

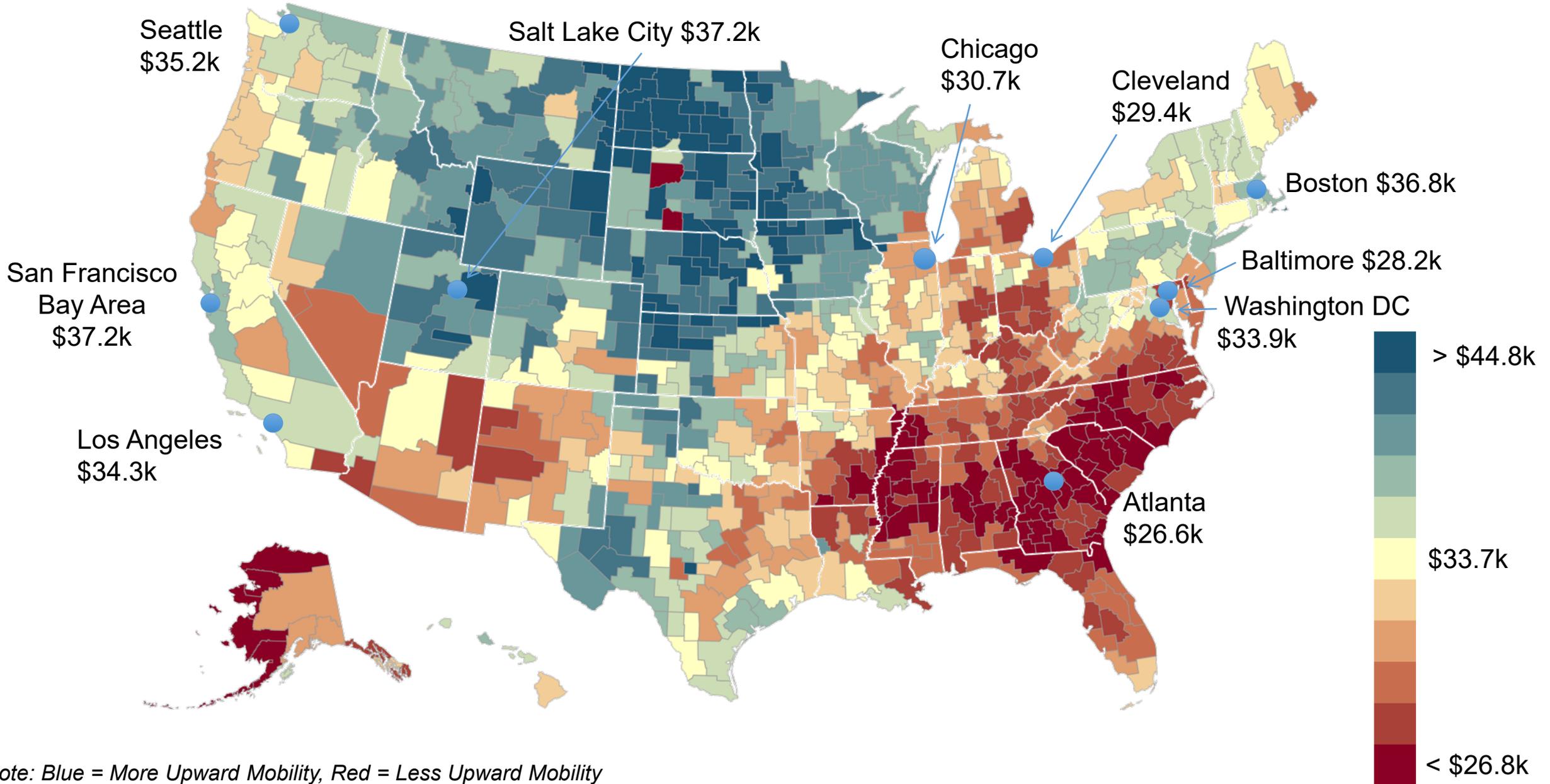
Creating Moves to Opportunity in Seattle and King County

Randomized trial to develop and test policy-scalable strategies to reduce barriers housing choice voucher recipients face in moving to high-opportunity areas in Seattle and King County

