

**Communities Within:  
Diversity and Exclusion in Ottawa**

**Les communautés au sein de notre ville :  
la diversité et l'exclusion à Ottawa**



An initiative of the Social Planning Council of Ottawa  
Un projet du Conseil de planification sociale d'Ottawa



# **Mixed Blessings and Missed Opportunities**

## **The Intercase Study on Inclusion and Exclusion of Ottawa's Visible and Ethnic Minority Residents**

### **The Geography of Exclusion**

2008

A project funded by  
Canadian Heritage, Multiculturalism and Aboriginal Programs  
The City of Ottawa  
United Way Ottawa

With support from Sambuza Village  
With the collaboration of Carleton University



**Copies of this report can be obtained in English. French and large print from:**

**The Social Planning Council of Ottawa**

280 rue Metcalfe Street, suite 501

Ottawa (Ontario), K2P 1R7

Tel: (613) 236-9300

Fax (613) 236-7060

E-mail: [office@spcottawa.on.ca](mailto:office@spcottawa.on.ca)

Internet [www.spcottawa.on.ca](http://www.spcottawa.on.ca)

For other alternate formats, please contact Nathalie at the contact information above.

**SPC Project Team**

Dianne Urquhart - Executive Director

Clara Jimeno – Research Director

Catalyst Research and Communications

Richard Lau – GIS Mapper

We would like to thank Hindia Mohamoud and Chola Mulenga for their invaluable contribution to this project, in the design stage, for the focus groups, preparing background papers and for data analysis.

The following prepared background research and assisted with qualitative data gathering.

Ersin Asliturk

Sophie Cyrenne

Eric Diotte

Monique Best

Crystal Li Zhao

Leanne Dustan

Norah Barongo-Muweke

Kathryn Minichiello

Oren Winer

Colin Stuart

Paula de Coita

Ted Oliver

Maria T. Reyes

Kristen Robertson-Grewal

In addition, we offer our sincere thanks to members of our Advisory Committees, including:

Allan Moscovitch

Brian Ray

Glenn Drover

Fran Klodawsky

Jean Lock Kunz

Diana Majury

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the department of Canadian Heritage, Multiculturalism and Aboriginal Programs. As well, we offer a special thank you to our other funders: City of Ottawa (for focus groups), United Way Ottawa (for infrastructure support and staffing), Carleton University (for providing us in-kind resources of excellent students ).

The opinions and interpretations expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

**June 2008**

du / cj : spc

## **a) The Geography of Exclusion: Concentration in Poor Neighbourhoods**

### **Are visible minority groups more likely live in poor neighbourhoods than non visible minority groups in Ottawa?**

To answer this question, we examine the spatial distribution of the visible minority groups in relation to low income neighbourhoods within Ottawa. The findings will further our understanding of some of the underlying factors leading to social and economic exclusion faced by this group of the population.

From the same Census, close to one in seven of the population in private households live below the Low Income Cut-off (LICO). There are about 112,000 persons living in poverty representing 15% of the population (city average).

### **Poor Neighbourhoods**

We define a poor neighbourhood as a census tract in which the percent of low income residents is above the city average of low income population (15%). A census tract (CT) as established by Statistics Canada is a small, relatively stable geographic area that usually has a population of 2,500 to 8,000. It is as homogeneous as possible in terms of socioeconomic characteristics, such as similar economic status and social living conditions.

