

2020 POST ELECTION REPORT

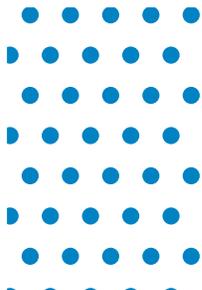


ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are pleased to share our 2020 Post-Election Report. This report reflects our work and that of our partners leading up to the 2020 general election and our commitment to educating, connecting and empowering our collective communities across Northeast Ohio. In the coming months, we will share an additional year in review detailing the investments, strategies and recommendations for continued advocacy.

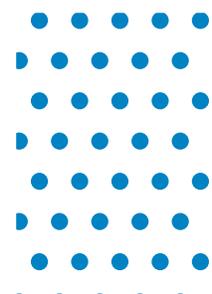
This report was authored by the Cleveland VOTES team in partnership with Leah D. Hudnall, of The Legacy Perspective. Research was collected by Marissa Jones. We pay special gratitude to Nina Holzer, who created the GIS maps featured in this report and Jacinda Walker, of DesignExplorr for editing and final creative production.

Cleveland VOTES is fiscally sponsored by the Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association. We are incredibly grateful for their partnership and the tremendous support they provide to the team!



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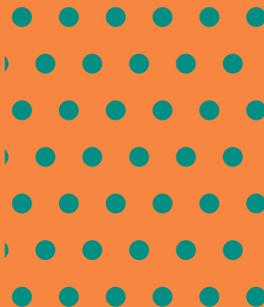
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Civic engagement must be understood as a constant, sustained practice that outlives election cycles and stretches beyond voting or formal channels for citizen input.

ABOUT CLEVELAND VOTES

SECTION
1.0



Team Members. Pictured left to right: Jennifer Lumpkin, Civic Engagement Strategy Manager; Erika Anthony, Co-Founder Adviser; Crystal Bryant, Co-Founder Adviser; and Devonta Dickey, Advocacy and Engagement Coordinator.



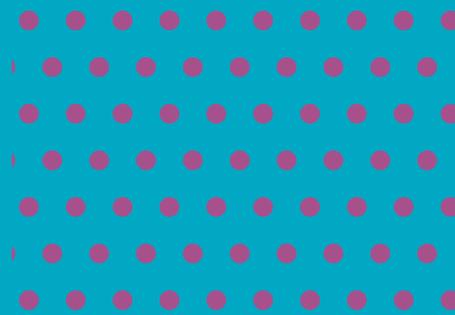
Cleveland VOTES is a nonpartisan democracy building and mobilization entity that aims to strengthen civic muscle and power to ensure we have a more informed, participatory, and cohesive community. Our work is communal and co-created with fellow democracy builders.

We invest in entities working to expand voter registration, accessibility, and participation by integrating the practice of equitable civic engagement through the success and measurable outreach efforts of its partners, collaborators, and grantees.

Co-Founders Erika Anthony and Crystal Bryant, created Cleveland VOTES to fill the voter registration void for individuals incarcerated and re-entering society. Partnerships and collaboration have vastly expanded to include dozens of organizations at the national, state and local levels.

To learn more, visit us at clevotes.com.

2020 STATE OF AFFAIRS



SECTION
2.0

The sudden arrival and spread of the coronavirus disease spurred a national pandemic and sent America into a frenzy of fear. At the onset, it was clear that we would all be undoubtedly impacted, as state and federal leaders strategized on a comprehensive response. Physical distancing orders impacted every routine and in-person function, including voting.

Shortly after, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine ordered every Ohioan to stay at home to slow the spread of the virus, he announced he was moving the state's 2020 primary election that was slated for March 17, 2020 to June 2, 2020. The sudden announcement prohibiting in-person voting, sparked chaos across the state, causing county election officials and non-profit advocates to manage the public outcry and confusion.

The matter was presented to Judge Richard A. Frye of Franklin county who denied the request to delay the primary election. After the judgement, Governor DeWine ultimately closed the polls for in-person voting on March 17, citing it as a health risk. The election was subsequently held almost entirely absentee and concluded on April 28, the official date set with approval of the Ohio legislature.

With only a few weeks to pivot strategies, the Cleveland VOTES team worked with local funders, state-wide, and Greater Cleveland partners to develop a strategy to educate, connect and empower the community to activate for the Primary Election. With the public health crisis just starting to take heed, traditional in-person strategies were very limited. Partners quickly innovated and launched strategies that included:

- Leveraging organizational assets such as websites, newsletters, digital campaigns, and other forms of communication
- 2020 Census - paired Primary Election activities with 2020 Census activation
- COVID-19 paired events - prior to the launch of #Masks4Community in Cleveland, there was a pre-launch that made masks and voter related materials accessible
- Enhanced digital and virtual engagement
- Multilingual hotline and translated materials
- Small business engagement - leveraging establishments that were still open and essential services to make voter materials available to customers
- Social media engagement, leveraging engaging digital content, paid digital ads, and virtual town hall discussion
- Traditional media engagement (digital, print, radio, and television)
- Virtual SMS texting and phone banks
- Voter drive-throughs and caravans
- Voter by Mail applications - printing and dropping

Ultimately, the best strategy was leveraging the trusted messengers in our community. All of us were experiencing 'information overload', therefore it was critical to have 'translators' help navigate our fellow community members through the process. After the Primary wrapped up, it was clear that we would likely need to continue to maintain physically distanced strategies for the balance for the year. We and our partners quickly debriefed and processed how to improve upon these strategies for the 2020 General Election.

