

Where Families with Children Use Housing Vouchers

A Comparative Look at the 50 Largest Metropolitan Areas

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Research Action
Council*

Why Should We Care About Housing?



The Housing Choice Voucher Program is the Nation's Largest Rental Assistance Program

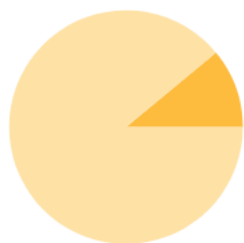
5.3 million

people in **2.2 million American** households use a voucher to afford decent, privately owned housing.

68% are seniors, children, or people with disabilities.

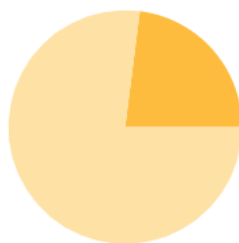
...but **7** out of **10 low-income* American**

households pay too much for rent and do not receive a voucher or other federal rental assistance due to limited funding.



11% of voucher recipients are elderly

Vouchers help **600,700** of America's seniors afford decent, modest housing and age in place.



23% of voucher recipients are disabled

Vouchers enable **1.2 million** people with disabilities in America to live independently in their home communities.

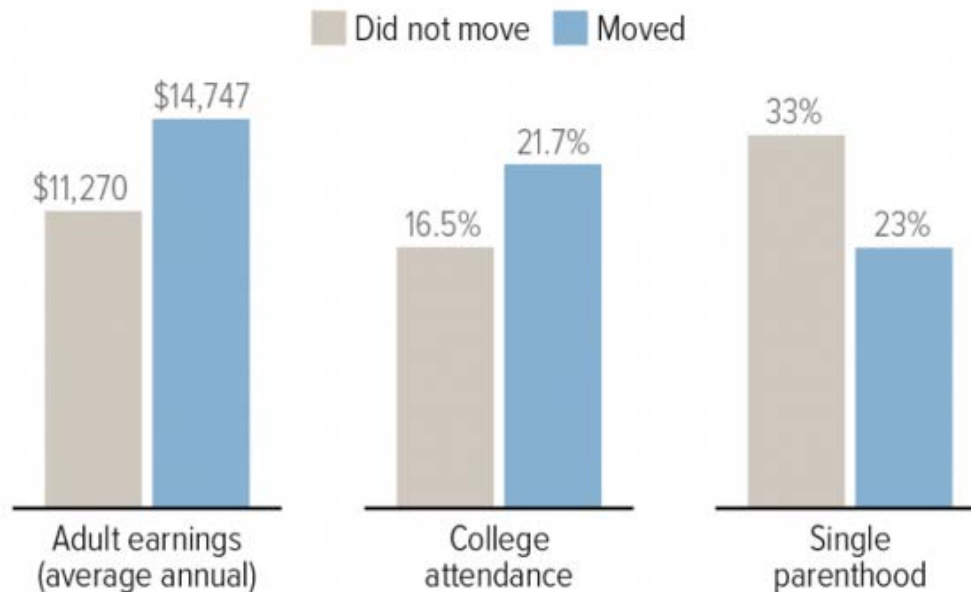


70% of voucher recipients are in families with children

1.0 million families with **2.2 million** children in America use a voucher to keep a roof over their heads.

Good Neighborhoods Help Low-Income Children Succeed

Moving With Voucher to Lower-Poverty Neighborhoods While Young Children Improves Key Adult Outcomes



Note: Outcomes are for children up to age 13 at the time of random assignment under the Moving to Opportunity (MTO) demonstration. "Moved" refers to families that used MTO vouchers to relocate to neighborhoods where fewer than 10 percent of residents were poor. "Did not move" refers to control group families that did not receive MTO vouchers.

Source: Chetty, Hendren, and Katz, "The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children," American Economic Review, 2016.

Do Families with Vouchers Have Genuine Choice About Where They Live?

- Neighborhoods—and who lives in them—are shaped by public policy: exclusionary zoning, redlining, location public transportation, schools, etc.
- Neighborhoods affect a child's chances of upward economic mobility.
- Vouchers have the unique ability to give low-income families the opportunity to live in higher opportunity neighborhoods.
- Where are rental units affordable to voucher holders located? What are those neighborhoods like?
- Where do families with children using vouchers live? What are those neighborhoods like?