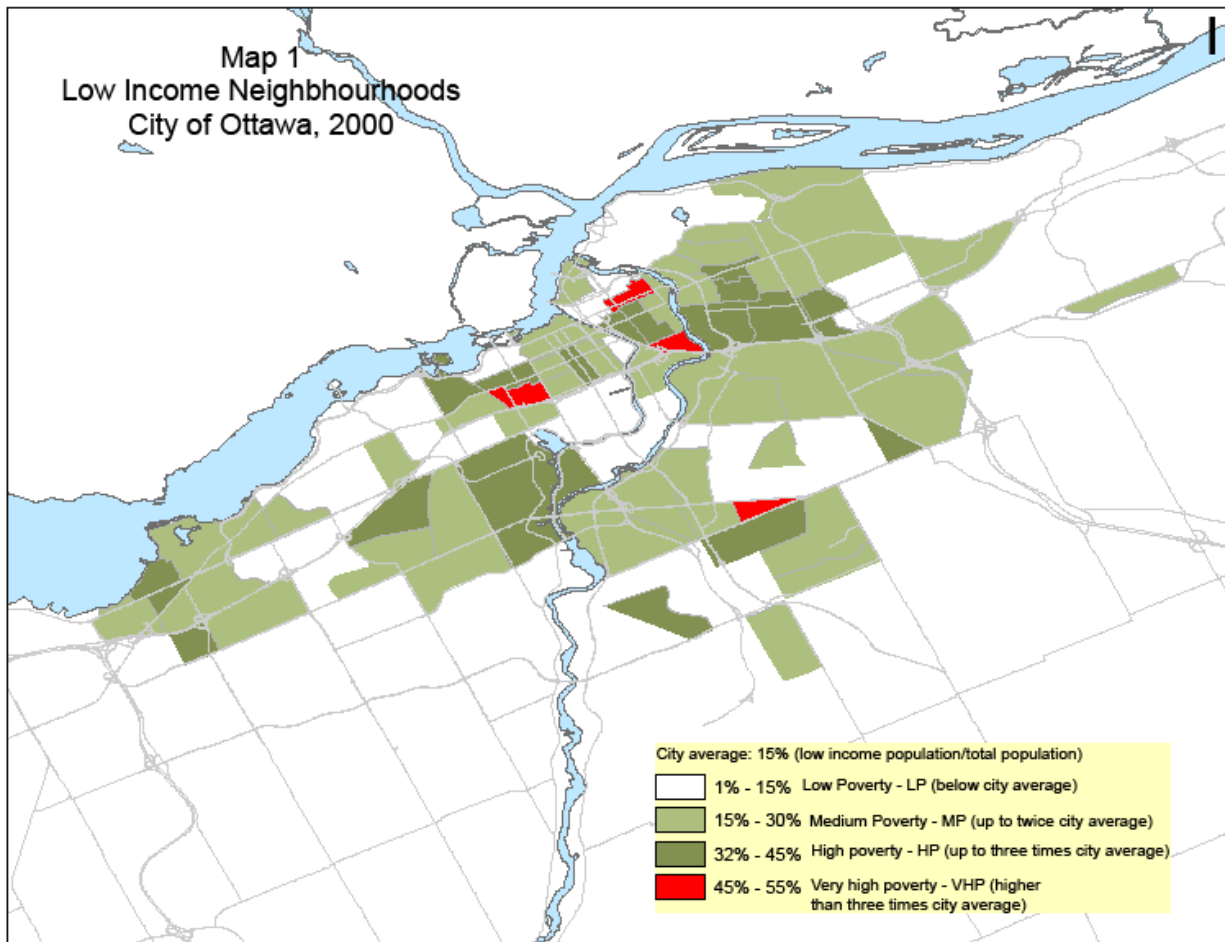
There are 59 census tracts with over 15% of the residents living in poverty. They account for about 34% of all the neighbourhoods (census tracts) in Ottawa. Almost all the poor neighbourhoods are located within the Ottawa Central area.

These neighbourhoods can be further divided into groups based on the magnitude of the poverty level (low, medium, high and very high).

- Low Poverty (LP) neighbourhoods are those areas with below city average rates of poverty (less than 15%).
- Medium Poverty (MP) neighbourhoods are those between 15 to 30% of the city average.
- High Poverty (HP) neighbourhoods are those areas with between two to three times of the city average (30 to 45%).
- Very High Poverty (VHP) neighbourhoods are those with above three times of the city average (45% and over). In other words, about half of the residents in the VHP neighbourhoods live in poverty.

This approach to classify and group low income neighbourhoods was also used in the low income neighbourhood study (Poverty by Postal Code) by the United Way of Greater Toronto and Canadian Council on Social Development.<sup>1</sup>

Map 1 below shows the geographic locations of the four groups of low income neighbourhoods. About 64% (38 census tracts) of the poor neighbourhoods belong to the Medium Poverty group, 29% (17 census tracts) to the High Poverty group and 7% (4 census tracts) to the Very High Poverty group. The four Very High Poverty neighbourhoods are each located in Alta Vista, Dalhousie, Sandy Hill and Lower Town.



<sup>1</sup> United Way of Greater Toronto and Canadian Council on Social Development, (2004). Poverty by Postal Code: The Geography of Neighbourhood Poverty: City of Toronto, 1981 – 2001. Toronto: United Way of Greater Toronto.