Top: each kit distributed via #Masks4Community included a washable cloth mask, health information and Cleveland VOTES collateral promoting the 2020 census and election.

Bottom: dedicated volunteers pose for a photo after assembling free mask kits.

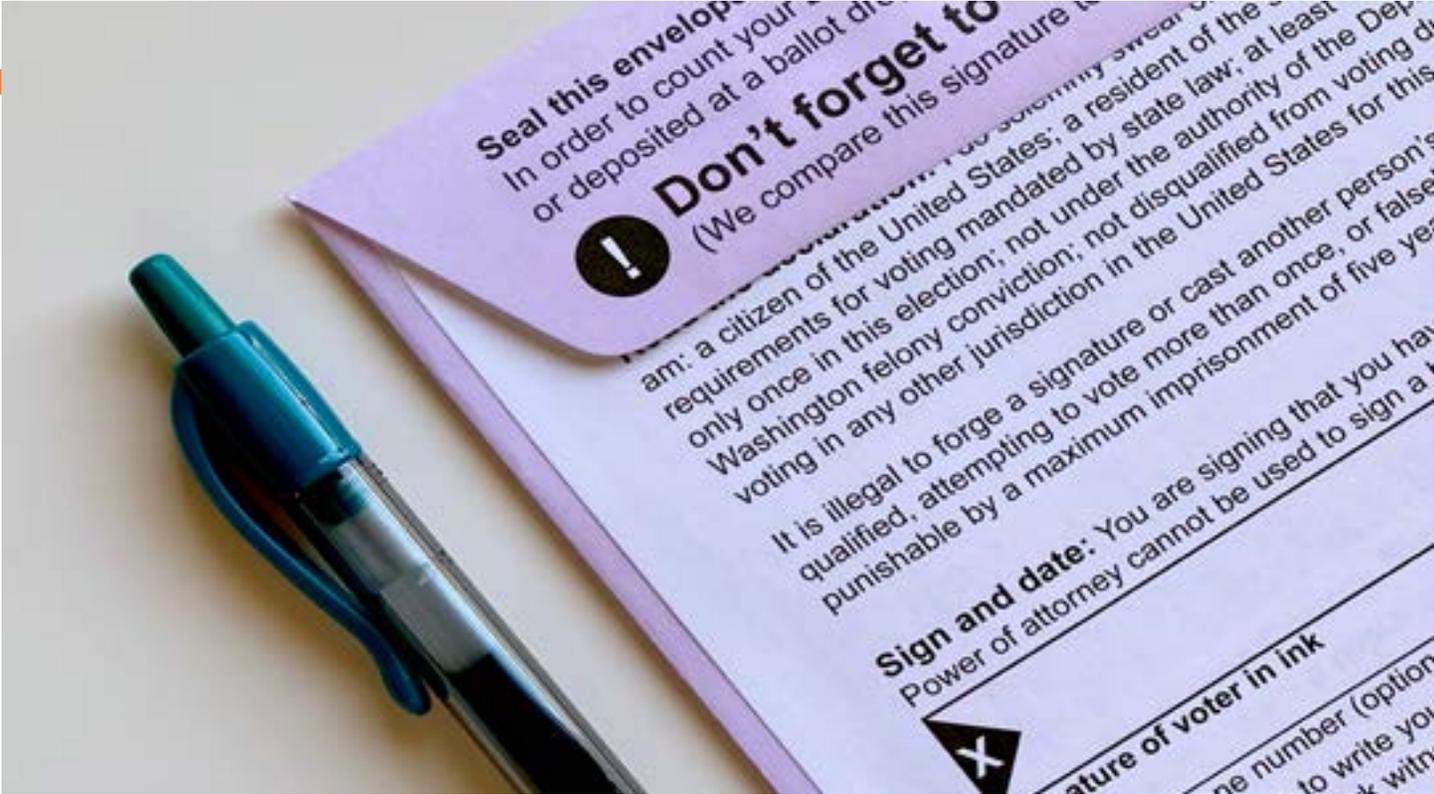


#MASKS4COMMUNITY

Cleveland VOTES was a proud partner of #Masks4Community, a grassroots initiative that leveraged the power of more than 10 health, civic and nonprofit partners focused on voter education and outreach, environmental racism, grassroots research, and the digital divide, to provide 77,000 free washable cloth masks for residents of Cleveland and East Cleveland along with voting and census information.

Between May and September 2020, #Masks4Community safely organized hundreds of volunteers to provide the equipment and information Cleveland's African American, Latinx and LGBTQ community members needed as they were and still are disproportionately experiencing the severe and deadly health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learn more at masks4community.com.



Increased Amount Of Absentee/Mail In Ballots

Absentee Ballot Applications Received, 2016: 1,994,991

Absentee Ballot Applications Received, 2020: 3,785,827

By the start of early voting for the 2020 election, over 169,000 Ohioans had contracted COVID. By Election Day, that number rose to over 230,000 cases. Thus, census, voter outreach, and GOTV efforts significantly shifted, and vote by mail activity increased at the county and state level.