Data Sources

U.S. HUD Administrative Data (Form 50058)

- Housing Choice Voucher households with children

U.S. HUD Public Data

- Small Area Fair Market Rents
- AFFH Opportunity Indices
- Low-income renters of color (CHAS)

American Community Survey Data (2012-16 5yr)

- Renter Occupied Units by Gross Rent
- Poverty Rate
- Hispanic or Latino Origin by Race
- Vacancy Rate

Compare...

**Location of voucher-assisted families
with children**

&

**Location of voucher-affordable rental
units**

Compute for each of the top 50 metro areas:

1. Metro share of voucher-assisted families with children, in type of neighborhood

Example:

$$\frac{\text{Voucher HHs in high poverty tracts in metro area}}{\text{Total Voucher HHs in metro area}}$$

= **61%** in Buffalo-Cheektowaga-Niagara Falls NY

Compute for each of the top 50 metro areas:

2. Metro share of voucher-affordable units, in type of neighborhood

Example:

$$\frac{\text{Voucher affordable units in high poverty tracts in metro area}}{\text{Total Voucher affordable units in metro area}}$$

= **35%** in Buffalo-Cheektowaga-Niagara Falls NY

Neighborhood Measures

Low-poverty neighborhoods: poverty rate $< 10\%$.

High-poverty neighborhoods: poverty rate $\geq 30\%$.

High-opportunity neighborhoods: in top 20% of all metro tracts on composite opportunity index.

Low-opportunity neighborhoods: in bottom 20% of all metro tracts on composite opportunity index.

HUD defined “Minority-concentrated” neighborhoods: tract where the percentage of people of color is at least 20 percentage points higher than for the entire metro area.

“Voucher-affordable” rental units?

Census tract estimates:

Rental units with **gross rents** below
2 BR **Small Area Fair Market Rent**

SAFMR →

40th percentile of ZIP Code rent
distribution

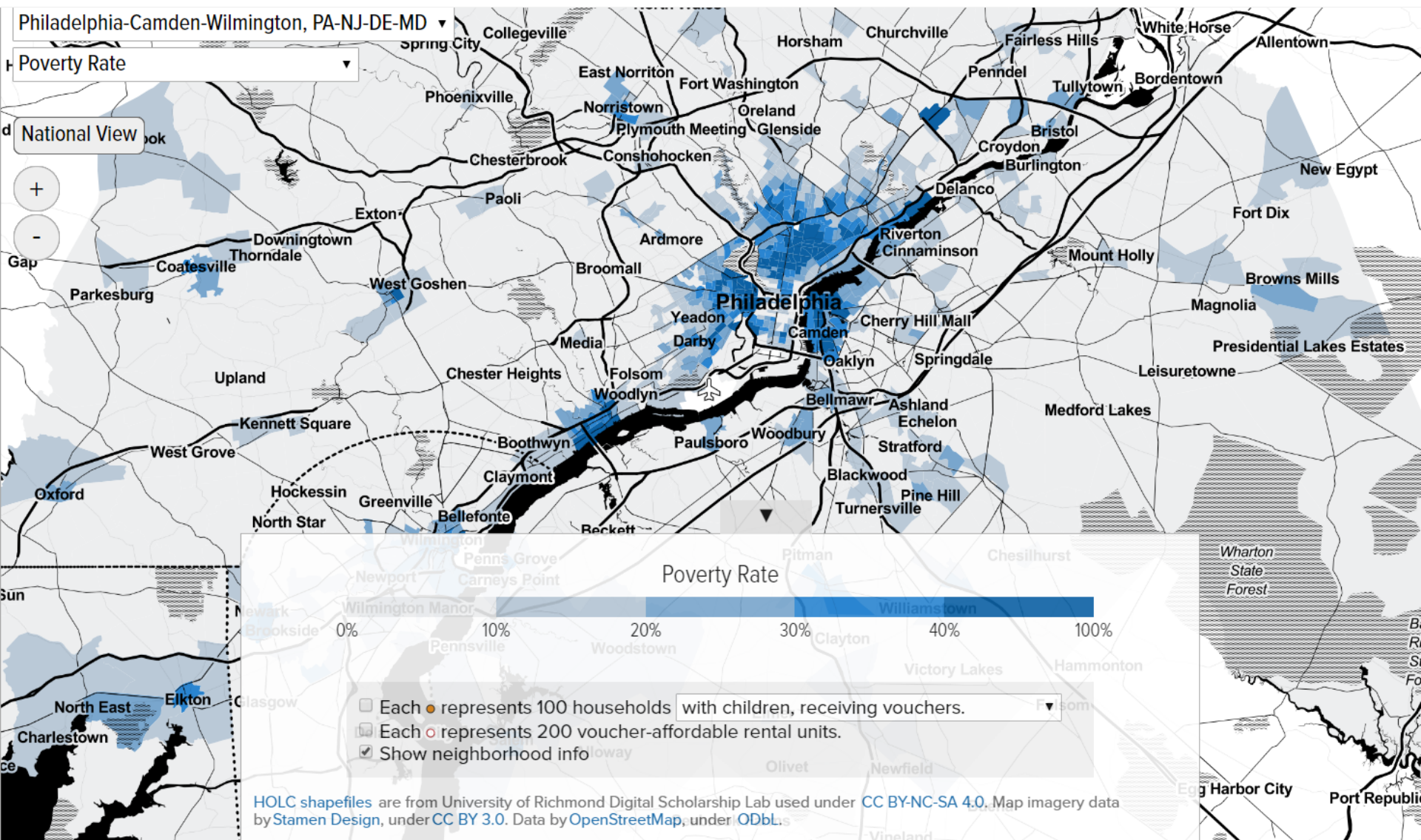
“Voucher-affordable” rental units?