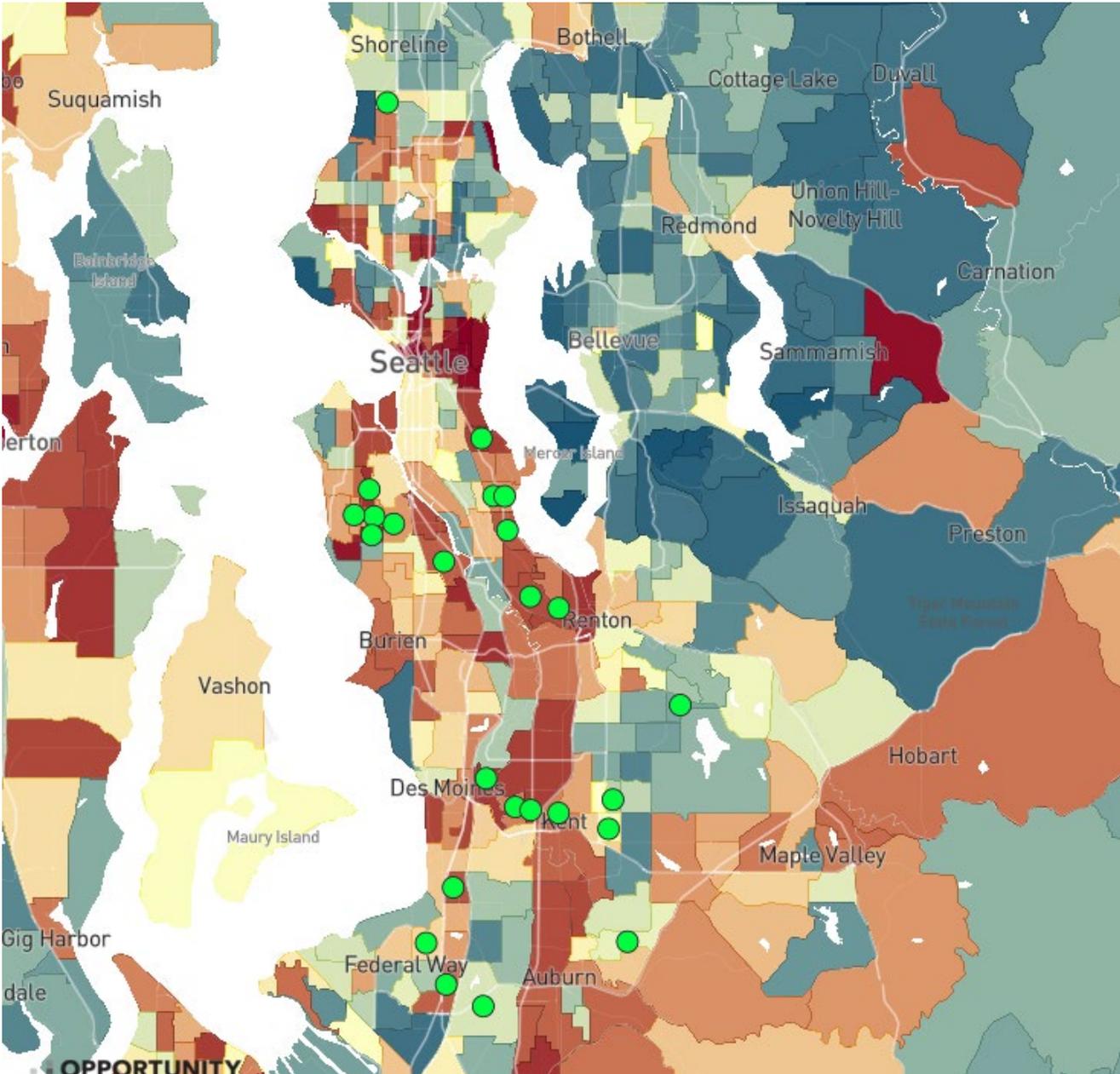


The Geography of Upward Mobility in the United States

Average Household Income for Children with Parents Earning \$27,000 (25th percentile)

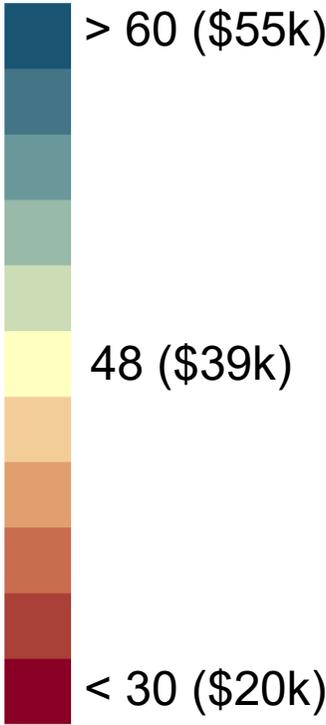


Most Common Locations of Families Receiving Housing Vouchers

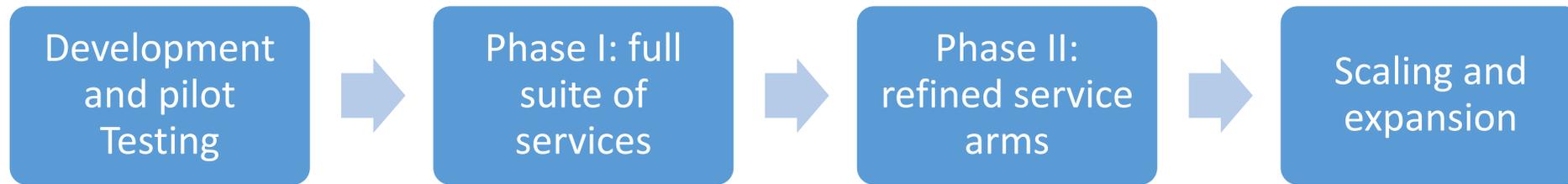


● 25 most common tracts where voucher holders lived before the CMTO experiment

Percentile Rank in Adulthood



Project Goal: *Develop and test which strategies most effectively support opportunity moves by families with young children using a Housing Choice Voucher.*



