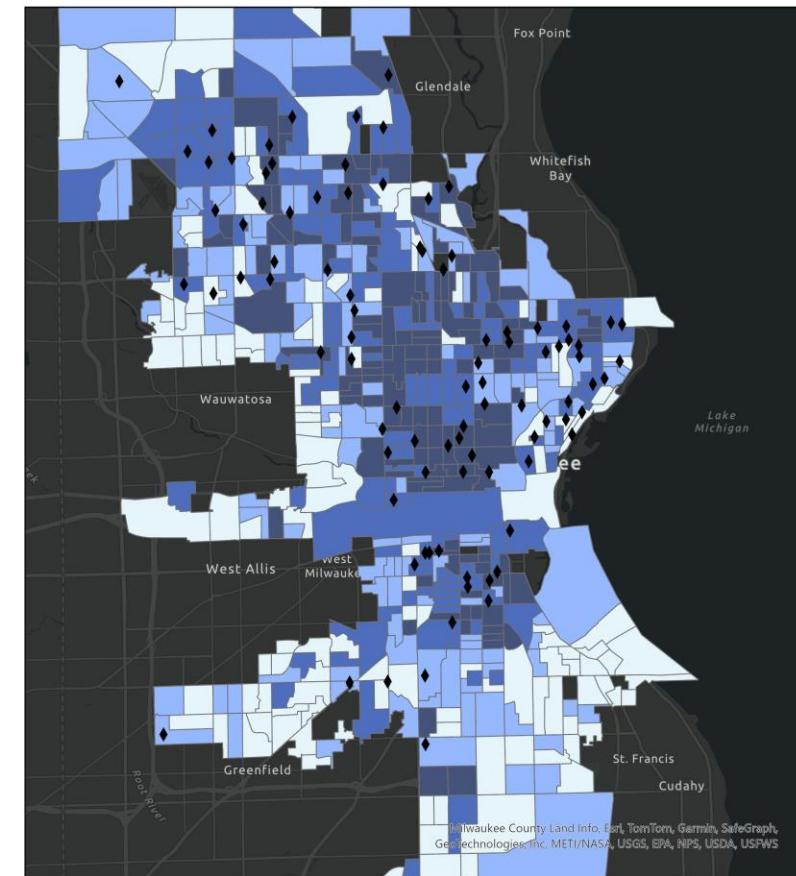
Voter Turnout in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2020)



Public Transportation and Polling stations (2020)



Poverty Rate (2021) and Polling stations (2020)

