



Housing Policy After *The Truly Disadvantaged*

Stefanie DeLuca
Johns Hopkins University

The Stakes Are High

- Growing up in a neighborhood of concentrated disadvantage reduces the verbal cognitive score of African-American children by 4 points, the equivalent of missing 1 year of schooling (Sampson, Sharkey and Raudenbush, 2008)
- Wodtke, Harding, and Elwert (2011) show the negative effects of living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty accrue over time and can have devastating effects on the odds of graduating from high school

Escaping Concentrated Poverty Matters

- Improved mental health for women
- Reduction in obesity and diabetes
- Decreased mortality among boys
- Increased housing quality and safety
- Reduction in neighborhood poverty, racial segregation
- Access to better schools
- Intergenerational integration

The New Public Housing

● HOPE VI

- 150,000 Units Demolished
- Mixed income developments created
- Most families will not return to these sites (19% loss since 1995)

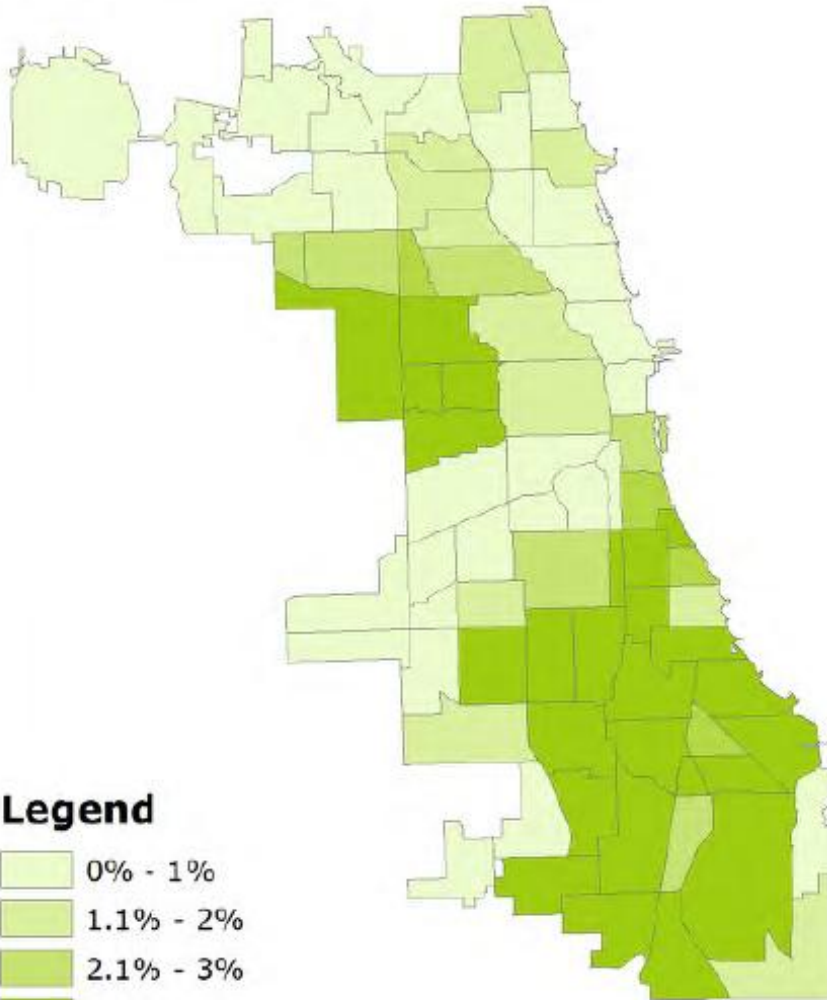
● Shift from “hard unit” to tenant based subsidies

- “privatizing public housing”
- 2.2 million HH served by Housing Choice Vouchers

● Vouchers should reduce concentrated poverty and segregation because they are not tied to developments