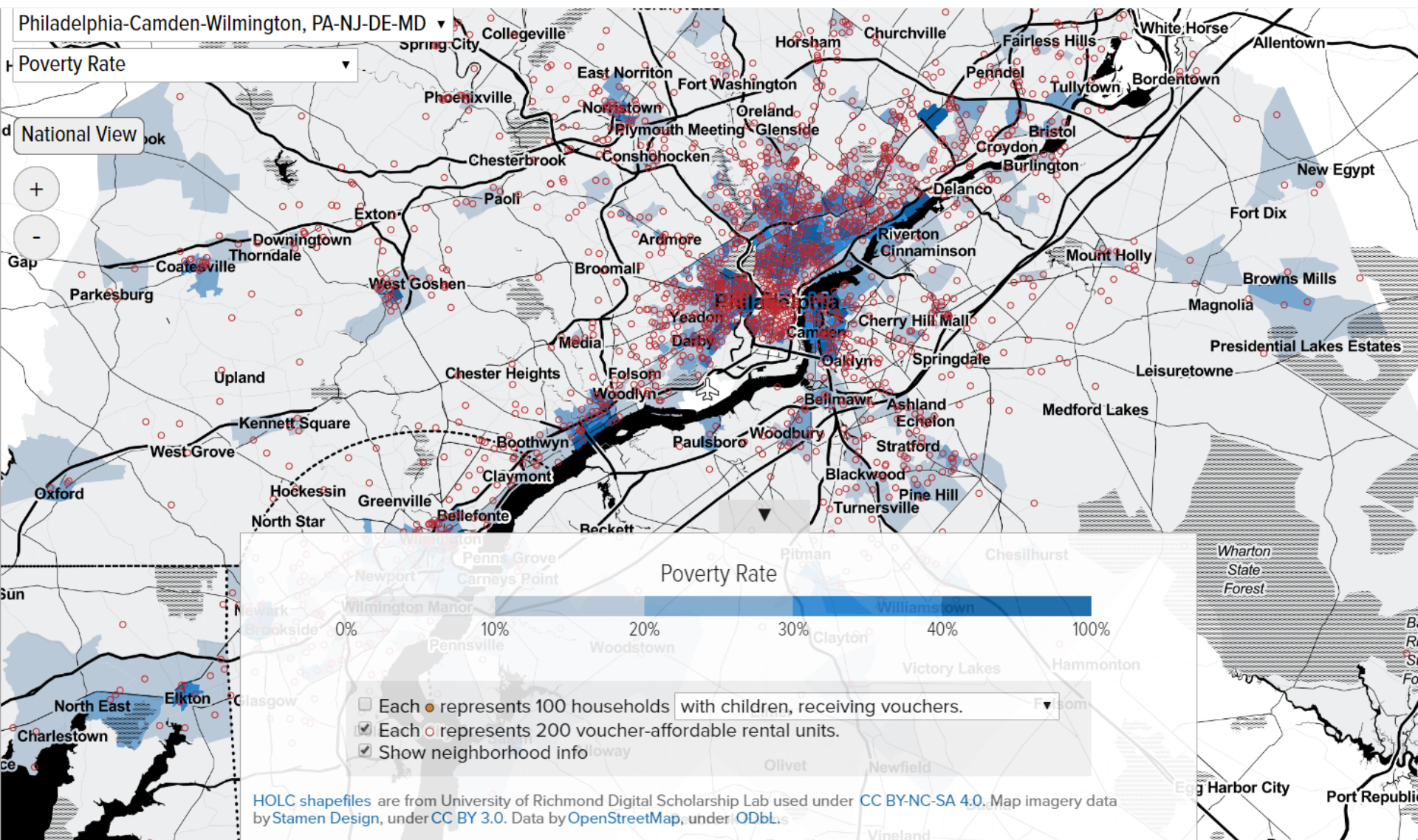
1. Join data together

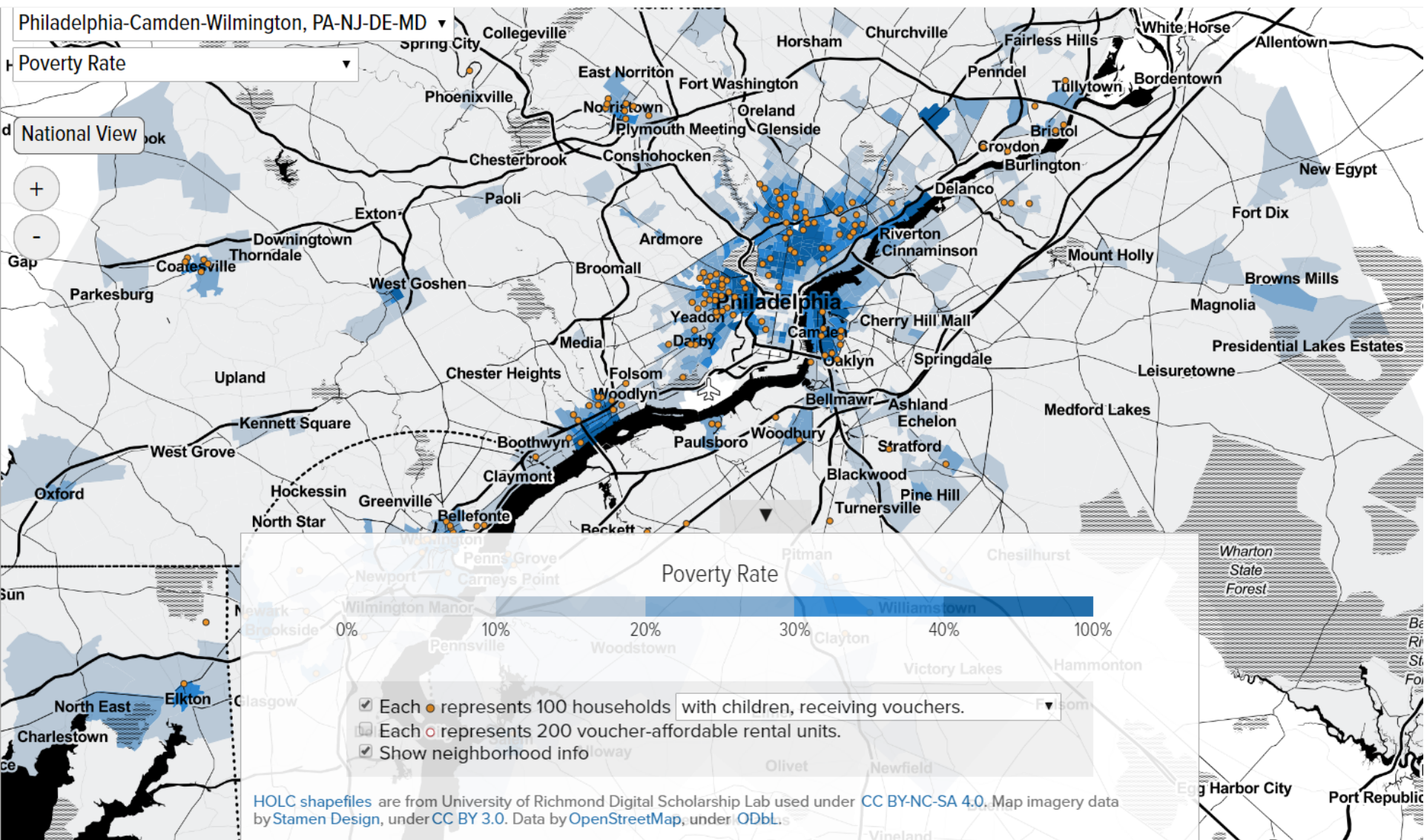
- Tract-level counts, Renter-occupied units by gross rent (2012-16 ACS Table B25063)
- FY 2016 HUD SAFMRs (ZIP Code level)
- Crosswalks (Mable/Geocorr)