According to unofficial results of the 2020 election released by the Ohio Secretary of State's office, the number absentee ballot applications received had nearly doubled since 2016.

2020 POLL WORKERS: A NEW CLASS



Devonta Dickey, Advocacy and Engagement Coordinator with Cleveland Votes is pictured here with a Cleveland resident at the polls at Harvey Rice Library in Cleveland's Woodland Hills neighborhood. On Election Day, the Cleveland VOTES team conducted vote tripling – a voter turnout tactic that reminds voters to encourage three people to vote.



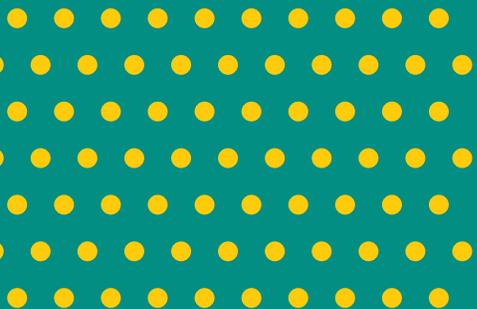
Elections in our communities in Northeast Ohio and throughout the country may be governed by local boards of elections, but they are executed by dedicated poll workers who are committed to facilitating efficient election experiences for all voters.

According to the Pew Research Center, in 2018, approximately 58% of poll workers were 61 years or older, with approximately 27% of those individuals being over 70 years of age. The arrival of the coronavirus disease immediately threatened the longstanding core group of poll workers (older adults), who were one of the several populations identified as groups with increased risk to contract the virus. Poll workers across the country who routinely served on Election Day, were no longer able, due to the potential health risks.

Many Americans signed up to be a poll worker for the first time this election, to honor those who could not due to increased vulnerability. Though detailed statistics are not yet available on the age demographic of those who signed up to work the polls in Ohio, we can safely assume that many who committed a day to democracy in this fashion were under the age of 60.

In advance of the 2020 election, Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose introduced the state's first ever Poll Worker Tracker to share the progress toward poll worker recruitment goals across all 88 counties in a transparent fashion. Over 56,000 citizens committed to working the polls across Ohio on Election Day, with over 5,300 of those persons representing Cuyahoga County.

ACCESSIBILITY



To boost voter participation, Cleveland VOTES and partners encouraged voters to make a plan to vote, which would increase the likelihood of an individual successfully casting their ballot. We promoted all voting methods as options to consider, including voting absentee by mail, early in person, or in person at a polling location on Election Day.

As a result of the public health crisis, more Ohioans voted absentee which caused barriers to fair and equitable access. Several of our partners, including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Ohio, All Voting is Local and the Ohio Voting Rights Coalition, advocated for expanded voting rights, additional vote by mail drop boxes, and widened access to voters living with disabilities.

POLLING LOCATION CHANGES

Following a directive from Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose's office, the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections changed the location of several polling places across the county. According to Cleveland.com, 16 cities in Cuyahoga County saw polling place changes, which included seven wards in the city of Cleveland. While voters were issued postcards via mail to inform them of their new polling location, the changes became yet another barrier of information and point of confusion during the 2020 election season.

A. PHILIP RANDOLPH INSTITUTE OF OHIO, LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO, OHIO STATE CONFERENCE OF THE NAACP, ET AL V. FRANK LAROSE

A lawsuit filed by a coalition of voting rights advocates in Ohio garnered national attention in advance of the 2020 general election. The lawsuit, which centered on a demand for more ballot drop boxes after Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose announced only one drop box would be allowed in each of Ohio's 88 counties. The suit, which the Washington Post referred to as "one of the most bitter and revealing legal fights of this election year," ended after a Secretary LaRose's decision to provide only one drop box per county, regardless of the county's population or number of registered voters, was defended by a federal appeals court in Cincinnati, with a 2-1 vote.

To read the ACLU's summary of the case, [click here](#).

SENATE BILL 191

Senate Bill 191, sponsored by Senator Theresa Garvarone, proposed that Ohio voters have the option to apply to vote absentee via a secure online process. While Ohioans can register to vote online, they must submit completed absentee ballot applications through the mail. Proponents of the legislation believe an online portal will make Ohio's voting process more efficient for voters and election officials.

The bill is now before the Government Oversight and Reform Committee and has received supporting testimony from Secretary LaRose's office. Though it was not passed in advance of the 2020 general election, the legislation is still seen as a promising advancement in strengthening our state's vote-by-mail system. Other opportunities for advancement include providing prepaid postage for all mail-in ballots and applications, increasing the number of ballot drop boxes per county, and more.

[Learn more about SB 191.](#)

THE EXPANSION OF CURBSIDE VOTING

Under normal conditions, curbside voting is available for Ohioans living with a disability who are voting at a location that is exempt from accessibility requirements. This voting method allows two precinct election officials from both major political parties to bring a ballot to the car, or at the door of a building.

This year, Ohio Secretary of State LaRose expanded curbside voting options due to COVID-19. Voters who had contracted the virus or who needed to take extra precautions, were also allowed to vote safely curbside. This method proved to be a beneficial addition, as there was notable increase in the use of the service in 2020 compared to 2016, according to WOSU Public Media.