Figure 3: Housing Choice Voucher Households as % of African American Households

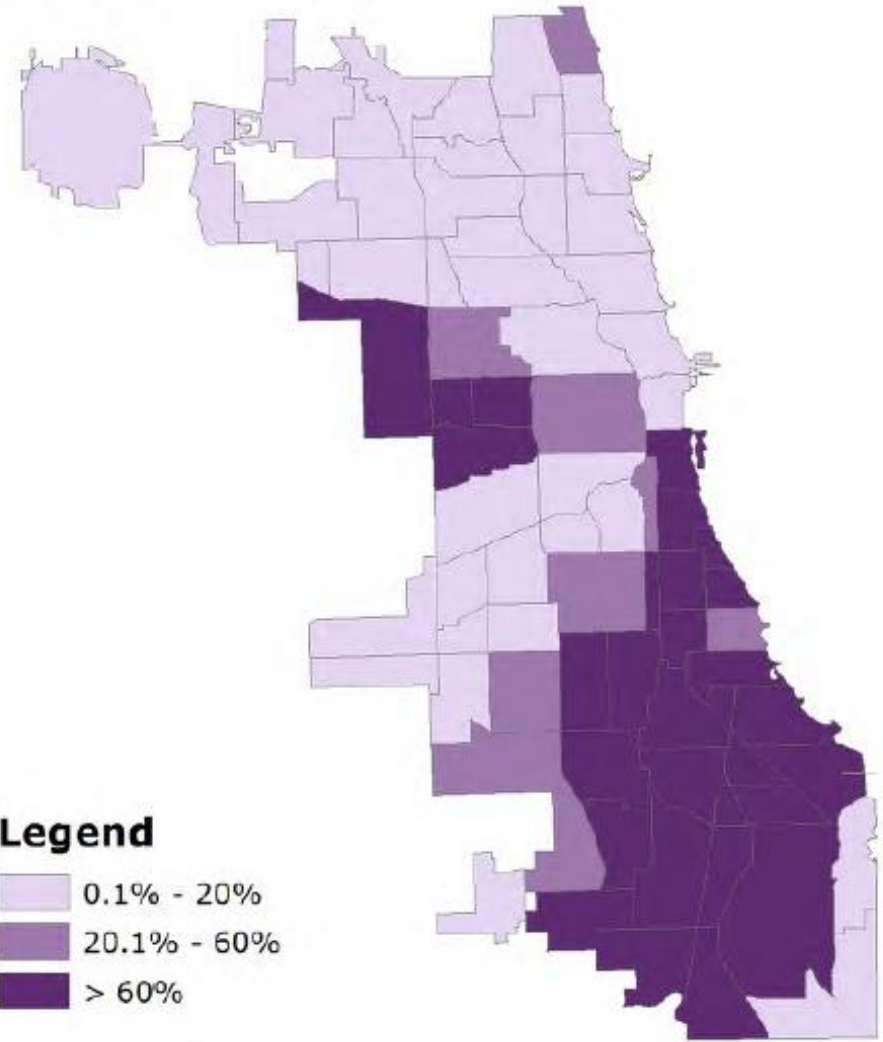
HCV Households as % of all Households (2007)



Legend

- 0% - 1%
- 1.1% - 2%
- 2.1% - 3%
- 3.1% - 4%
- > 4%

Percent African American Households (2000)



Legend

- 0.1% - 20%
- 20.1% - 60%
- > 60%

Data Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Illinois Assisted Housing Action Research Project (2000)