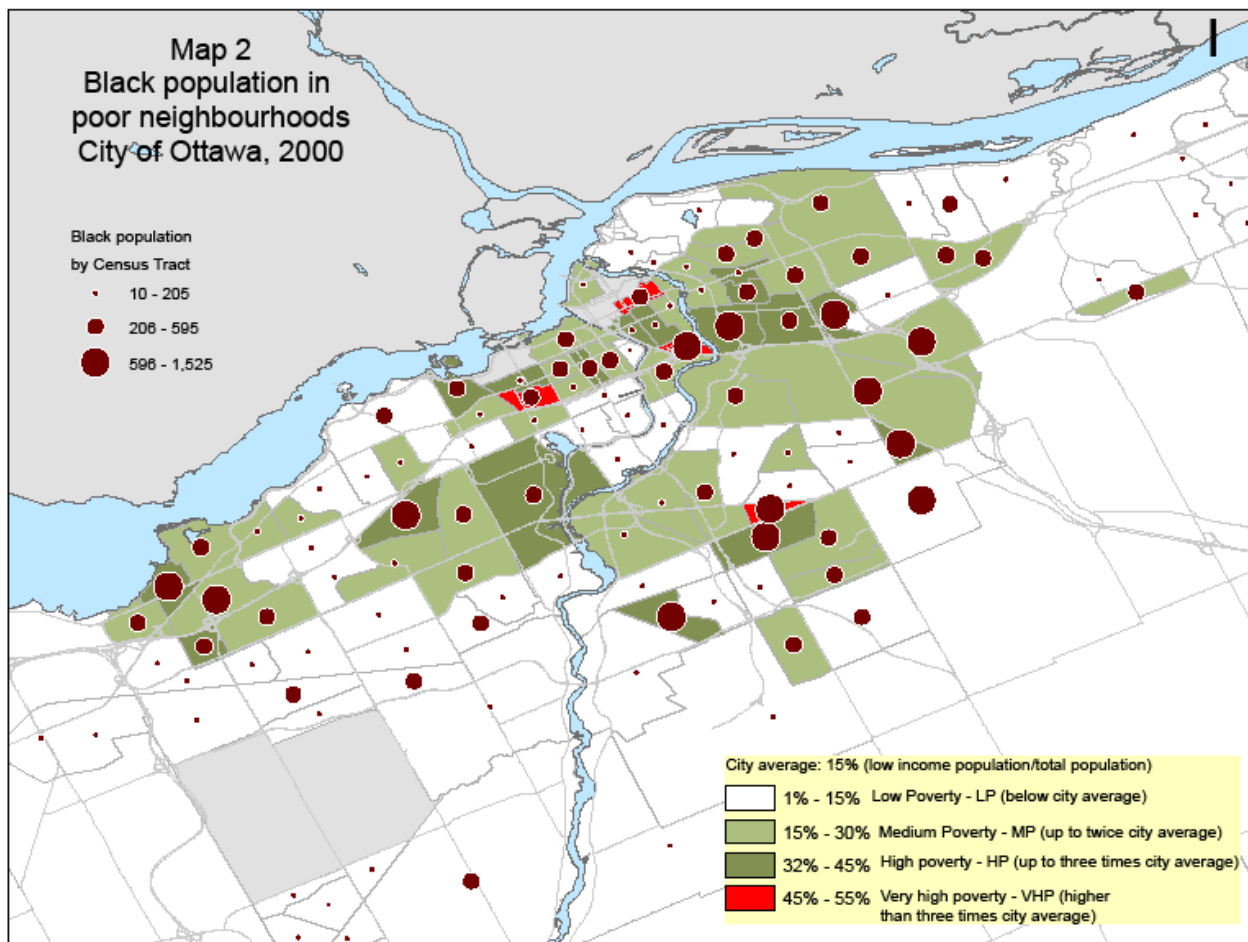
## Visible minority groups in poor neighbourhoods

The number of residents (visible and non visible minority groups) is summed for each of the 59 poor neighbourhoods. Over half (55.2%) of the all visible minority groups live in poor neighbourhoods, a total of over 75,000 residents. On the other hand, about one-third (33.3%) of the non visible minority groups live in the same areas.