Voting rights advocates hope curbside voting access will become a permanent expansion in the state of Ohio beyond the pandemic and the 2020 election season.



TRANSPORTATION

From our work in Cleveland neighborhoods and surrounding cities, we have learned that those without access to personal transportation face significant barriers on Election Day.

Once prospective voters make the commitment to activate their right to vote, they must then create a plan to get to their polling location. In the past, Cleveland VOTES operated Rides to the Polls in partnership with Ohio Votes. However, for the 2020 Election cycle, we opted to support efforts in the community.

In Northeast Ohio, voters were aided by local philanthropy, government, and fellow Cleveland residents who invested time and resources to remove transportation as a barrier to voting.

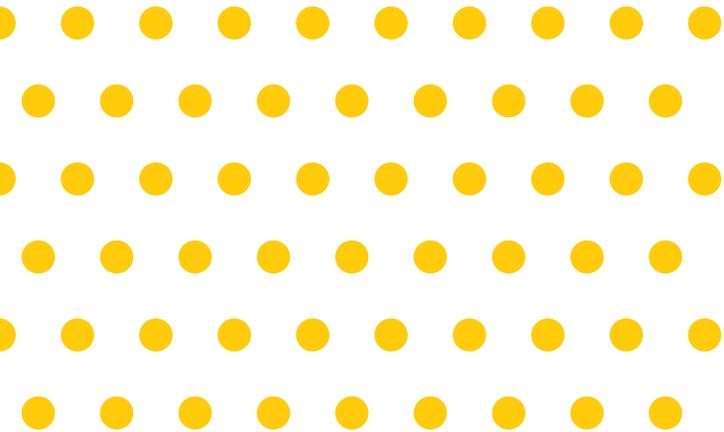
Voter Drive Cleveland emerged during the early voting season as a non-partisan effort by community members who coordinated a free and home-grown ridesharing program to boost voter turnout by driving voters to the polls. With proper safety precautions in place for each driver and passenger, Voter Drive Cleveland recruited 80 volunteer drivers who made over 170 trips to the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections and various polling locations. Voter Drive Cleveland also worked with two private transportation companies, Better Choice and Now Transit, which offered accessible rides for over 30 riders with disabilities.

Additionally, a few of our grantee partners operated their own shuttle services to make rides accessible for voters. University Settlement and Famicos Foundation offered shuttle service from their respective geographic locations. Also, we partnered with the Vote to Live campaign to offer a Lyft code that voters were able to use for early voting and Election Day.

In late October, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) in partnership with the Cleveland Foundation, announced that rides would be free for bus, rail and paratransit passengers, all day on Election Day. The announcement marked the first time in the RTA's history that fare was waived on Election Day.

The Cleveland Foundation's decision to underwrite the RTA's cost of ridership on Election Day is just one example of the impact that can be made when philanthropy's investment in nonpartisan voter engagement is responsive to the true needs of the community.

We are committed to the fight for equitable civic engagement and will continue to work alongside our partners toward long term solutions to transportation and other significant barriers that voters face leading up to and on Election Day.



We must say and honor their names, just as we honor our ancestors.

[CLEVELAND VOTES STATEMENT OF SOLIDAIRTY](#)

BLACK LIVES MATTER



The devastating stories of Ahmaud Arbery, of Georgia, Breonna Taylor, of Kentucky, and George Floyd, of Minnesota, were thrust into national headlines and conversations in homes across the country as we saw their stories threaded together by fatal incidents fueled by individual and structural racism.

Their stories, compounded with racial injustices of past and present, sparked a national uprising that resulted in hundreds of protests in cities across the world and candid conversations about America's pervasive history of racism. Soon after, a flood of commitments to Black lives and a more equitable future surfaced from corporate and nonprofit leaders at both the national and local level.

The Cleveland VOTES team stands in solidarity with our Brothers and Sisters who for no justifiable reason are no longer with us. We must say and honor their names, just as we honor our ancestors. We see every interaction with residents, allies, and partners as an opportunity to speak boldly about the impact racism has on each system in our country, including our democracy.

As four Black persons, from various walks of life – we share a bond and a desire for liberation. Every day we are confronted with practices and policies that stand to compromise or jeopardize the viability of ourselves or our community. We are committed to uplifting the ways in which historical, structural, and systemic racism impede fair and equitable justice for disenfranchised populations.

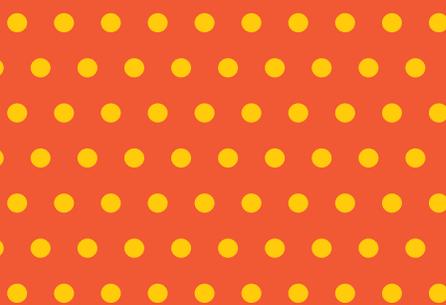
WE VOTE FOR TAMIR

This year, in partnership with Samaria Rice and the Tamir Rice Foundation, we released a voter guide for young adults and our community in memory of Tamir Rice, who would have turned 18 in June 2020.

The voter guide included instructions on how to register to vote online, how to apply to vote by mail, and listed key dates in the 2020 election cycle and upcoming races.