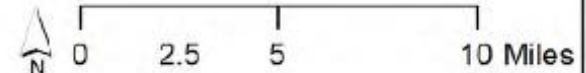
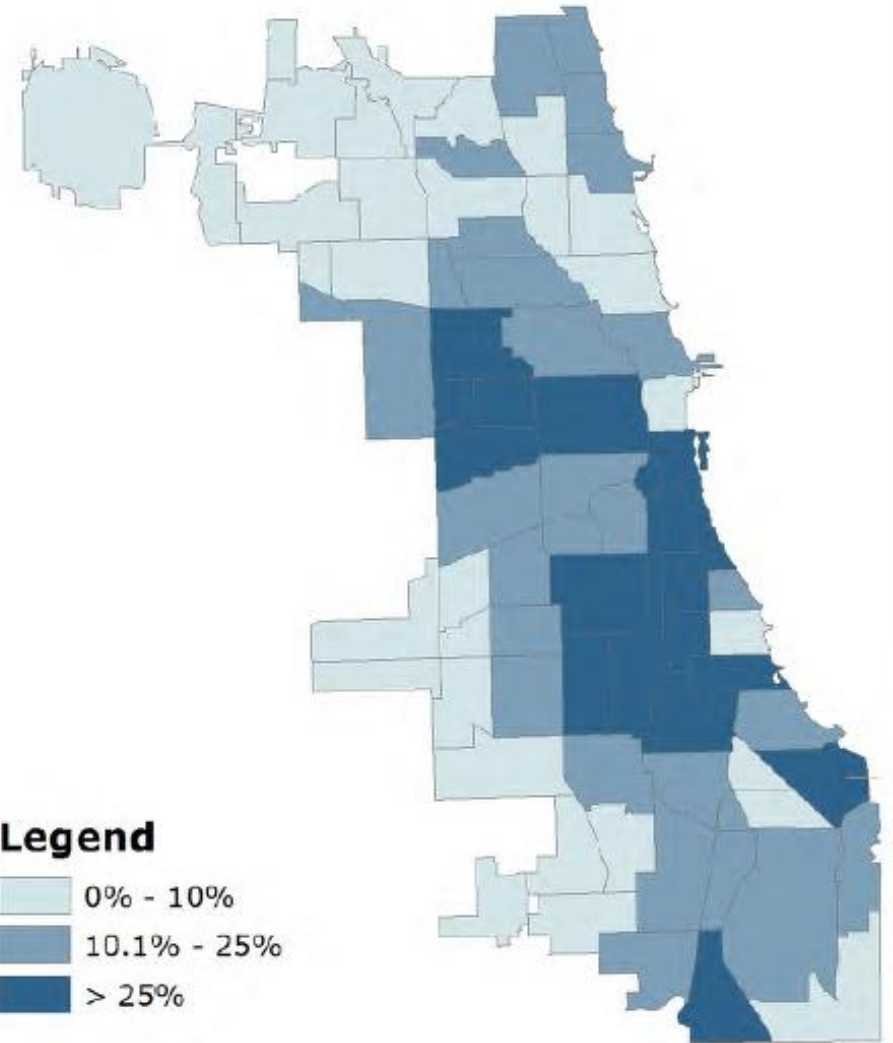