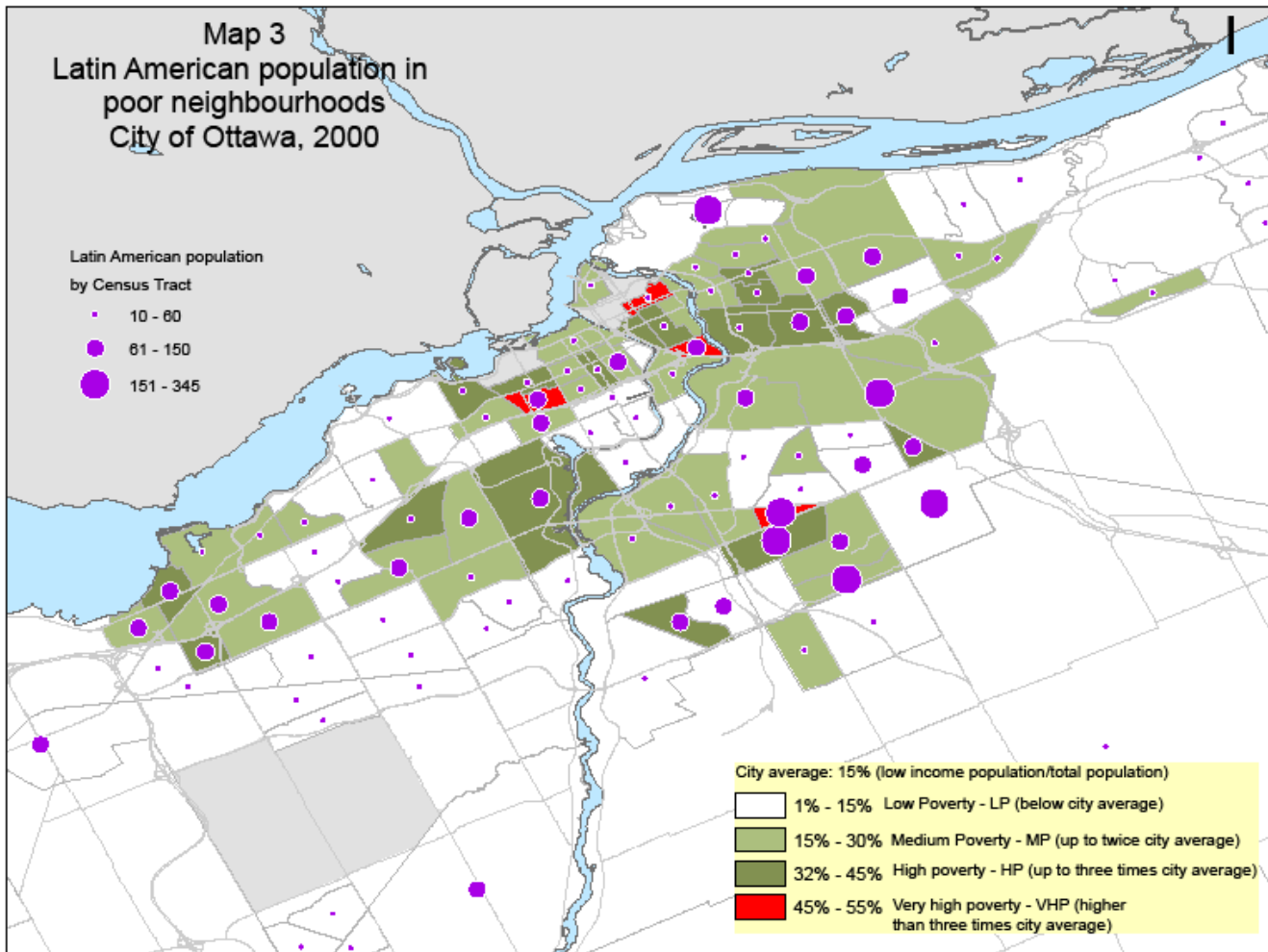
### Among the various visible minority groups, which groups are more likely to reside in poor neighbourhoods?

The spatial distribution of the six major visible minority groups living in the various levels of poverty neighbourhoods is captured in the following maps.

- Map 2, below, shows the pattern of the Black population. This group has presence in all three types of poor neighbourhoods (Medium, High and Very High). It also has strong presence in each of the Very High Poverty neighbourhoods.



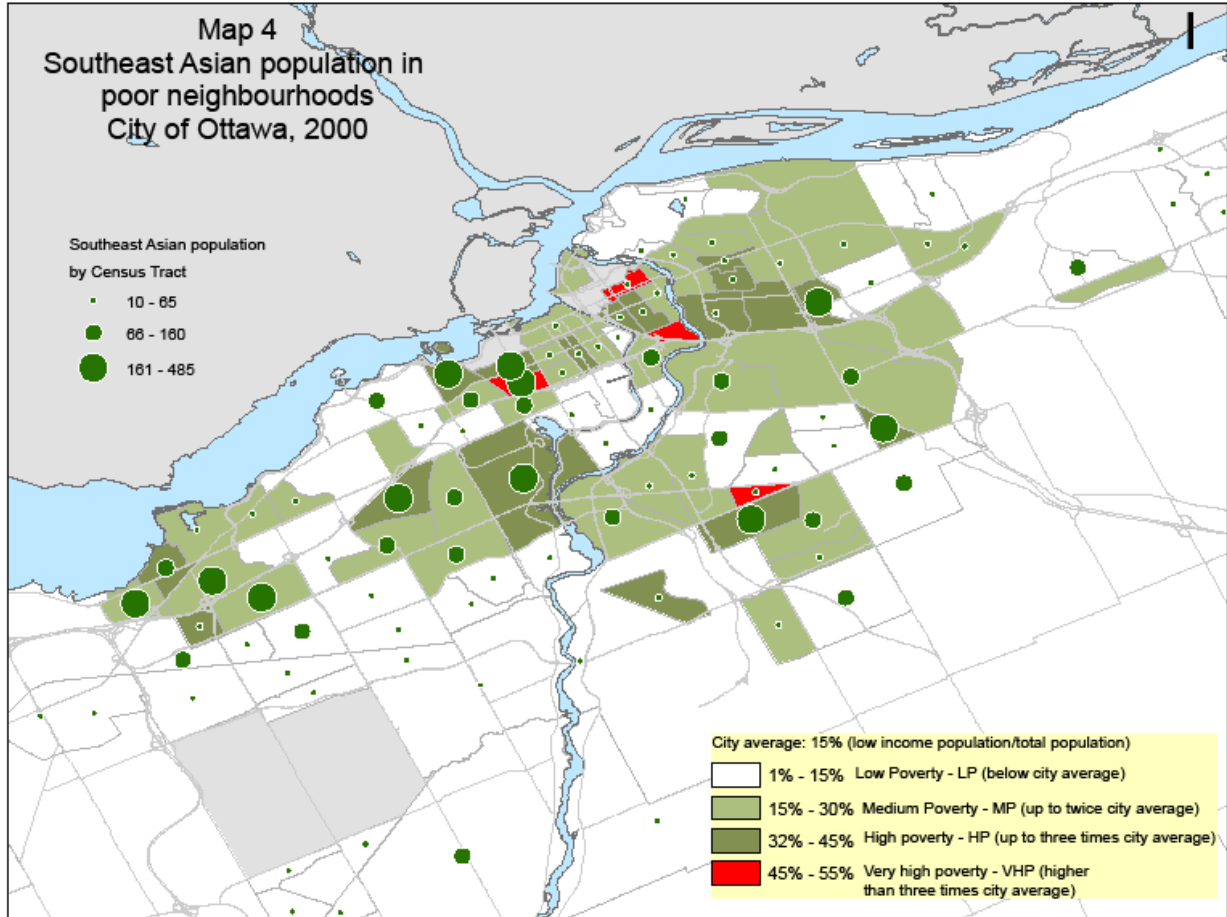
The Latin American group (See Map 3 below) has a lesser presence in the low poverty neighbourhoods except those in Hunt Club East, Rockcliffe Park, Alta Vista and Cyrville. It has presence in three of the four Very High Poverty neighbourhoods.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census, DMTI Spatial