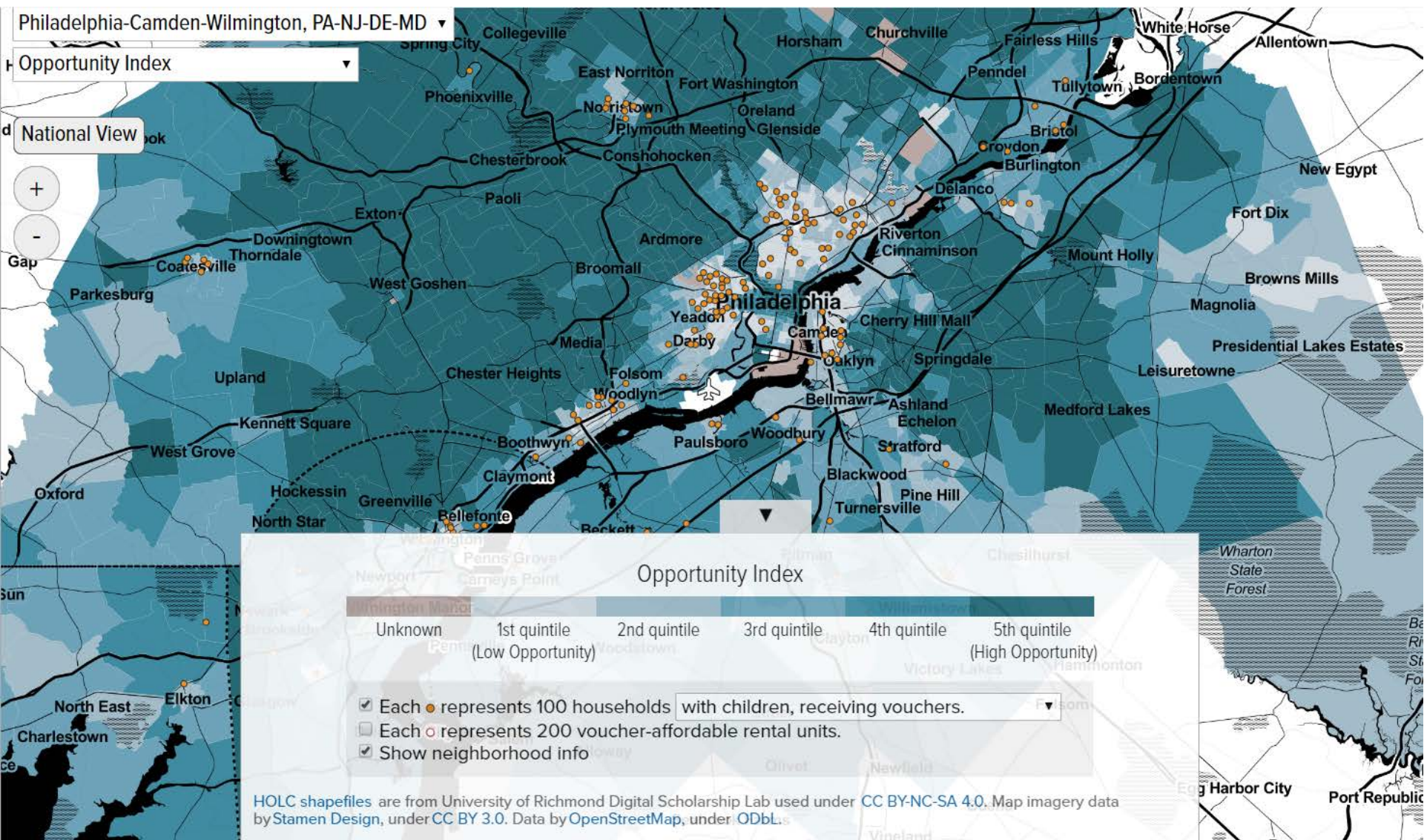
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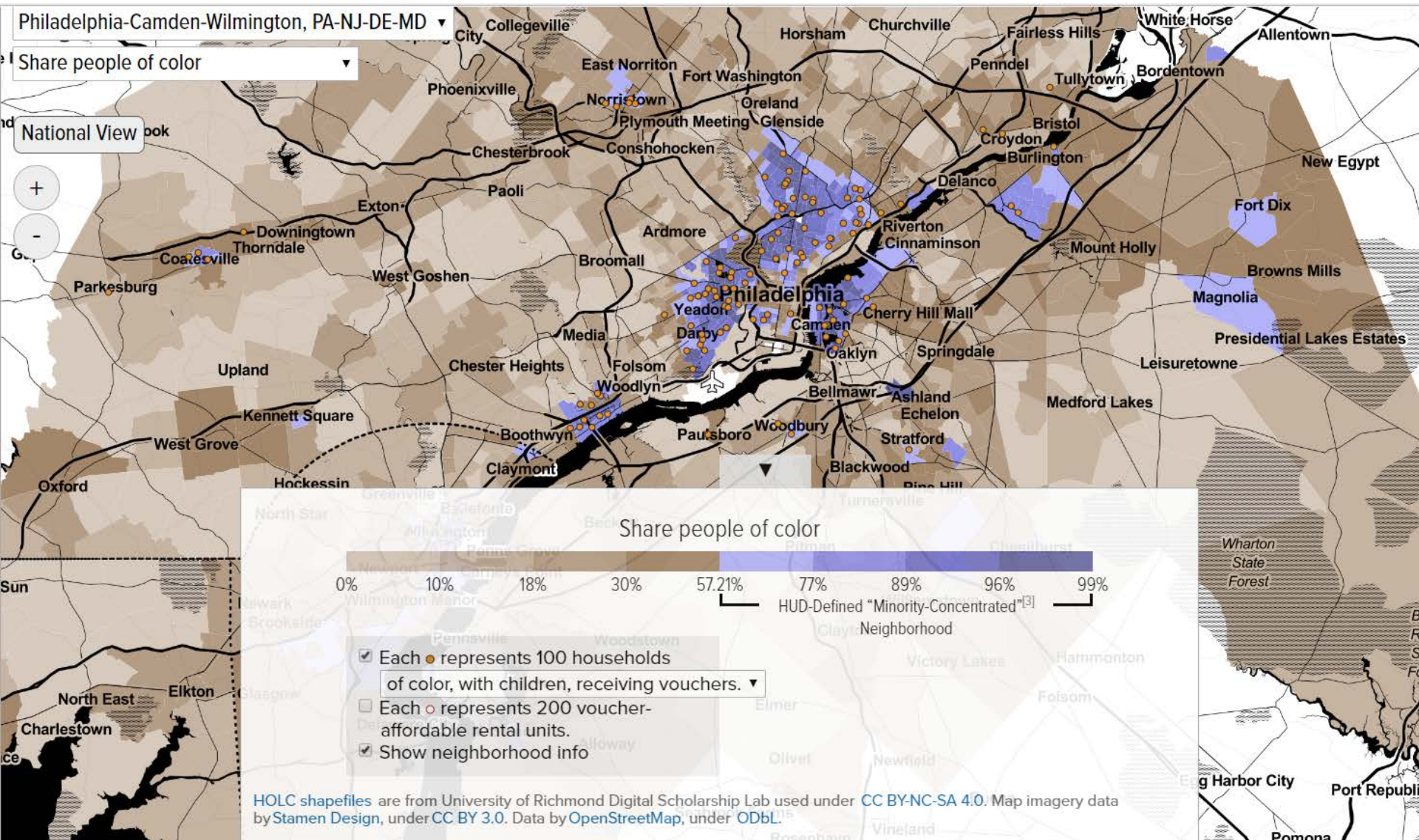
2. Create tract-level summary of 2BR SAFMR for all ZIPs intersecting with tract
3. Aggregate rental units for the gross rent increments below summary SAFMR
 - Linear interpolation for units $<$ SAFMR and above highest adjacent threshold
4. Result: Tract estimates, “voucher-affordable units”