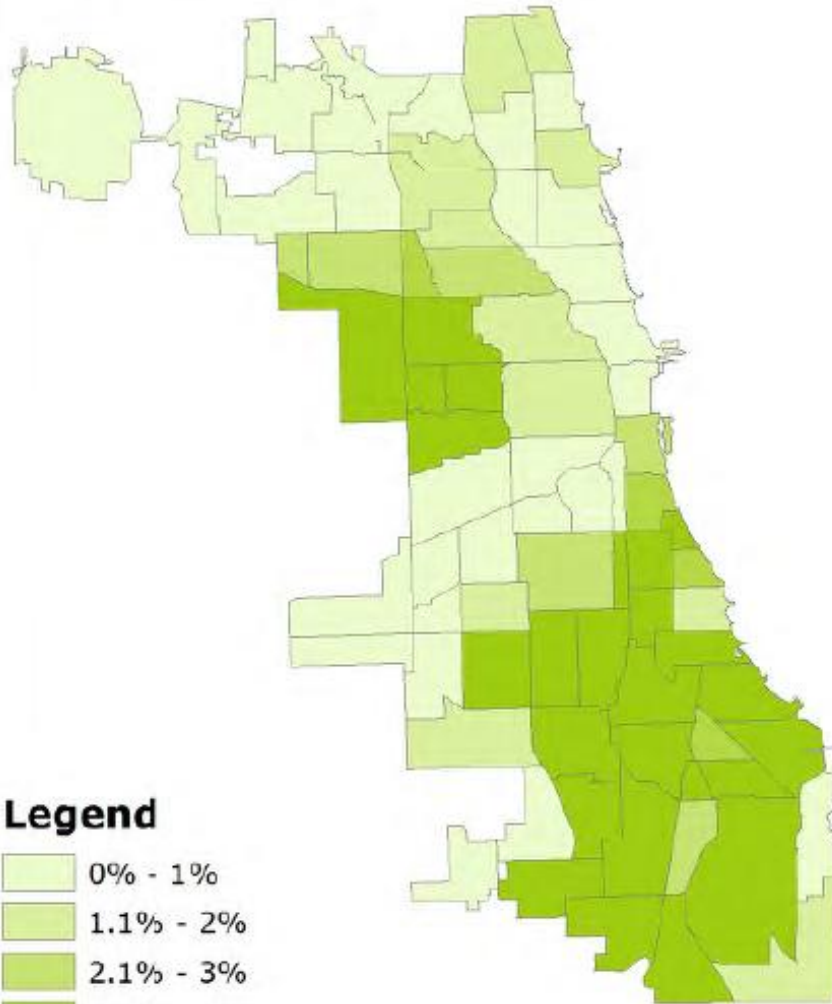