© 2008, Social Planning Council of Ottawa, all rights reserved

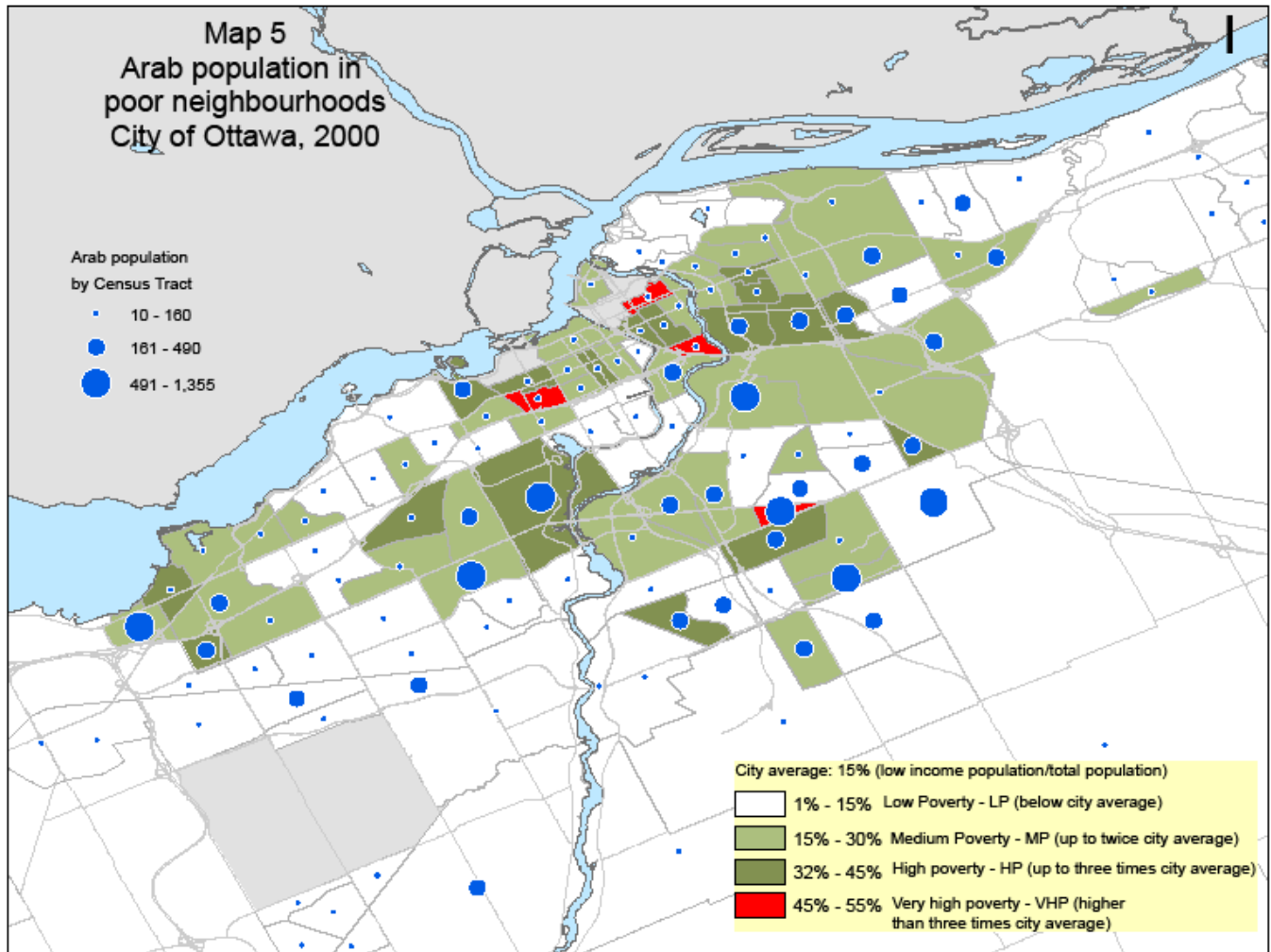
The Southeast Asian group (Map 4 below) has a presence only in one of the four Very High Poverty neighbourhoods (Dalhousie). A majority of the residents live in the poor neighbourhoods in the western part of the city.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census, DMTI Spatial