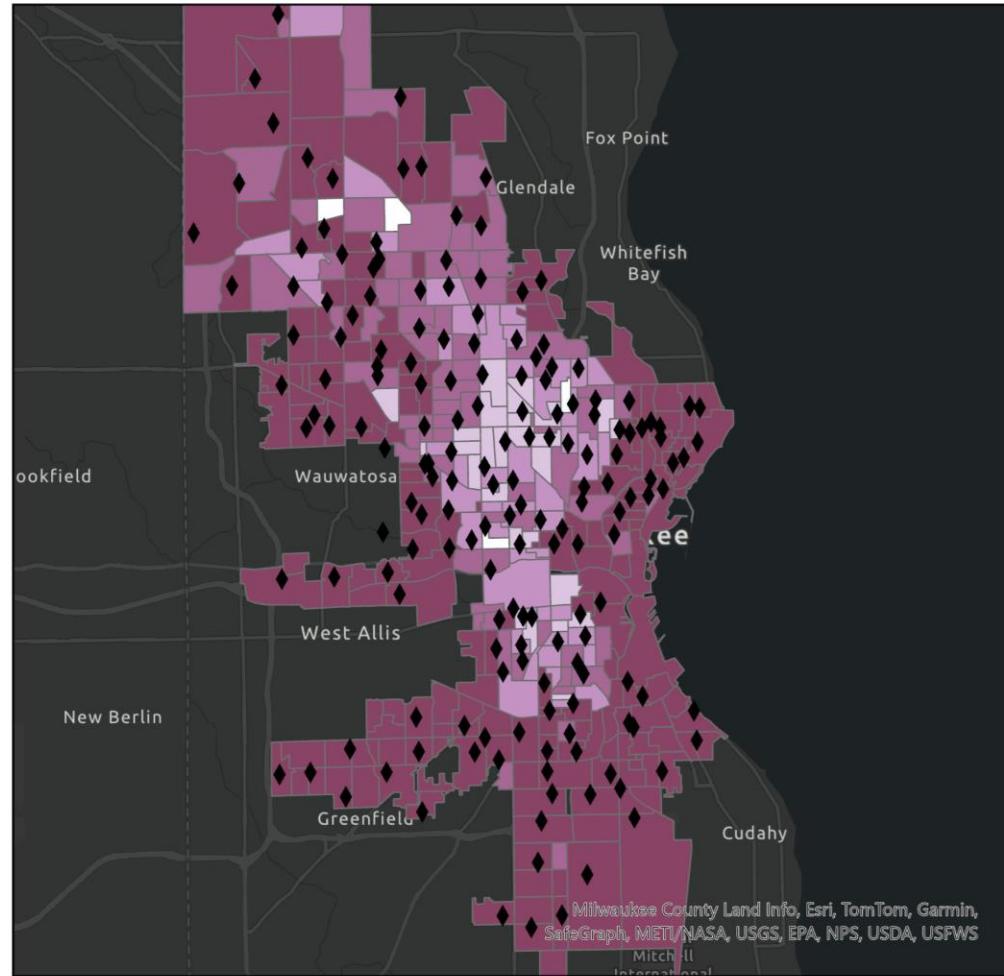


# Central Area of Milwaukee

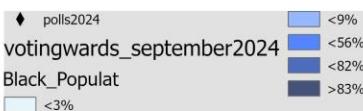
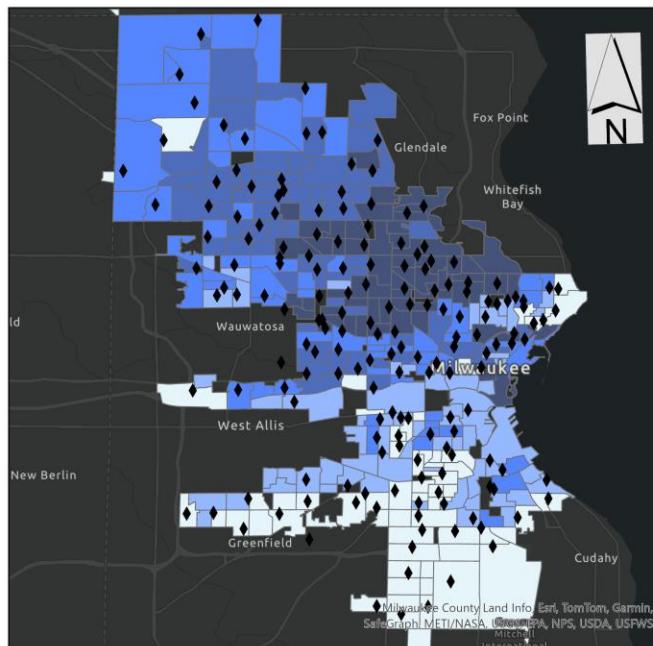
- Little to no polling locations
- Poverty rates are higher
- Car, Truck and Van usage rates are below average
- Higher percentage of Black residents



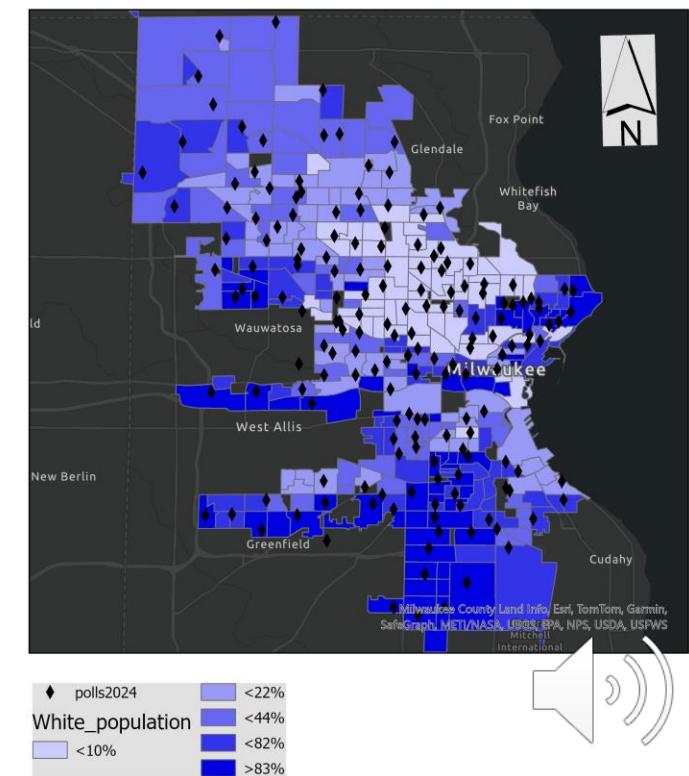
### Voter Turnout in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2024)