Figure 4: Housing Choice Voucher Households and Family Poverty Rate

HCV Households as % of all Households (2007)

Family Poverty (2000)



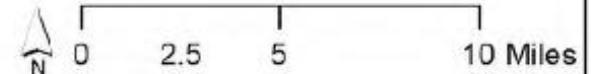
Legend

- 0% - 1%
- 1.1% - 2%
- 2.1% - 3%
- 3.1% - 4%
- > 4%

Legend

- 0% - 10%
- 10.1% - 25%
- > 25%

Data Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Illinois Assisted Housing Action Research Project (2000)



**WHY IS IT SO HARD TO GET OUT AND
STAY OUT?**

Policy and Market Obstacles to Housing Opportunity

- ◉ Fair Market Rents
- ◉ Portability
- ◉ Source of Income Discrimination
- ◉ Housing quality failures
- ◉ Time limits on vouchers
- ◉ Limited vouchers
- ◉ Landlord practices

Reactive Mobility Limits Choice

- Most residential mobility among poor minority families is reactive
 - Poor quality housing stock, landlords, family conflicts, neighborhood violence, housing policy regulations
 - Moving under duress circumscribes neighborhood choice
 - Results in repeated relocation to high poverty, segregated neighborhoods

Families Adapt to Constraints

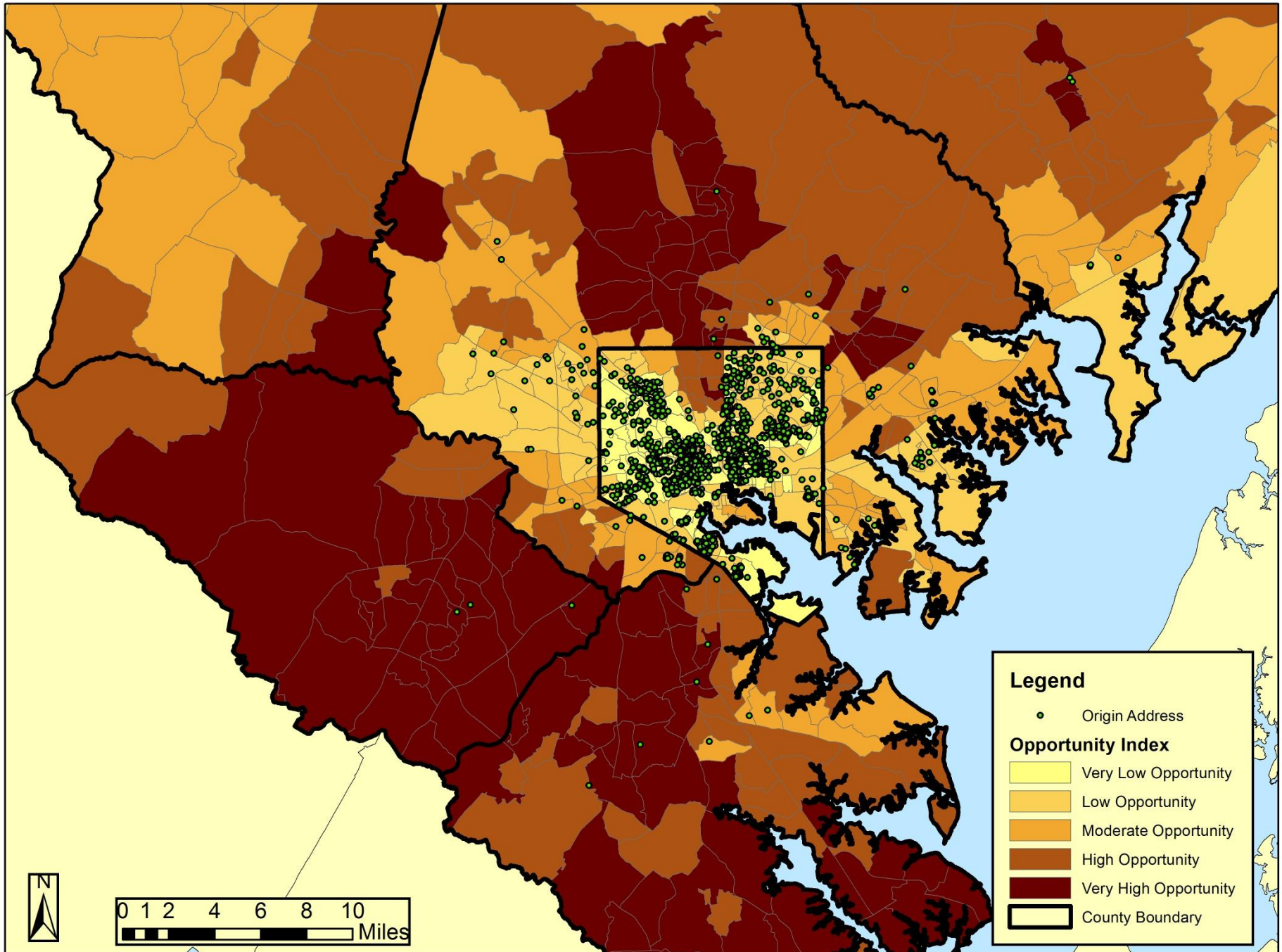
- Families expect little & adopt strategies which largely accept the inevitability and universality of danger
- **Reduced expectations**—'all areas got crime'
- **Strategic Retreat**—'keep to myself'
- **Telescoping**—'we don't live outside, we live in here'
- Prioritize **housing quality** over neighborhood quality—choice set becomes units
- Confidence in their **survival skills after years of living in violent communities**
- **These adaptations are neighborhood effects**