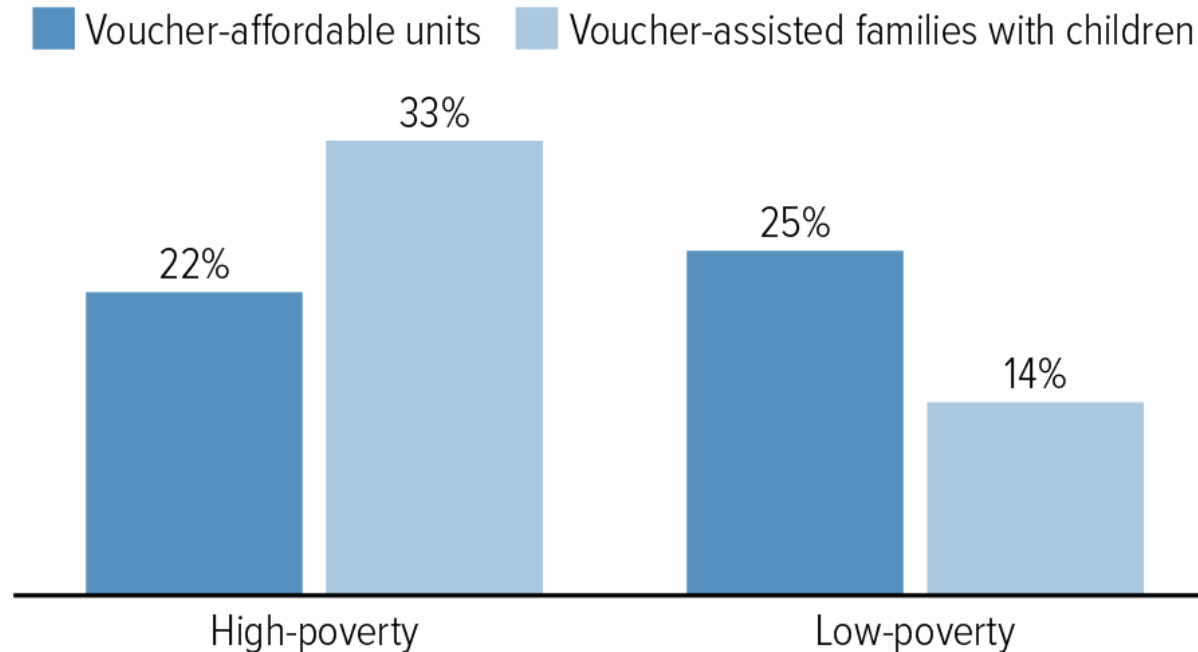






Metropolitan Voucher-Assisted Families More Likely to Live in High-Poverty Areas, Less Likely to Live in Low-Poverty Areas, Relative to Affordable Units