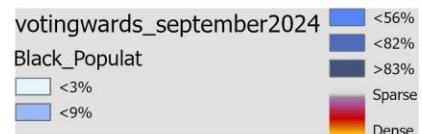
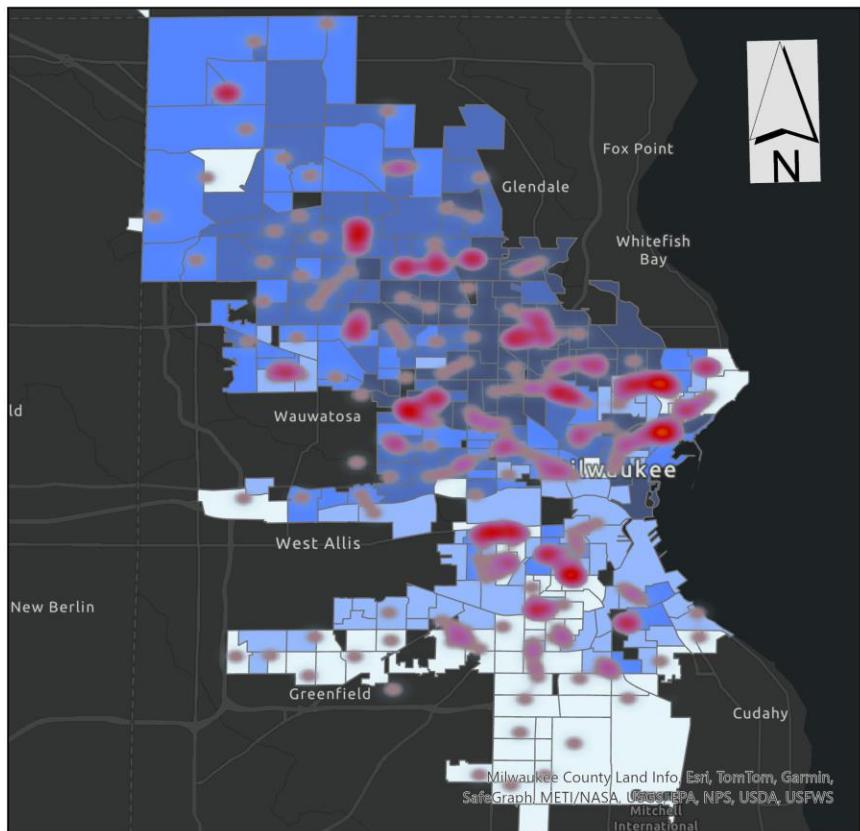
Percent of Black People in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2024)



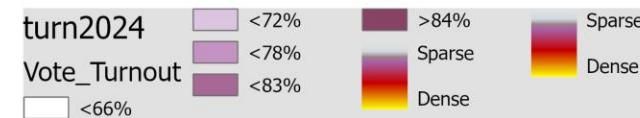
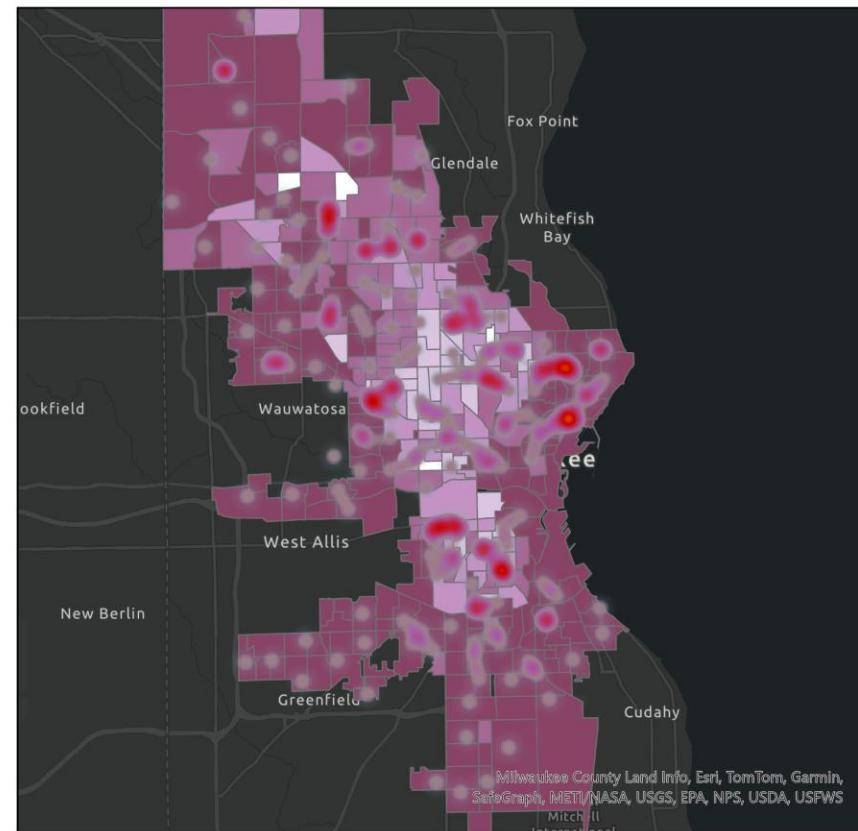
Percent of White People in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2024)