Creating Moves to Opportunity Experiment

- Sample frame families:
 - at least one child below age 15
 - applied for vouchers in either Seattle or King County
 - applied between April 2018 to April 2019
- 421 families, split randomly into control (standard services) and treatment
- Power calculations iterative process

Key Elements in the CMTO Intervention

CUSTOMIZED SEARCH ASSISTANCE

- **High-opportunity area education** to increase families' knowledge about high-opportunity areas.
- **Rental application coaching** to increase families' competitiveness for rental units by addressing credit history and preparing a narrative.
- **Housing locator services** to help families identify suitable units in high-opportunity areas.

INCREASED LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT

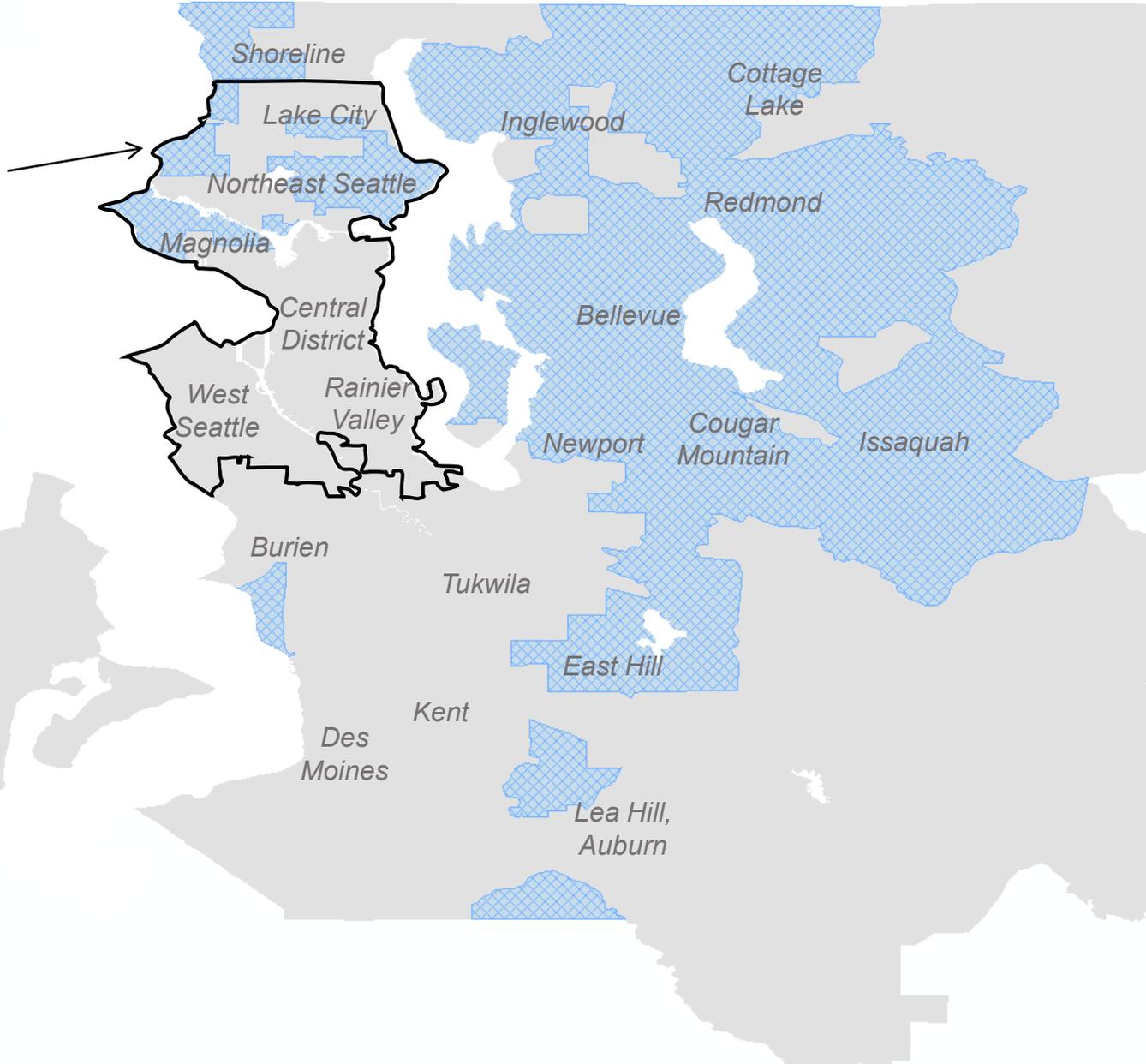
- **Cultivate relationships** with landlords in designated high-opportunity areas to create housing opportunities for CMTO families.
- **Expedite lease-up processes** by completing PHA required documents and conducting housing inspections more quickly.
- **Insurance fund** to mitigate risks of property damage.