[Learn more about the We Vote for Tamir Voter Guide.](#)

VOTER SUPPRESSION





DISINFORMATION

On November 2, 2020, the New York Times reported that Signal Labs, a media intelligence company, ranked Ohio as the state that received the second highest amount of misinformation leading up to the general election. Out of the approximately 1.1 million misinformation mentions (across several mediums ranging from cable television to social media), Signal Labs captured nearly 90,000 of them stemming from Ohio. The mentions of misinformation specifically focused on questioning the validity of one's vote and raised unsubstantiated concerns about ballot tampering.

There was a noticeable uptick in disinformation attacks against Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) voters this election. According to an NPR article released just shortly before Election Day, voting advocates and experts in the field reported that Black and Latinx voters in Ohio were targeted by bad actors spreading disinformation through phone and social media days before the election, mirroring Russian interference tactics from 2016.

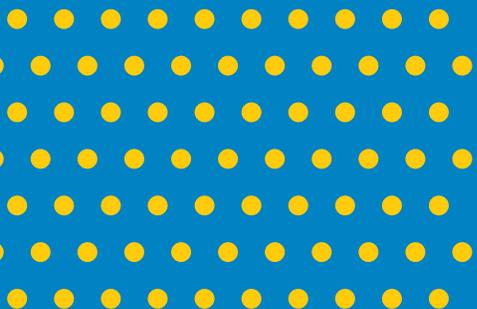
VOTER INTIMIDATION

The Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office secured an indictment for Jacob Wohl and Jack Burkman, who acted as a team to use deceptive practices to intimidate voters in Cleveland and East Cleveland. According to Ideastream, Wohl and Burkman, both from out of state, left recorded phone messages to purport that voter's information could be collected by government officials and used to enforce mandatory coronavirus vaccinations or that it could be released to law enforcement and debt collectors.

These false messages appropriated and tokenized Black culture by using vernacular to specifically target predominantly Black neighborhoods. Wohl and Burkman have been charged with eight counts of telecommunications fraud and seven of bribery. Their case brought forth the first voter intimidation charges in the state of Ohio for the 2020 election.

Voter intimidation is an ugly form of voter suppression that we actively combat with voter education and engagement. Continued civic education, delivered on a routine basis, not just during election season, is imperative so that Cleveland voters are not susceptible to similar attacks in the future.

2020 GENERAL ELECTION: GREATER CLEVELAND



VOTER TURNOUT: 2020

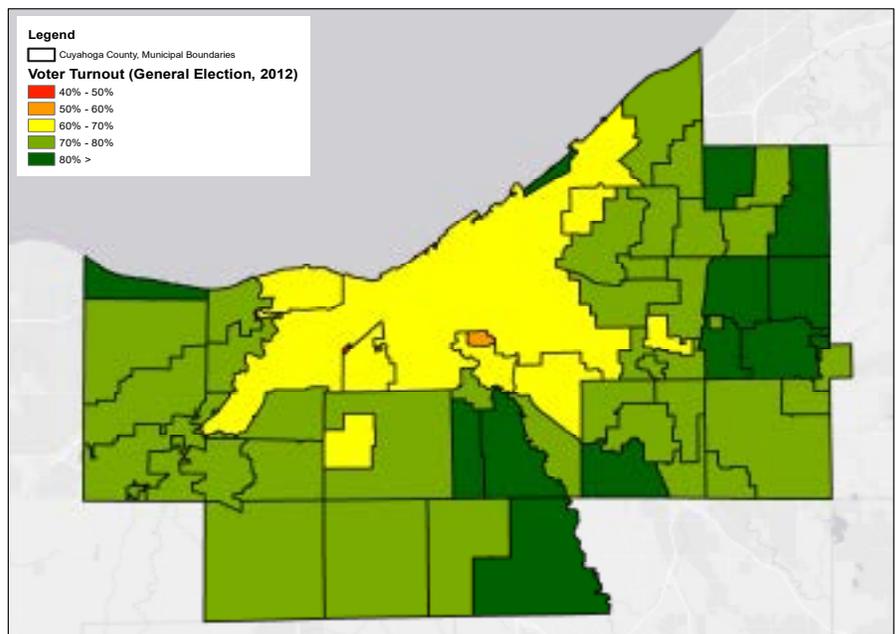
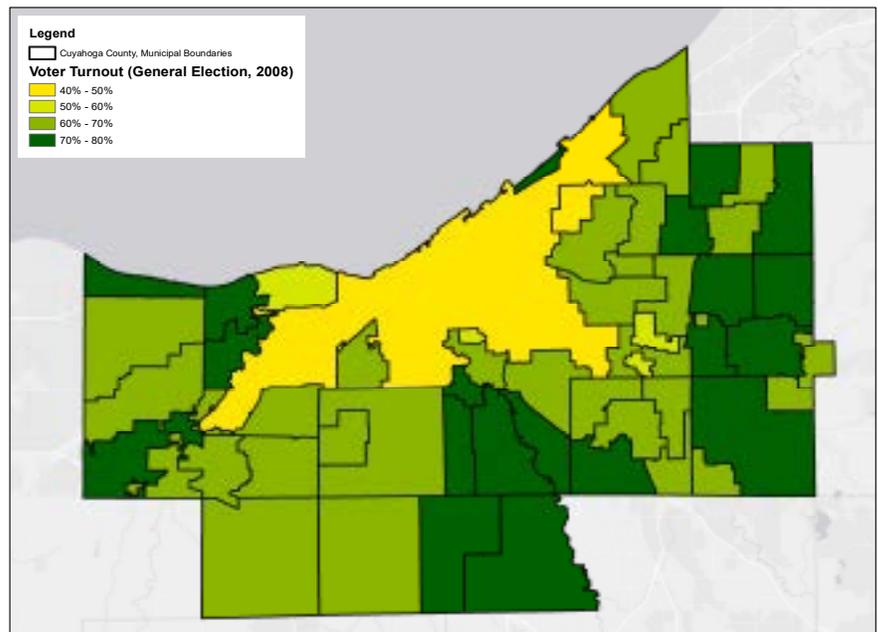
The 2020 general election will be remembered as one of the most historic elections in modern history. Voter turnout across the country skyrocketed, with Ohio leading the way. According to an op-ed penned by Secretary of State LaRose in the Cincinnati Enquirer, Ohio reached a record high for voter turnout with 5.8 million votes cast in the 2020 election, as of November 8, 2020.