© 2008, Social Planning Council of Ottawa, all rights reserved

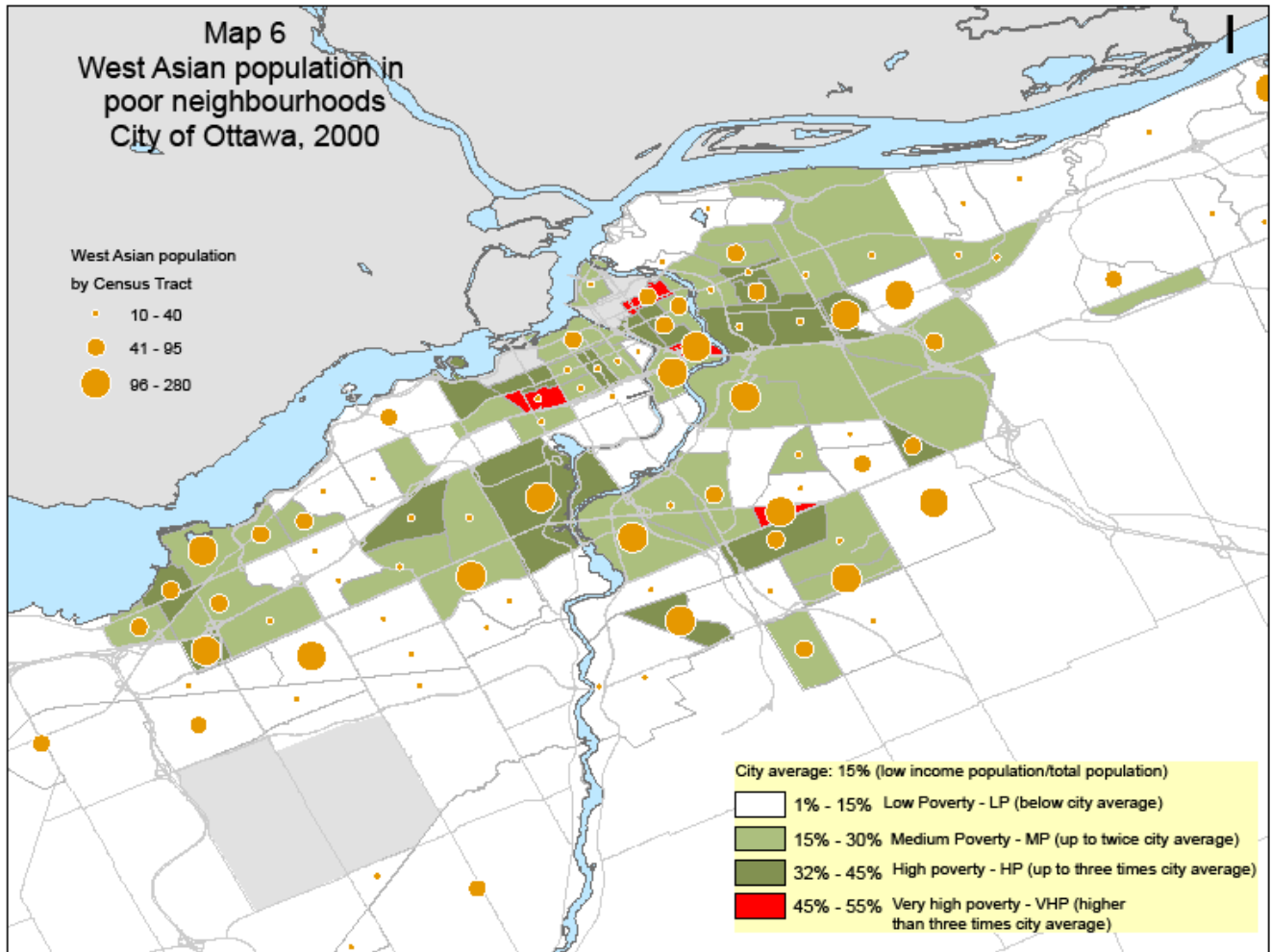
The Arab group (Map 5 below) has a strong presence in only one of the four Very High Poverty neighbourhoods (Alta Vista). Their strong presence can be found in Riverview/Hawthorne, Carleton Height, and Hunt Club East. The Arab group includes Lebanese.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census, DMTI Spatial