Baltimore Thompson Program

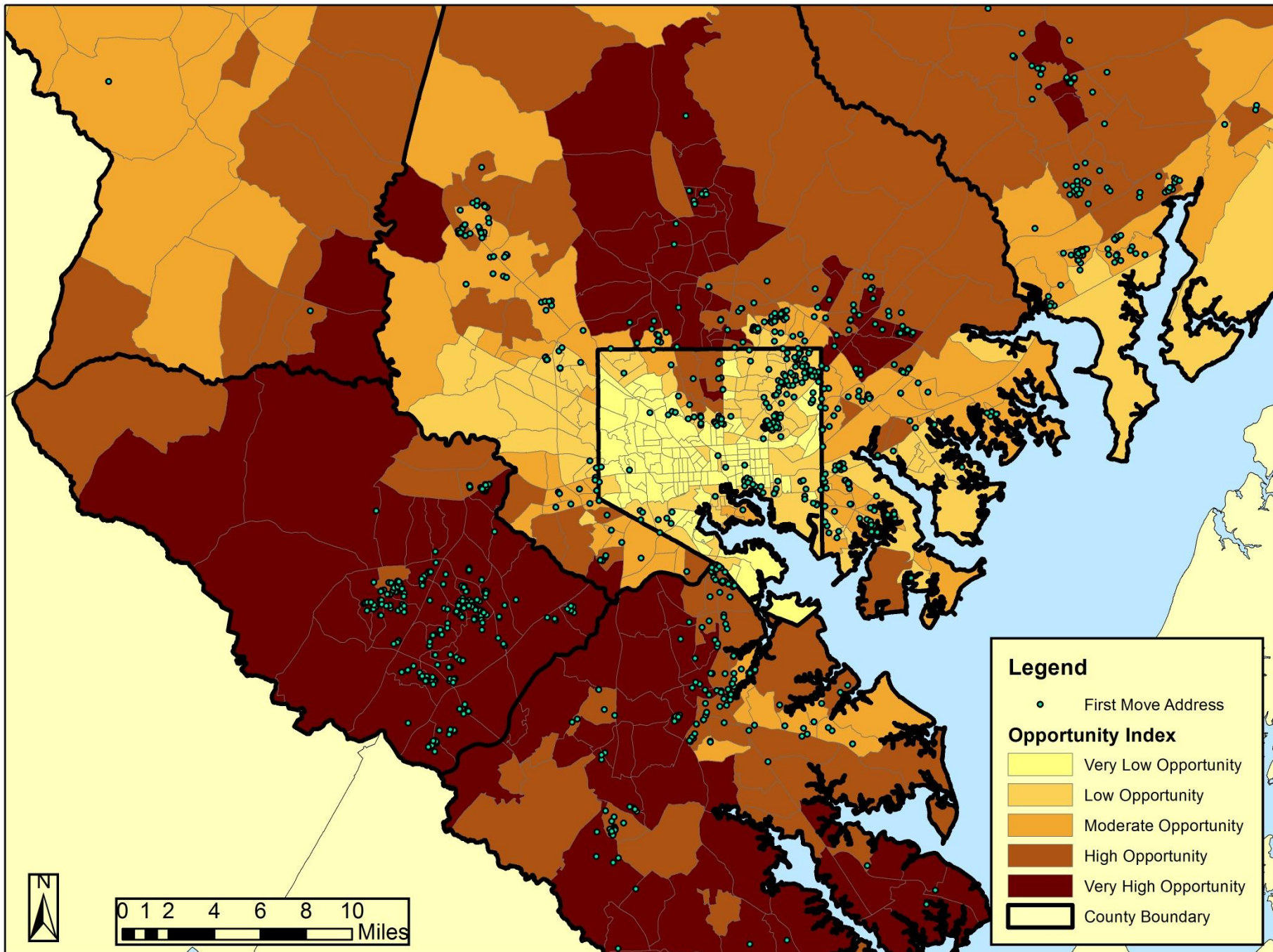


- 1995 class action lawsuit
 - Housing desegregation remedy
- Current and former public housing families
- Voucher to move to a census tract that is
 - <=10% Poverty
 - <=30% African-American
 - <=5% sub housing
- Choice within tract, with housing counseling