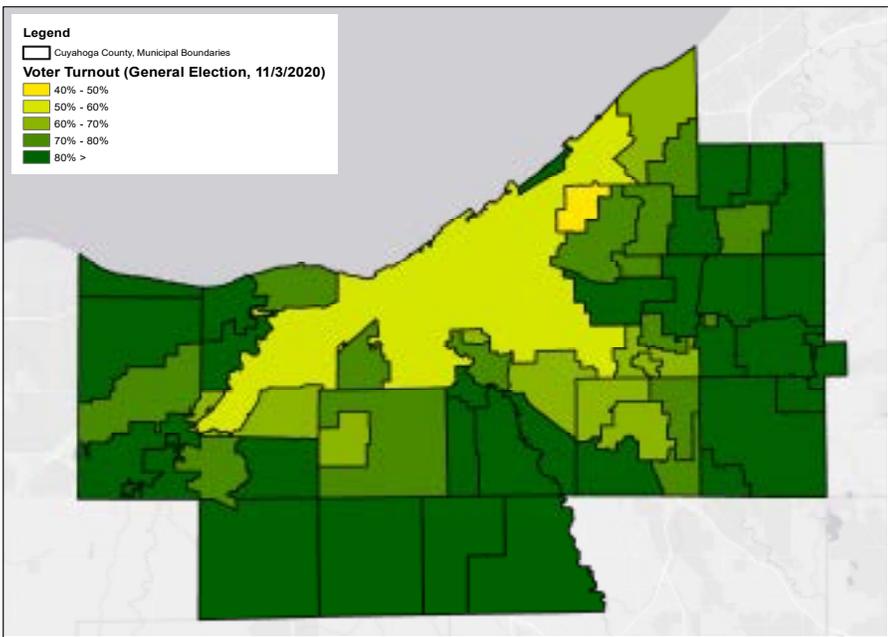
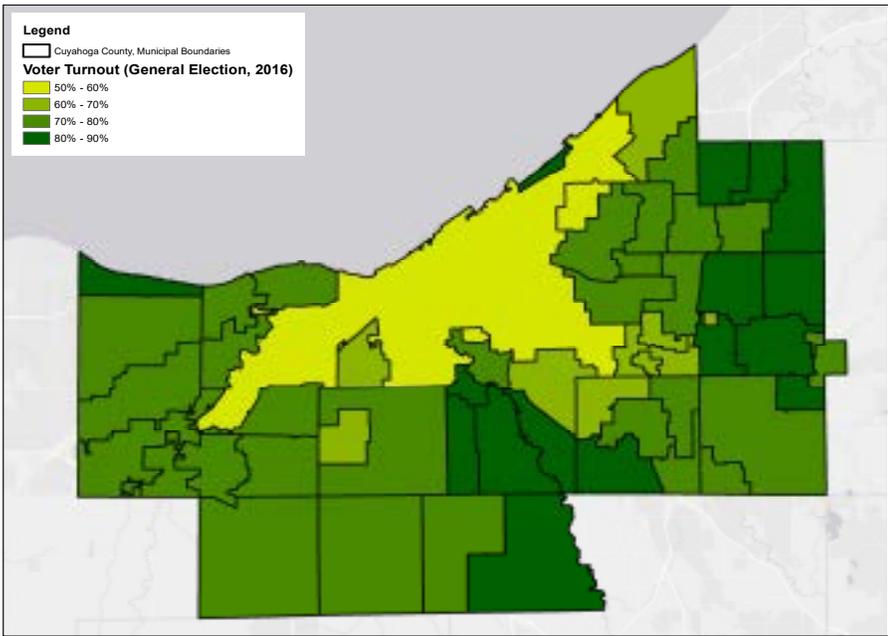
One day before Election Day, Secretary LaRose's office released preliminary data showing that total ballots cast, ballots cast early in person, and absentee ballot applications had all nearly doubled since the 2016 general election.

On October 31, 2020, the last Saturday before Election Day, local news outlets across the region covered the long lines stemming from the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections. Voters waited patiently as the line eventually stretched onto the overpass on I-90, with an average wait time of two and a half hours, according to Cleveland.com.

Though record highs were reached at the state level, there is still an opportunity to encourage greater voter participation within the city of Cleveland, as the city's approximate overall voter turnout rate was 53% in the 2020 general election.