© 2008, Social Planning Council of Ottawa, all rights reserved

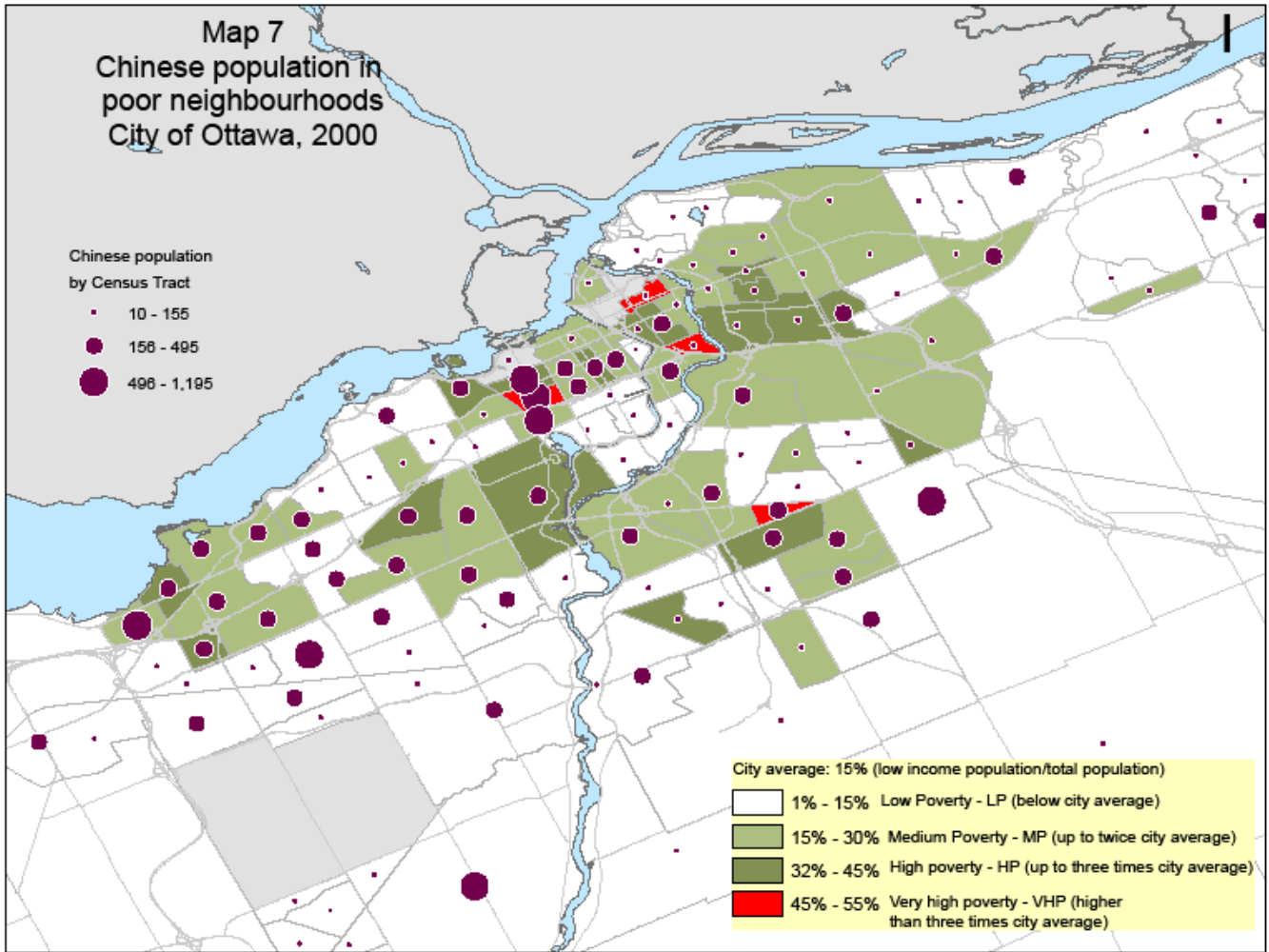
Map 6 below shows the pattern of the West Asian group. They have presence in three of the four Very High Poverty neighbourhoods. Similar to the Arab group, they have no presence in Dalhousie.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census, DMTI Spatial

© 2008, Social Planning Council of Ottawa, all rights reserved

Very similar to the pattern of the Black population, the Chinese population (See Map 7) has presence in all four groups of neighbourhoods with a strong presence in Dalhousie. Unlike the Black population, the Chinese has little presence in the eastern part of the city (Overbrook, Vanier, Ottawa North East and Rockcliffe Park).