Percent of Black People in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2024)



Voter Turnout in each Voting Ward in relation to Polling Locations (2024)



# Importance

- Adds a spatial component to Voter Turnout
  - Physical proximity to polling locations relation to vote turn out in racially diverse areas
- Accessibility of polling locations
- Advocating for more equitable resources and voting access



# Thank You!

# What's Next

- **Mode of Voting:**
  - whether voters cast their ballots in-person, absentee, or via early voting.
- **Average Distance to Polls**
  - calculating the **average distance** that voters in different wards must travel to their designated polling location. This will help quantify how accessibility affects voter turnout

Year	Polling Stations	Voter Turnout (City Wide %)
2016	N/A	75.49
2020	101	78.51
2022	151	62.68
2024	186	88.90

ward plan for the municipality to remain in effect until superseded by a ward plan enacted or adopted by the governing body in compliance with s. 5.15.

**History:** 1985 a. 304 ss. 9, 11, 12; 2011 a. 39.

## 5.25 Polling places.

- (1) All elections under chs. 5 to 12 shall be held at the polling places provided in this section. The places chosen shall be public buildings, unless the use of a public building for this purpose is impracticable or the use of a nonpublic building better serves the needs of the electorate, as determined by the authority charged with the responsibility for establishing polling places under sub. (2).
- (2) In cities over 500,000 population, polling shall be at the places established by the board of election commissioners. In all other cities and in villages and towns, polling shall be at the places established by the governing body.
- (3)
- (a) Polling places shall be established for each election at least 30 days before the election. Subject to par. (b), no polling place so established in a municipality may be closed to voters on election day unless the majority of the members-elect, as defined in s. 66.10015 (1) (bs), of the governing body of the municipality makes a finding of emergency, both the majority of the members-elect of the governing body of the municipality and the municipal clerk approve the closure, and the municipal clerk does all of the following:
1. Posts public notice of the closure on the municipality's website or, if the municipality does not maintain a website, posts notices in at least 3 different locations within the municipality reasonably calculated to notify the most residents.
  2. Publishes a class 3 notice under ch. 985 notifying the public of the closure.
  3. Publishes a class 2 or class 1 notice under ch. 985 notifying the public of the closure if time does not permit publication of a class 3 notice.
  4. Designates a proper person who shall be stationed at or as near as possible to the closed location to notify all electors of the closure and of their new polling location.
  5. In a municipality establishing one polling place only, establishes a new polling location approved by the majority of the members-elect of the governing body and the municipal clerk.
- (b) Under no circumstance may a municipality close more than one-half of its polling places within 30 days before an election, except as provided in par. (a) 5.
- (c) After an election and more than 30 days before the next election, the location of a polling place in a municipality may not be discontinued without the approval of the municipality's governing body after a public hearing at which the public has an opportunity to present testimony on the proposed discontinuation.
- (d) Nothing in this subsection alters the authority of the election inspectors to adjourn to another location for voting on election day under s. 7.37 (1).
- (4)
- (a) Each polling place shall be accessible to all individuals with disabilities. The commission shall ensure that the voting system used at each polling place will permit all individuals with disabilities to vote without the need for assistance and with the same degree of privacy that is accorded to nondisabled electors voting at the same polling place. This paragraph