Certified results from the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections show that Cuyahoga County's overall turnout rate was 70.99% (compared to 69.24% in the 2016 general election). Overall voter turnout has varied throughout previous elections, evidenced by the following turnout maps.





Voter turnout in Cuyahoga County from the 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2020 general elections.

2020 ELECTION RESULTS

The majority of voters in Cuyahoga County selected the following individuals for each respective office:

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

President-Elect, Joseph R. Biden (D): 66.36%

CONGRESSIONAL

United States Rep 9th District, Marcy Kaptur (D): 63.57%

United States Rep 11th District, Marcia L. Fudge (D): 81.47%

United States Rep 14th District, David P. Joyce (R): 50.76%

United States Rep 16th District, Aaron Paul Godfrey (D): 42.54%

State Senate 24th District, Matt Dolan (R): 54.34%

STATE LEGISLATORS

State Rep 6th District, Phil Robinson (D): 51.36%

State Rep 7th District, Thomas F. Patton (R): 58.21%

State Rep 8th District, Kent Smith (D): 100%

State Rep 9th District, Janine Boyd (D): 86.61%

State Rep 10th District, Terrence Upchurch (D): 100%

State Rep 11th District, Stephanie Howse (D): 100%

State Rep 12th District, Juanita Brent (D): 82.24%

State Rep 13th District, Michael J. Skindell (D): 74.33%

State Rep 14th District, Bride Rose Sweeney (D): 58.44%

State Rep 15th District, Jeffrey A. Crossman (D): 52.17

State Rep 16th District, Monique Smith (D): 50.68%

CUYAHOGA COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

Michael C. O'Malley (D): 100.00%

CUYAHOGA COUNTY COUNCIL

County Council District 2, Dale Miller (D): 100%

County Council District 4, Scott M. Tuma (D): 100%

County Council District 6, Jack Schron Jr (R): 100%

County Council District 8, Pernel Jones Jr (D): 88.37

County Council District 10, Cheryl L. Stephens (D): 100%

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

District 5, Christina Collins: 56.26%

District 11, Meryl Johnson: 59.11%

JUDICIAL: OHIO

Justice of the Supreme Court, John P. O'Donnell: 57.85%

Justice of the Supreme Court, Jennifer Brunner: 66.51%

8th District Court of Appeals, Sean C. Gallagher: 100%

8th District Court of Appeals, Larry A. Jones: 100%

8th District Court of Appeals, Emanuella D. Groves: 57.73%

8th District Court of Appeals, Anita Laster Mays: 100%

8th District Court of Appeals, Lisa Forbes, 71.02%

JUDICIAL: CUYAHOGA COUNTY

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Michael J. Russo: 100%

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Nancy A. Fuerst: 100%

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, William Vodrey: 50.75%

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Nancy R. McDonnell: 100%

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Brendan J. Sheehan: 100%

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Andrew J. Santoli: 54.46

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Nancy Margaret Russo: 100%

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Shannon M. Gallagher: 100%

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Deena R. Calabrese: 100%

Court of Common Pleas, General Division, Richard A. Bell: 52.95%

Court of Common Pleas, Domestic Relations, Colleen Ann Reali: 68.36%

Court of Common Pleas, Domestic Relations, Leslie Ann Celebrezze: 100%

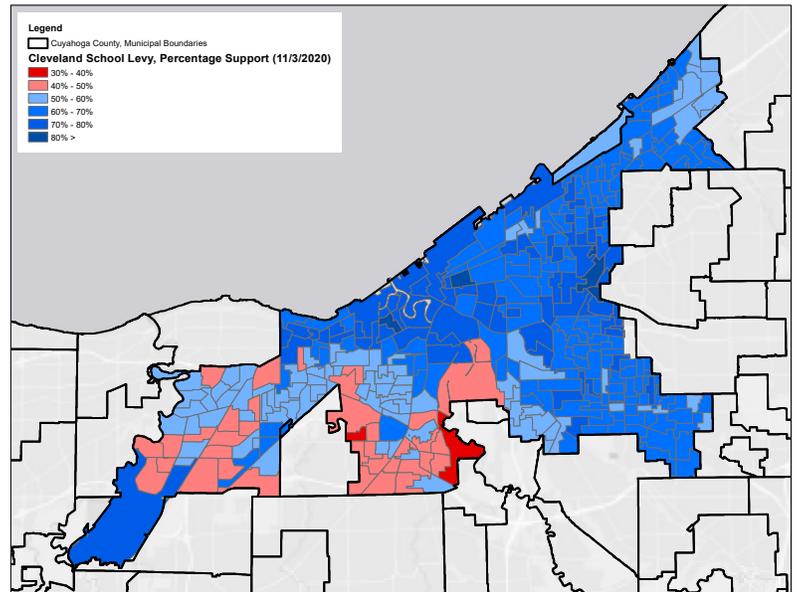
Court of Common Pleas, Probate, Anthony J. Russo: 100%

Court of Common Pleas, Probate, Laura J. Gallagher: 100%

**ISSUE 68:
CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN
SCHOOL DISTRICT (CMSD)**

The renewed levy will support the school district's operating budget for 10 years.