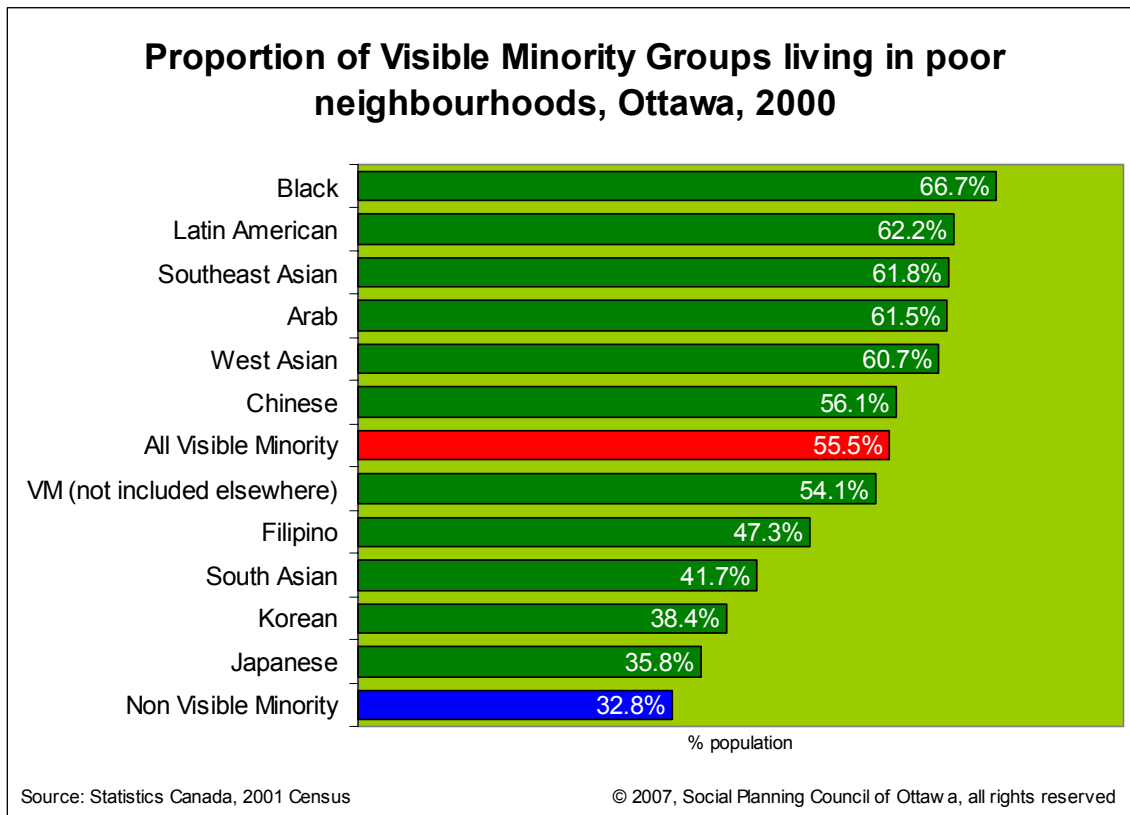


Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census, DMTI Spatial

© 2008, Social Planning Council of Ottawa, all rights reserved

As the chart below shows, 6 of the 11 major visible minority groups have more than half of their population living in poor neighbourhoods. Over two-third (66.7%) of the Black population can be found in these areas. This group is closely followed by the Latin American population (62.4%), Southeast Asian population (61.8%), Arab population (61.5%), and the West Asian population (60.7%).

## Proportion of Visible Minority Groups Living in Poor Neighbourhoods, Ottawa, 2000



It is interesting to note, that even the Japanese population which is both small in number and proportion, has a higher percentage (35.8%) living in poor neighbourhoods than the non visible minority population (32.8%).

Between 30% to 40% of the population in each visible minority group lives in Low Poverty neighbourhoods, with the exception of the Chinese. Over half (54%) of the Chinese population lives in the neighbourhoods with below the City average (15%). About one quarter of the Southeast Asian and Black population live in High Poverty areas. About 9% of the Arab population lives in Very High Poverty neighbourhoods followed closely by the Black, Latin American, Southeast Asian and the West Asian population.

### Conclusion

The above analysis clearly demonstrates that the total visible minority population and each of the visible minority groups with no exception are more likely live in poor neighbourhoods than the non visible minority population in the City of Ottawa.

- Over half (55.5%) of all visible minority group members live in poor neighbourhoods

This is an excerpt from the full report “Mixed Blessings and Missed Opportunities: The Intercase Study on Inclusion and Exclusion of Ottawa’s Visible and Ethnic Minority Residents” which can be found on the website of the Social Planning Council of Ottawa.

- Less than one-third (32.8%) of all others (non visible minority group members) live in poor neighbourhoods

In addition, there is also a higher likelihood for the same groups to live in high poverty and very high poverty areas. Living in these neighbourhoods are:

- 66.7% of the Black group
- 62.2% of the Latin American group
- 61.8% of the Southeast Asian group
- 61.5% of the Arab group
- 60.7% of the West Asian group
- 56.1% of the Chinese group

The fact that we do not have a significant pattern of ethnic enclaves does not mean we do not have geographic exclusion in Ottawa. The intersection of the racialization of poverty and the geography of exclusion create an extremely divisive tendency in Ottawa and a critical issue in the social and economic exclusion of visible minority residents.