Share in high-and low-poverty metropolitan neighborhoods

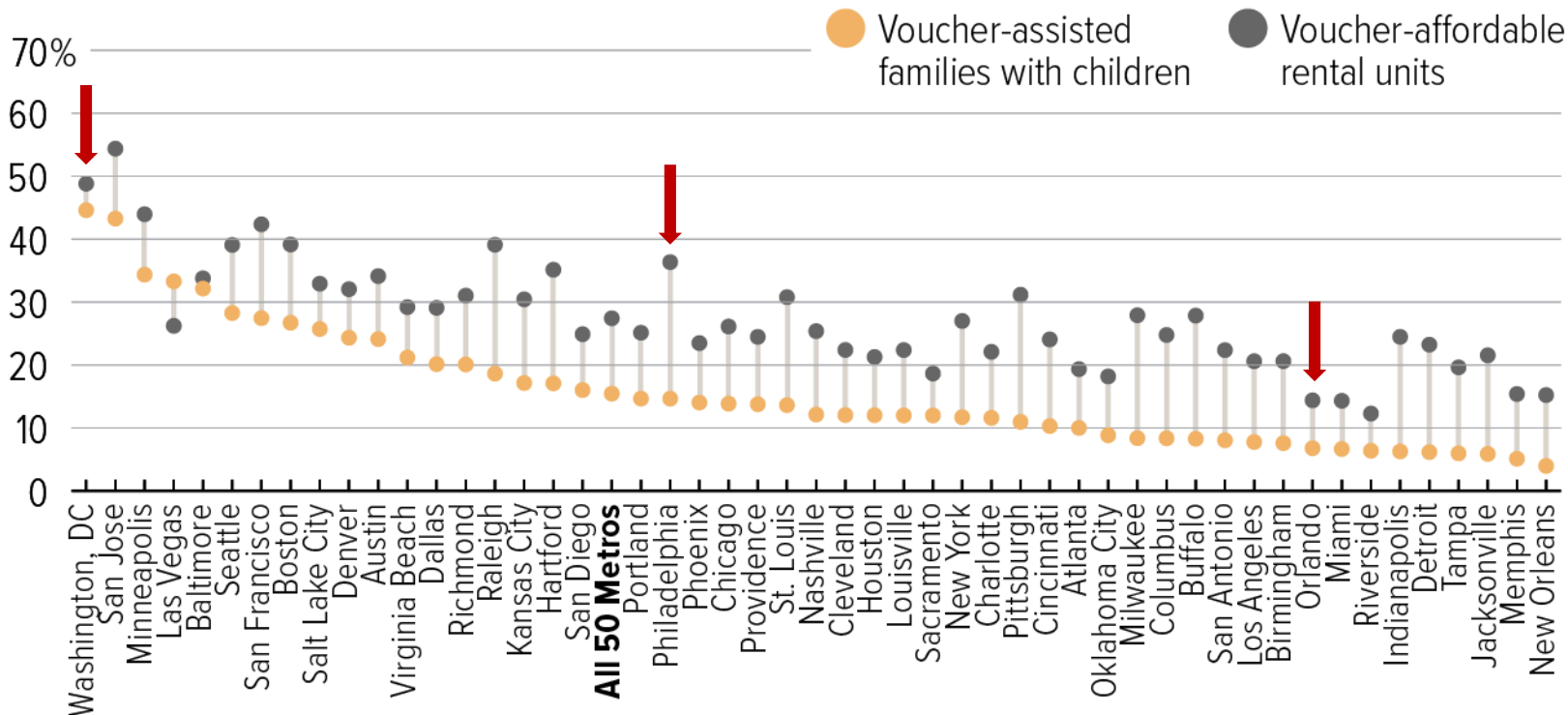


Note: High-poverty neighborhoods are Census tracts with a poverty rate of 30% or more. Low-poverty neighborhoods have a poverty rate of less than 10%.

Source: CBPP/PRRAC analysis of the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, 2016 Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Small Area Fair Market Rents, and 2017 HUD administrative data.

In 49 of 50 Largest Metro Areas, Share of Voucher-Assisted Families With Children in Low-Poverty Neighborhoods Is Lower Than Share of Affordable Units

Share in low-poverty neighborhoods



Note: Low-poverty neighborhoods are Census tracts with a poverty rate of less than 10%.

Source: CBPP/PRRAC analysis of the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, 2016 Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Small Area Fair Market Rents, and 2017 HUD administrative data

How Do We Improve Housing Choice?

Implications for Public Policy

**Housing
Voucher
Mobility
Programs**

**Source of
Income
Protections**

**Improve and
Enforce HUD
Policies That
Promote
Choice**

**Invest in
Communities
Where
Voucher-
Holders
Already Live**

**Affirmatively
Further Fair
Housing**

**Expand the
Supply of
Voucher-
Affordable
Housing**

Resources

- Where Families with Children Use Housing Vouchers:
<https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/where-families-with-children-use-housing-vouchers>
- Interactive Maps:
<https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/interactive-map-where-voucher-households-live-in-the-50-largest-metropolitan-areas>
- Interactive Tables and Charts:
<https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/interactive-tables-where-voucher-assisted-households-live-in-the-50-largest>

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