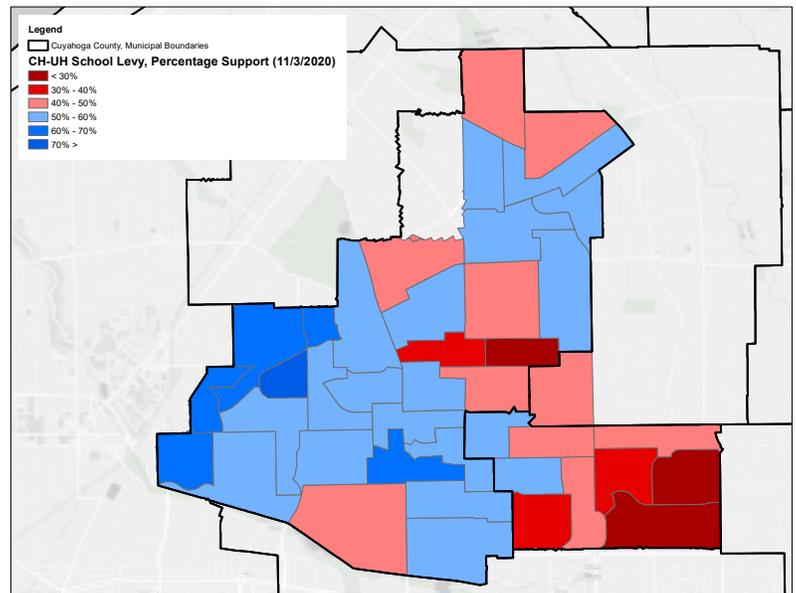
Passed with 61.63%



**ISSUE 69:
CLEVELAND HEIGHTS -
UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The levy will be used to strengthen and enhance school programming with the CH-UH school district.

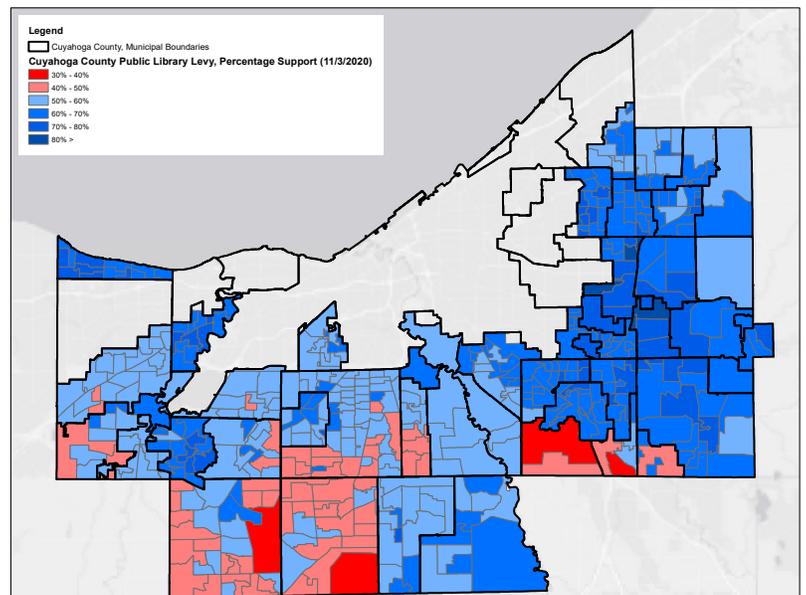
Passed with 50.23%



**ISSUE 70: CUYAHOGA COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY (CCPL)**

In November, Cuyahoga County Public Library (CCPL) was on the ballot for the first time in 12 years, requesting support for the county library system.

Passed with 59.51%





CONCLUSION

The global pandemic challenged us, but also thrust us into new areas of possibility. This year has demonstrated the importance of trust, relationship, and community. We shared a common (albeit unfortunate) bond with our partners and the community at-large. Honoring trusted messengers and connecting culture to equitable civic engagement has proven effective.

This year, the Cleveland VOTES team engaged countless national, state, and local partners, residents, and volunteers via our collective efforts to activate for the 2020 Census, Primary and General Election. This collective power has catalyzed a resurgence of energy towards owning our power. There is tremendous curiosity, creativity, courage, resilience, and a veracious spirit to realize true equitable democracy. And for that, this team continues to stay hopeful that together we can in fact create the change we all so desire.

We truly believe that we all have a role in nonpartisan democracy building. We are encouraging all folks committed to affecting change, undesigning oppressive and systemic policies/practices and creating pathways for equitable civic engagement to commit to at least one of the following actions listed to the right.

Download and share our [#Commit2CLE Toolkit](#)

Participate in a program provided by the [Informative Action Committee](#)

Celebrate justice and victory with Shooting w/o Bullets' [In Our DNA](#) campaign

Make a Voter Plan!

Commit to getting your network of family and friends registered - it is never too early. Our next Election is May 4, 2021.

Invest in Equitable Democracy. The Election may be over, but the sustainability of those that got us here is critical. Consider donating to a local organization that is committed to equitable civic engagement.

NOTES

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THANK YOU

Our work is made possible by donors and investors that are committed to realizing equitable democracy.

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PHOTO CREDITS

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Page 5: Josh Dobay,
Josh Dobay Productions

Page 14: [Bike the Block for Black Lives](#)

Page 22: Shooting Without Bullets;
Installation of the 'In Our DNA' campaign