Baltimore Mobility Program: Origin Address



Baltimore Mobility Program: First Move Address



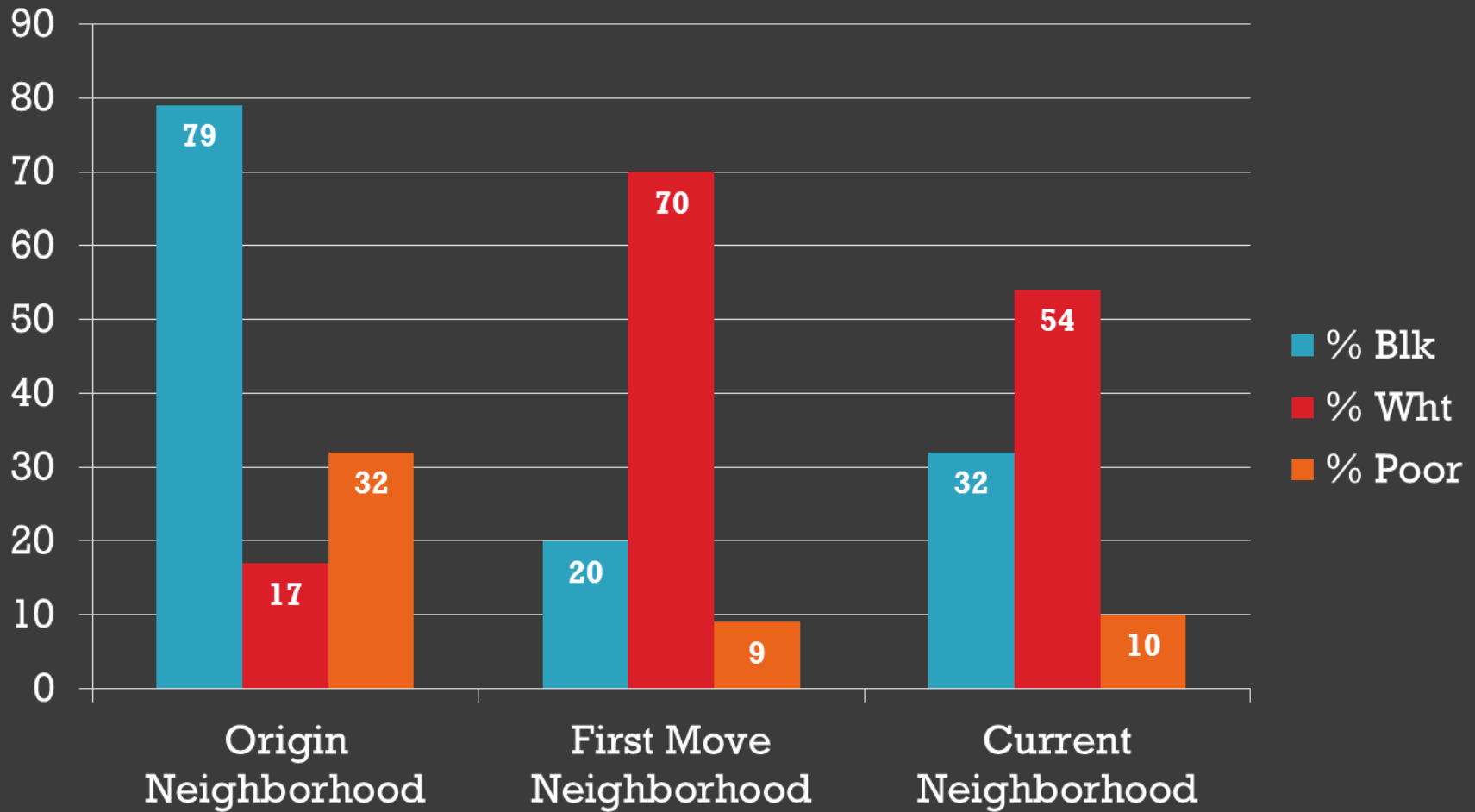
Community Development

- Getting it right is critical
 - Devaluing black communities
 - Reality, politics, opportunity structure
 - HUD's current agenda
- Empirical scrutiny
 - Sandtown-Winchester—70 million and counting
 - Aspen Institute has three volumes on 'challenges'
 - But we stand to learn as much from these about what matters

Implications

- To understand the promise of housing programs, we need to understand market forces and how poor families function and respond to policies
- Public Housing transformation → Section 8 Ghettos?
 - Critical to understand rental housing
 - Segregation and sorting processes
- Aspects of housing policy directly contribute to problems
 - Search time (60 days), Old Lists , Wait Lists
- We have as much to learn from community revitalization efforts as mobility programs

Origin, First Move, Current Neighborhood



Local Elementary School:

Pct. of Student Body Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch

