

LEVERAGING OPPORTUNITY ACCESS TO COUNTER THE HISTORY OF INTENTIONAL SEGREGATION

August 12, 2020

Constance Baker Motley Racial Inequality Speaker Series

Presenters

Arthur Gales, Othering & Belonging Institute, Berkeley

Rev. AJ Johnson, Center for Leadership & Justice and Urban Hope
Refuge Church

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Opportunity Defined

Opportunity is the full set of pathways available to have a better life and a set of resources to move people along these set of pathways



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

- Where we live determines our life outcomes
- Structures and institutions in our living environment either limit or promote fair access to opportunity
- These structures produce amenities/resources that can define neighborhoods as opportunity-rich or opportunity-poor and highlight spatial/racial inequities.

LONG TERM ANALYSIS OF MOBILITY: CHETTY ET AL.

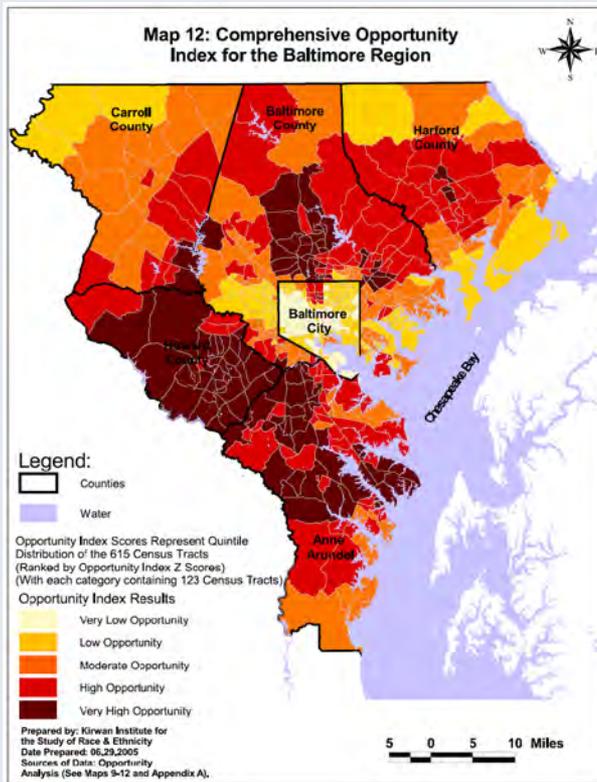
Outcomes for children who moved before age 13:

- Greater chance of going to college, and a higher quality college
- 30% higher income
- Girls were 26% less likely to become single parents

We estimate that [a move] out of public housing to a low-poverty area when young (at age 8 on average) ... will increase the child's total lifetime earnings by about \$302,000.

Second Chetty et al. study showed that the longer a child can be in a lower poverty area the greater the positive outcomes.

THE STORY OF OPPORTUNITY MAPPING

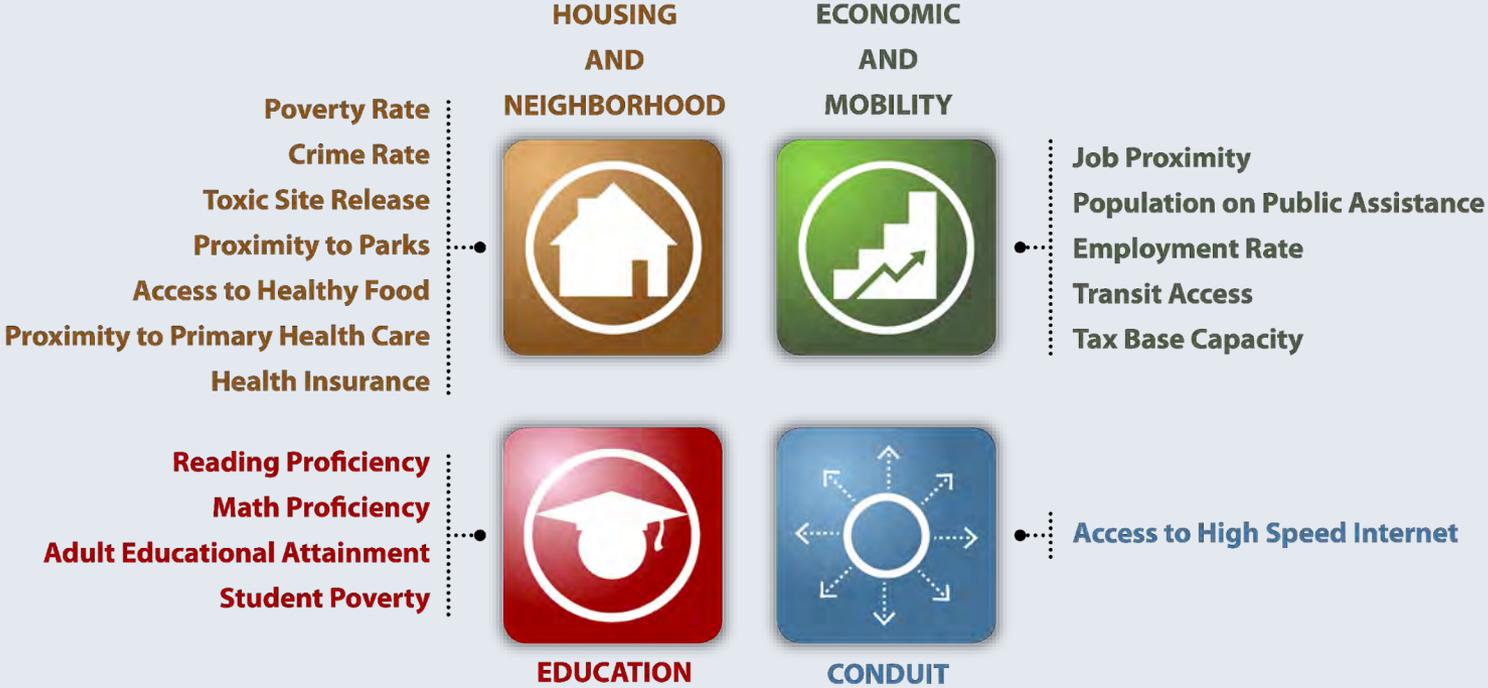


- **Thompson v HUD (2005)**
 - Baltimore Public Housing residents trapped in cycle of poverty
 - Sited in racially segregated neighborhoods
 - Filed a case against HUD
- **Approach**
 - Look at multi-factors
 - Consider access to opportunity
 - Conceptualization of “communities of Opportunity”

IDENTIFYING INDICATORS

- Established by input from staff and in consultation with our clients and stakeholders
- Based on certain factors
 - Specific issues or concerns of the region
 - Research literature validating the connection between indicator and opportunity
- Central Requirement:
 - Is there a clear connection between indicator and opportunity? E.g. Proximity to parks and Health related opportunity

OPPORTUNITY MAPPING MODEL



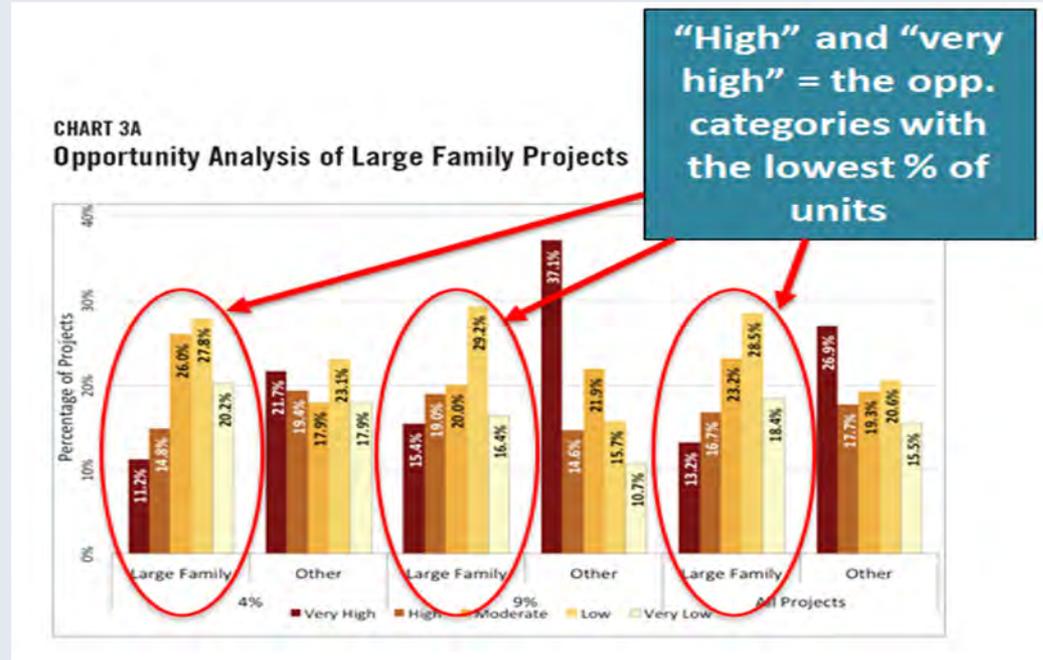
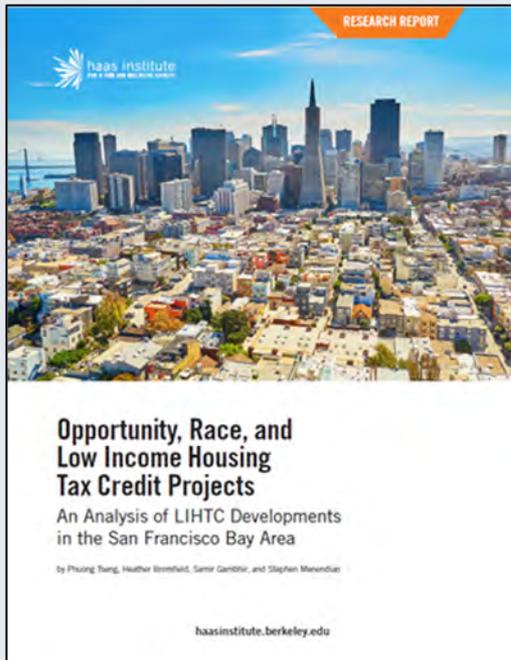
OPPORTUNITY MAPPING MODEL



APPLICATIONS OF OPPORTUNITY MAPPING

- **Fair Housing**
 - LIHTC
 - Section 8
 - Public Housing (Thompson v. HUD)
- **Education**
 - Student Assignment Policy
 - Admissions Criteria
- **Targeted Investments**
 - Shovel-Ready Projects (ARRA)
 - Micro-Lending (Rabobank)
 - Capital Investments/Revitalization
 - Infrastructure/Transit

FAIR HOUSING AND LIHTC



CLAY ARSENAL APARTMENTS



The mission of the Center for Leadership and Justice is to develop leaders who act collectively for social justice in Greater Hartford.



- Clay Arsenal Renaissance Apartments (CARA) in the Clay Arsenal neighborhood of Hartford has been owned by slumlord Emmanuel Ku since 2011. He owns 26 buildings with a total of 150 units in the Clay Arsenal neighborhood that are rat, mice, and mold infested.
- HUD was paying Ku \$1.4 million a year to provide housing to low income residents.

ORGANIZING VICTORY



- In 2017 the Center for Leadership and Justice started organizing residents, at their request, to improve living conditions.
- On June 1, 2018, HUD realized Ku was not going to improve the conditions and ended his subsidy. This means all 150 families need to relocate.
- All families were issued a mobile section 8 voucher which means they, in theory, can move wherever they want to geographically.
- HUD is required, under the Fair Housing Act, to administer this relocation in a manner that avoids perpetuating segregation and offers genuine housing choices to CARA tenants. HUD did not do this, compelling CARA tenants, who are disproportionately of color, to live exclusively in areas of color.

THE NEED FOR CHOICE

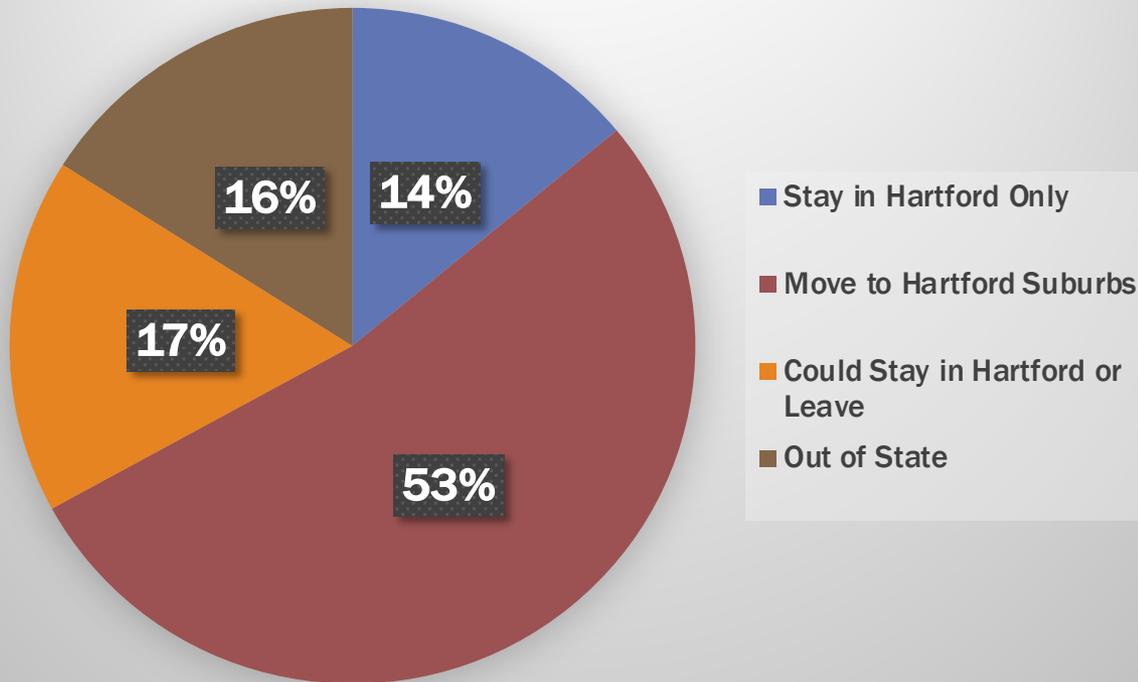
- Some of the CARA residents very much want to stay in Hartford, but others want to move to the Hartford suburbs. Still others want to move out of state. For example:
 - Milagros wanted to move to West Hartford to be closer to her job and for better schools for her kids, especially her son who has autism and needs special services.
 - Yulissa wanted to move to a town closer to the school her daughters attend. She also wants a yard for her kids to play in so they can go outside.



WHERE TENANTS WANT TO LIVE

North End Resident Housing Preferences

Ku Properties (25% response rate)



- A survey of 25% of the 150 tenants revealed that 53% would like to move to suburban Hartford and only 14% wanted to stay in Hartford.
- Most of those responding that they wanted housing “anywhere” listed towns in the Hartford suburbs when asked to list specific places to which they would like to move.

BARRIERS FACED BY TENANTS

- Not being given the rent maximums (“payment standards”) for the whole region.
- Being given apartment listings exclusively in high poverty areas of color.
- Being subjected to unrealistic 90-day timeframes to find a unit in order to get access to thousands of dollars in benefits relocating tenants are entitled to (to cover application fees, security deposit, moving costs and more). This incentivizes taking the first available unit.
- Being required to “port” vouchers to other towns, an administrative process that often creates delays, potentially resulting in the loss of the unit. HUD could have avoided this by choosing a regional program administrator other than the Hartford Housing Authority.



OPEN COMMUNITIES ALLIANCE

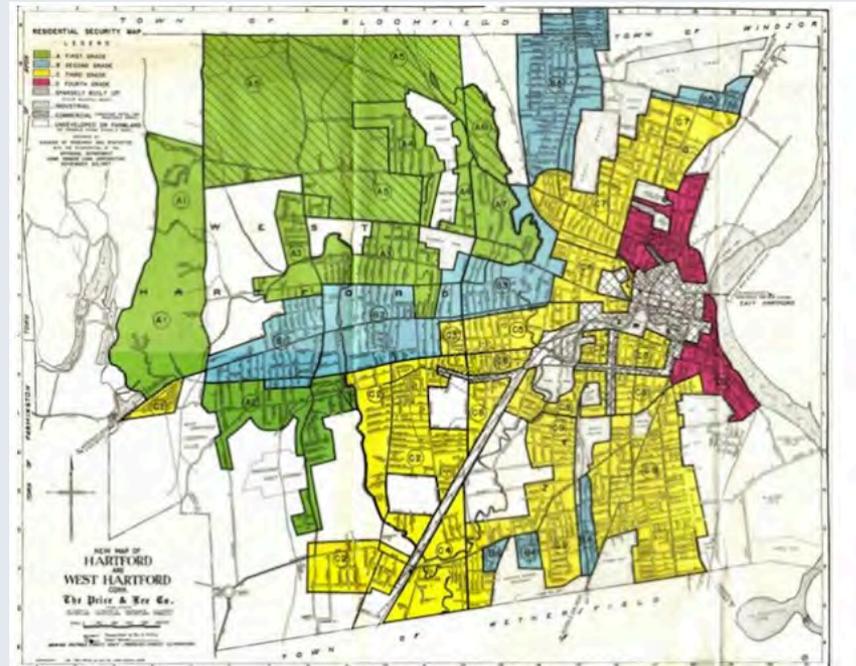
Embracing Diversity to Strengthen Connecticut

Open Communities Alliance is a Connecticut-based civil rights non-profit working with an urban-suburban interracial coalition to advocate for access to opportunity, particularly through promoting balanced affordable housing development, including in thriving communities.

HARNESSING HOUSING POLICY TO BRIDGE THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

PART OF A PATTERN

- The barriers faced by CARA tenants is part of a long history of policies that limited housing choices for families of color.
- These policies, such as redlining and racial covenants, have contributed to the segregation and disinvestment of Hartford.
 - The limited choices in resource-rich suburbs for interested low-income families who are disproportionately Black and Latinx.
 - Compel poverty concentration in communities that are disproportionately Black and Latinx.



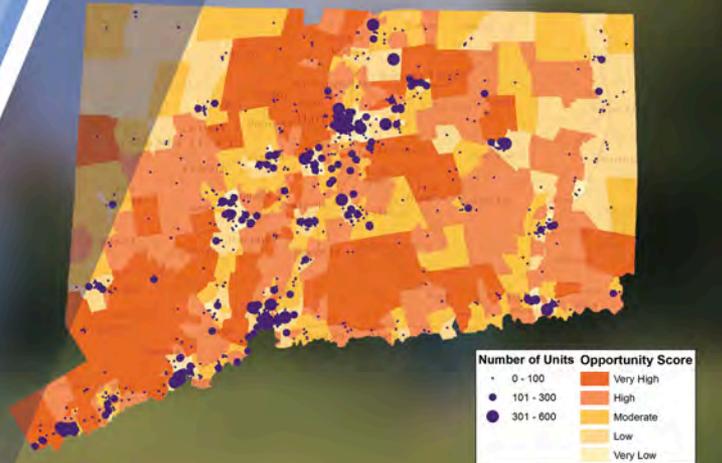
HOLC Residential Security Map of Hartford Area 1937. Records of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland – *On the Line: How Schooling, Housing, and Civil Rights Shaped Hartford and Its Suburbs*

OUT OF BALANCE



Subsidized Housing,
Segregation and
Opportunity in
Connecticut

SEPTEMBER 2017



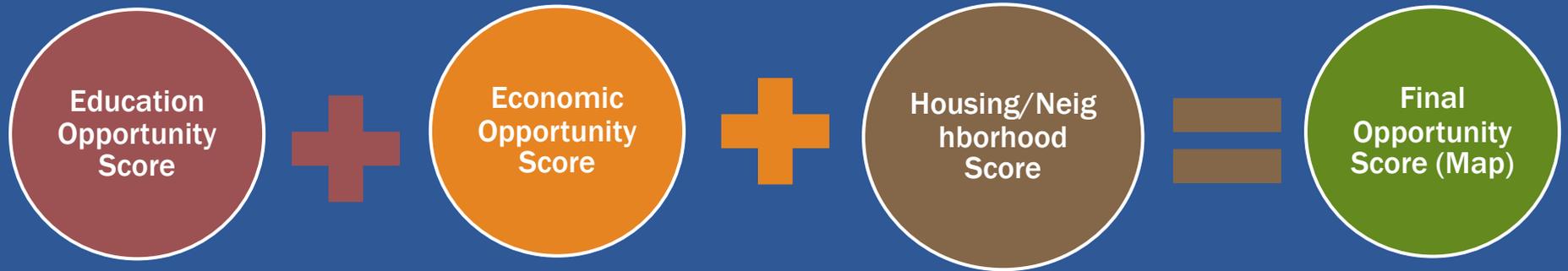
What areas of Connecticut are thriving? Struggling?

How do these neighborhood assessments interact with race and ethnicity?

Is the location of government subsidized housing allowing lower income families to connect to high performing school districts?

IMPACT ON OPPORTUNITY

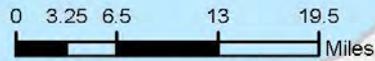
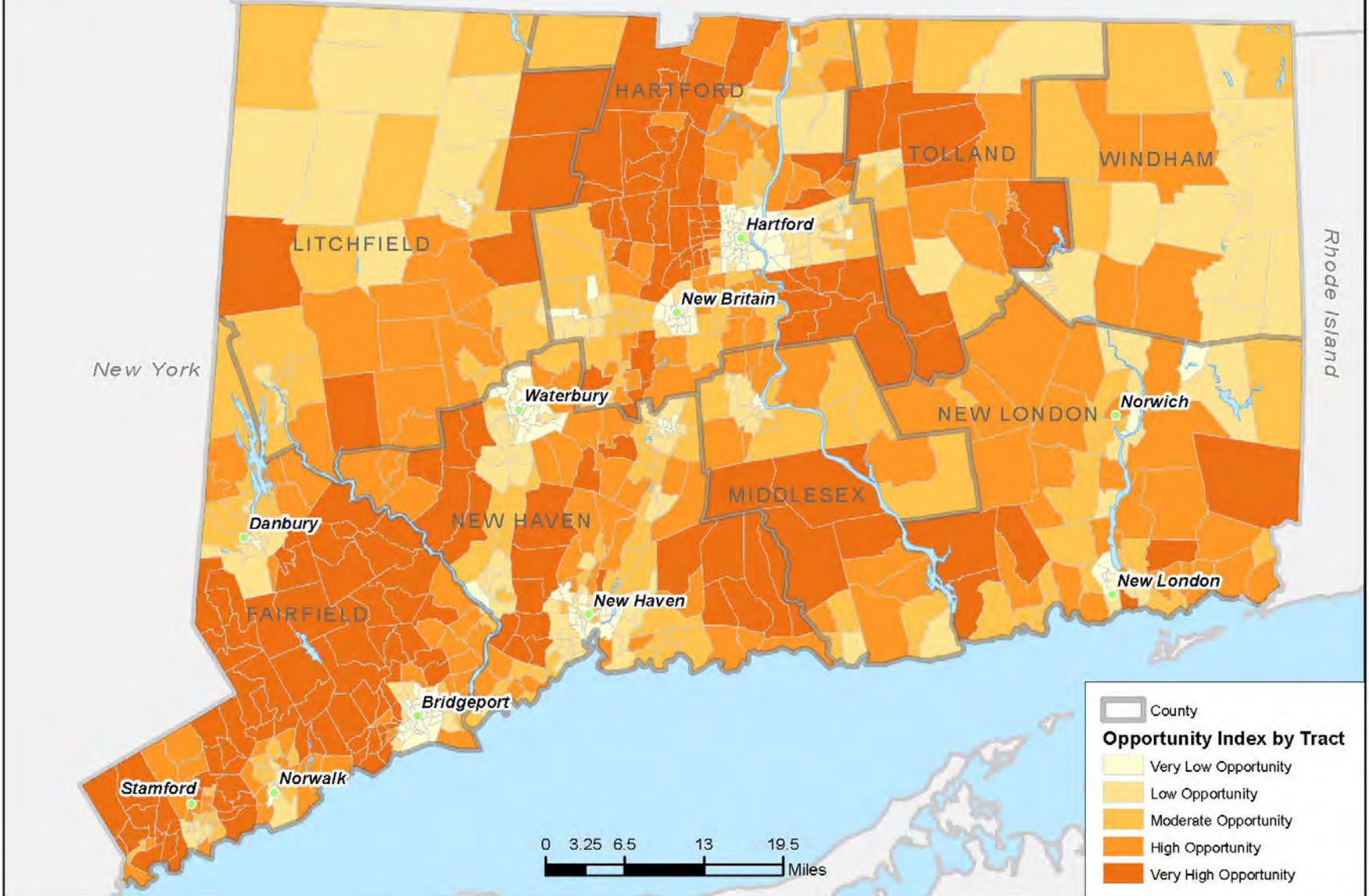
Educational Indicators	Economic Indicators	Neighborhood/Housing Quality Indicators
Students Passing Math Test scores	Unemployment Rates	Neighborhood Vacancy
Students Passing Reading Test scores	Population on Public Assistance	Crime Rate
Educational Attainment	Job Growth	Neighborhood Poverty Rate
	Employment Access	Homeownership Rate
	Job Diversity	



Map of Distribution of Opportunity in Connecticut



Massachusetts



County

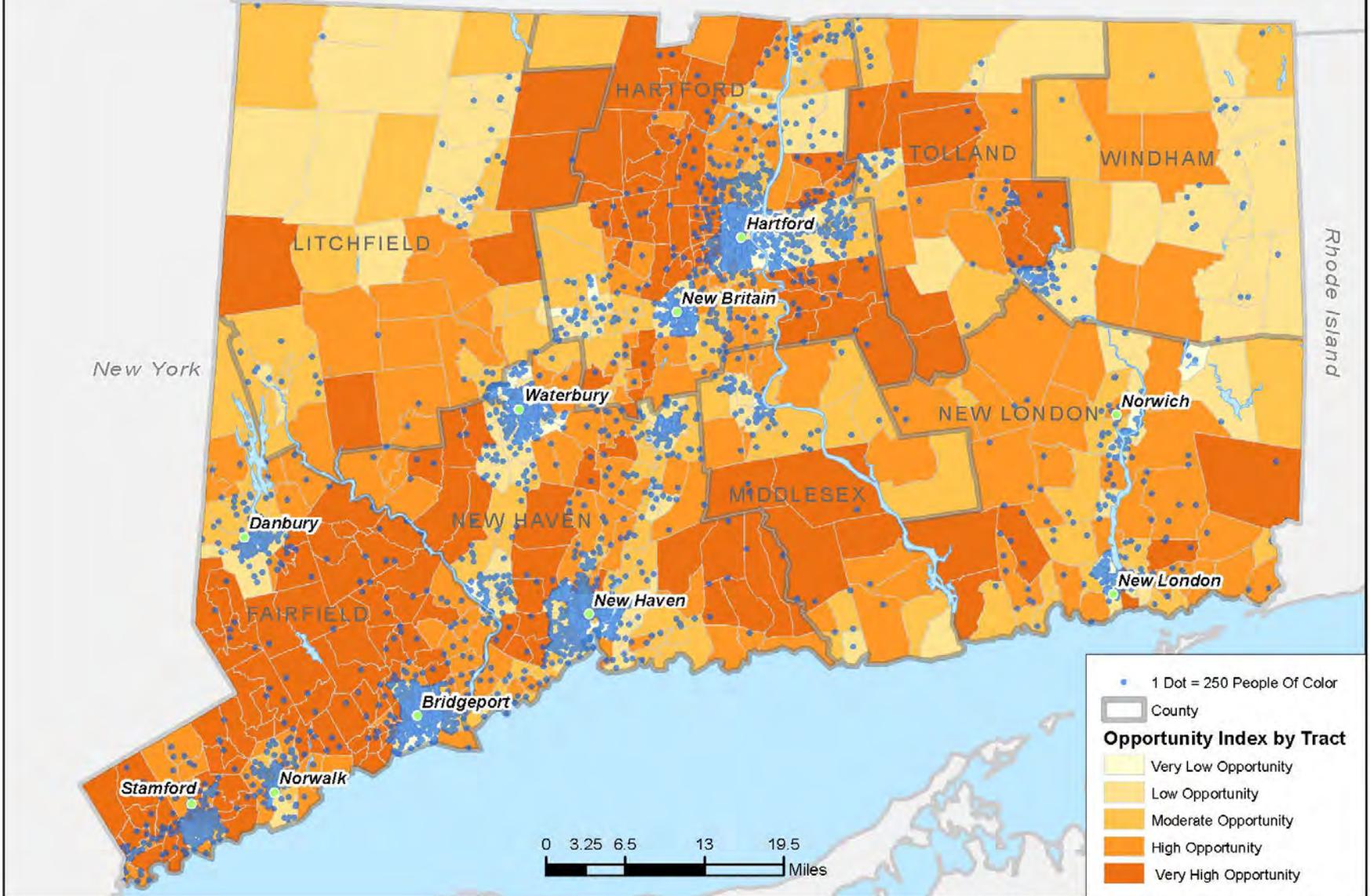
Opportunity Index by Tract

- Very Low Opportunity
- Low Opportunity
- Moderate Opportunity
- High Opportunity
- Very High Opportunity

Map of Distribution of People of Color and Opportunity in Connecticut



Massachusetts

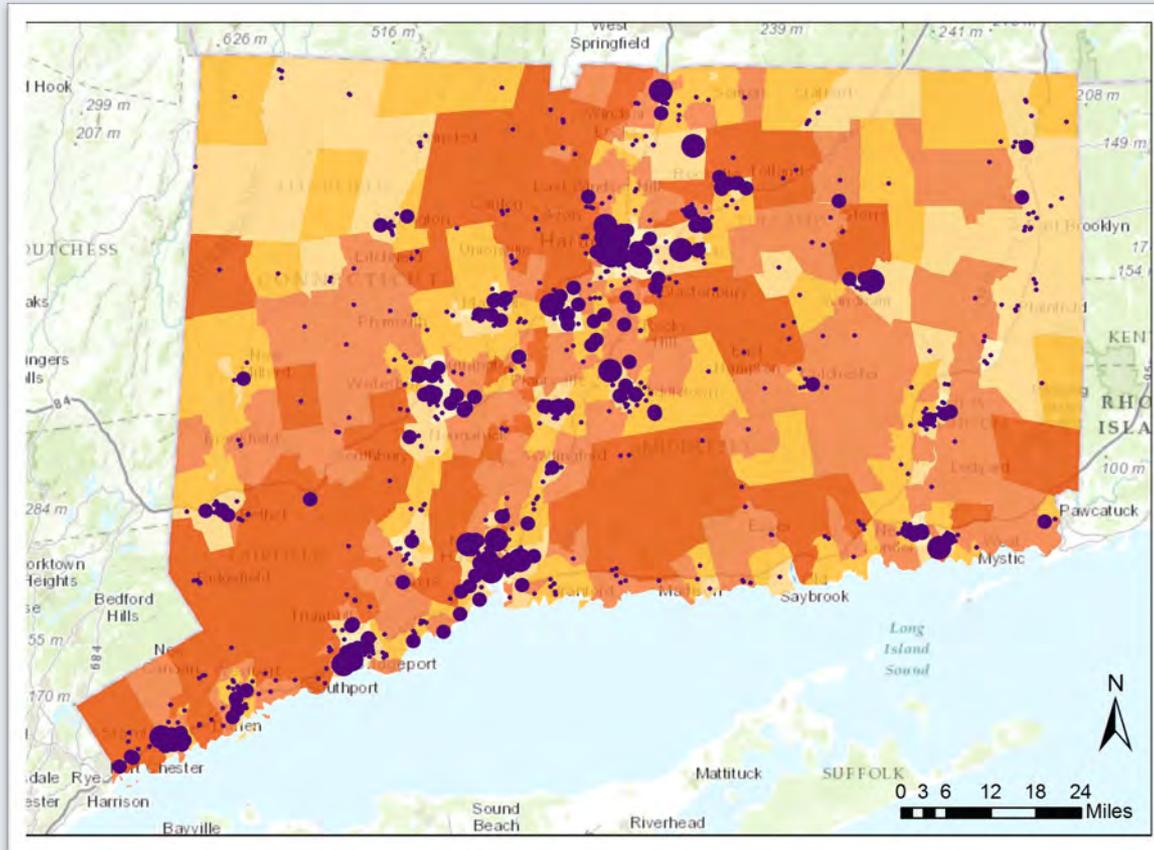


WHERE DO WE LIVE? OPPORTUNITY BY RACE AND ETHNICITY IN CT

% of People by Race & Ethnicity Living in Lower Opportunity Areas

Blacks:	73%
Latinos:	73%
Whites:	26%
Asians:	36%

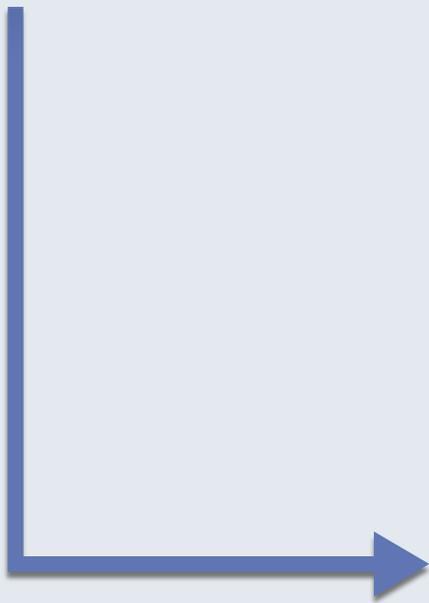
CHOICES ARE LIMITED BY THE LOCATION OF PHYSICAL UNITS OF SUBSIDIZED HOUSING



The Preservation List is the most comprehensive list of subsidized housing supported with federal and state funding that OCA is aware of. Unfortunately, even though it includes over 83,000 units of housing, it is incomplete and, to the best of our knowledge, not regularly updated.

PRESERVATION LIST BY OPPORTUNITY

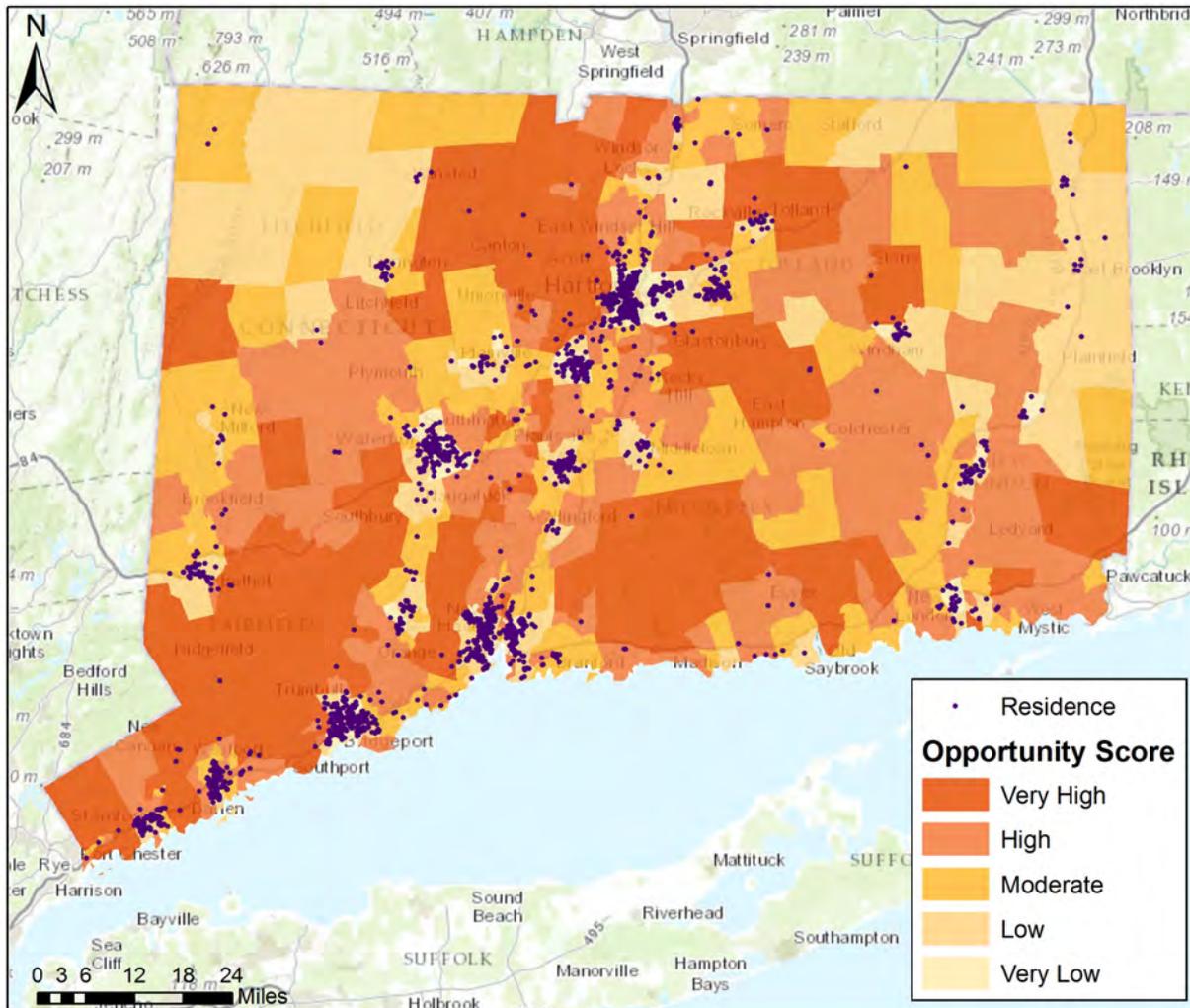
Higher opportunity areas make up 58% of the land area of the state.



87% of units in very low to moderate opportunity areas

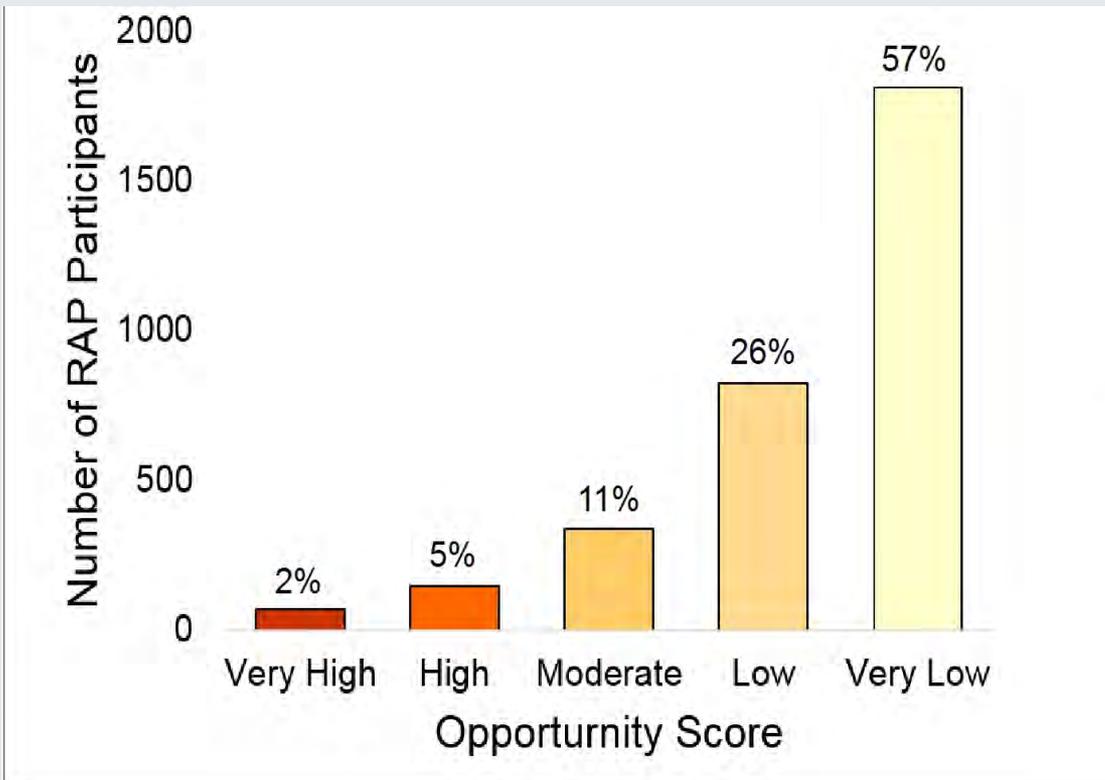


TENANT-BASED SUBSIDIES



Rental Assistance Program

STATE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



93% of state RAP program outside of higher opportunity areas.

86% of people using the federal government's Section 8 live outside of higher opportunity areas.

HOW DO WE UNWIND SEGREGATION?

TWO WAY STREET SOLUTION:

**(1) ENSURE *CHOICES* IN
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
LOCATION AND**

**(2) INVEST IN STRUGGLING
COMMUNITIES**

REAL SOLUTIONS FOR ADDRESS HOUSING SEGREGATION

Starting Point - Support a Racially Conscious COVID-19 Response. Prevent an eviction and foreclosure tsunami, ensure appropriate testing and protective equipment, particularly in hard hit Black and Latinx communities, and prioritize the provision of public education in a manner that is equitable, ensuring every district and every student has the resources necessary to meet students' needs while not endangering students or teachers.

(1) CREATE A MEANINGFUL STATE AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHERING FAIR HOUSING OBLIGATION INCLUDING:

- **FAIR SHARE OBLIGATION & EVEN PLAYING ZONING PLAYING FIELD:** Envisioning a plan for every town in the state to take on its fair share of affordable housing and the elimination of exclusionary zoning policies.
- **BALANCE:** Bringing balance to the location of hard units of government-supported housing (LIHTC, CHAMP, other funding)
- **DATA:** Requiring the collection and analysis of appropriate data to measure progress. (Legislative proposals, data deficits report)
- **EXPAND AND ENFORCE THE STATE AFFH LAW:** The current AFFH law is not very specific and applies to only two agencies. This should be expanded and made enforceable.

REAL SOLUTIONS FOR ADDRESS HOUSING SEGREGATION

(2) INVEST IN LOWER-RESOURCED COMMUNITIES: These investments should include supporting proven strategies to -

- Promote economic and community development,
- Equitable school funding that recognizes disparate needs across communities,
- Equalize property tax burdens across the state, and
- Promote small and "minority" businesses to equitably revitalize communities.

REAL SOLUTIONS FOR ADDRESS HOUSING SEGREGATION

(3) PASS A VOUCHER MOBILITY PACKAGE INCLUDING:

- **EXPANDED HOUSING AUTHORITY JURISDICTION:** Some of the state's most respected affordable housing developers, housing authorities, are restricted to their town of origin. Allow housing authorities to operate within 15 miles of their hometown will allow them to contribute to meeting the state's affordable housing and segregation crises.
- **ADOPT MARKET-BASED VOUCHER VALUES:** For decades, the value of housing vouchers have been set in a manner that has no connection to local markets. A two-bedroom in Hartford is valued the same as a two-bedroom in Glastonbury. Now, due to a successful OCA 2018 lawsuit against HUD, vouchers are set at a value that reflects local markets in 24 areas across the country, including Hartford – but not the rest of the state. This needs to be changed.
- **EXPAND THE STATE'S MOBILITY COUNSELING PROGRAM:** The state has just relaunched on a pilot basis a counseling program with a proven track record in other states for helping interested voucher families learn about high resource communities they may not have previously considered. This program needs be expanded to the whole state.
- **SUPPORT SPECIALIZED VOUCHERS:** To counteract the deep segregation in housing voucher programs, the state should create two programs using vouchers to access higher opportunity communities – one dedicated to families with children already accessing school desegregation programs to commute to suburban schools who would like to move to such communities and one for families facing environmentally triggered health issues in disinvested communities.

PROTECTIONS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND SEGREGATION

Federal Fair Housing Act

- Race—black or white
- Color—skin tone
- National Origin—country of an individual's origin or the country from which the individual's ancestors came
- Religion—Limitation based on religious or spiritual beliefs
- Sex—gender (recently being applied to sexual orientation too)
- Handicap/disability
- Familial Status—presence of children under 18; pregnancy; persons in the process of getting legal custody

CT State Fair Housing Act Additional Protections

- Gender Identity or Expression
- Lawful Source of Income
- Age (except minors)

Types of Claims

- Intentional discrimination
- Disparate impact/perpetuation of segregation
- A failure to affirmatively further fair housing for recipients of certain grant funding (APA claim)

CT Constitution Article First, Sec. 20

No person shall be denied the equal protection of the law nor be subjected to segregation or discrimination in the exercise or enjoyment of his civil or political rights because of religion, race, color, ancestry or national origin.



Othering
& Belonging
Institute



CENTER for
LEADERSHIP
& **JUSTICE**



OPEN COMMUNITIES
ALLIANCE
Embracing Diversity to Strengthen Connecticut

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