SHORT-TERM FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- Grants to **defray move-in expenses**, such as application fees and security deposits.

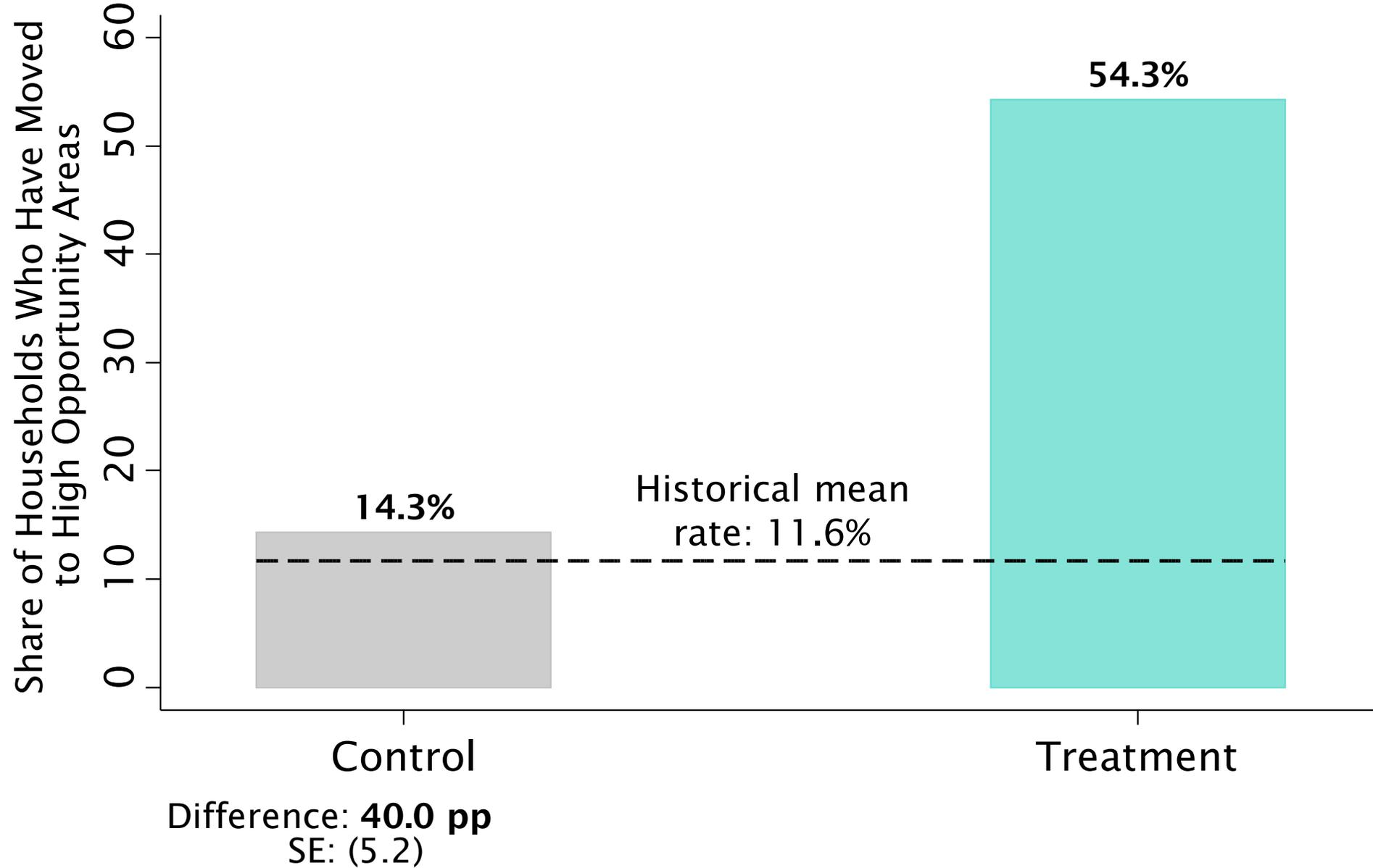
Designation of High-Opportunity Neighborhoods

Seattle
City
Boundary

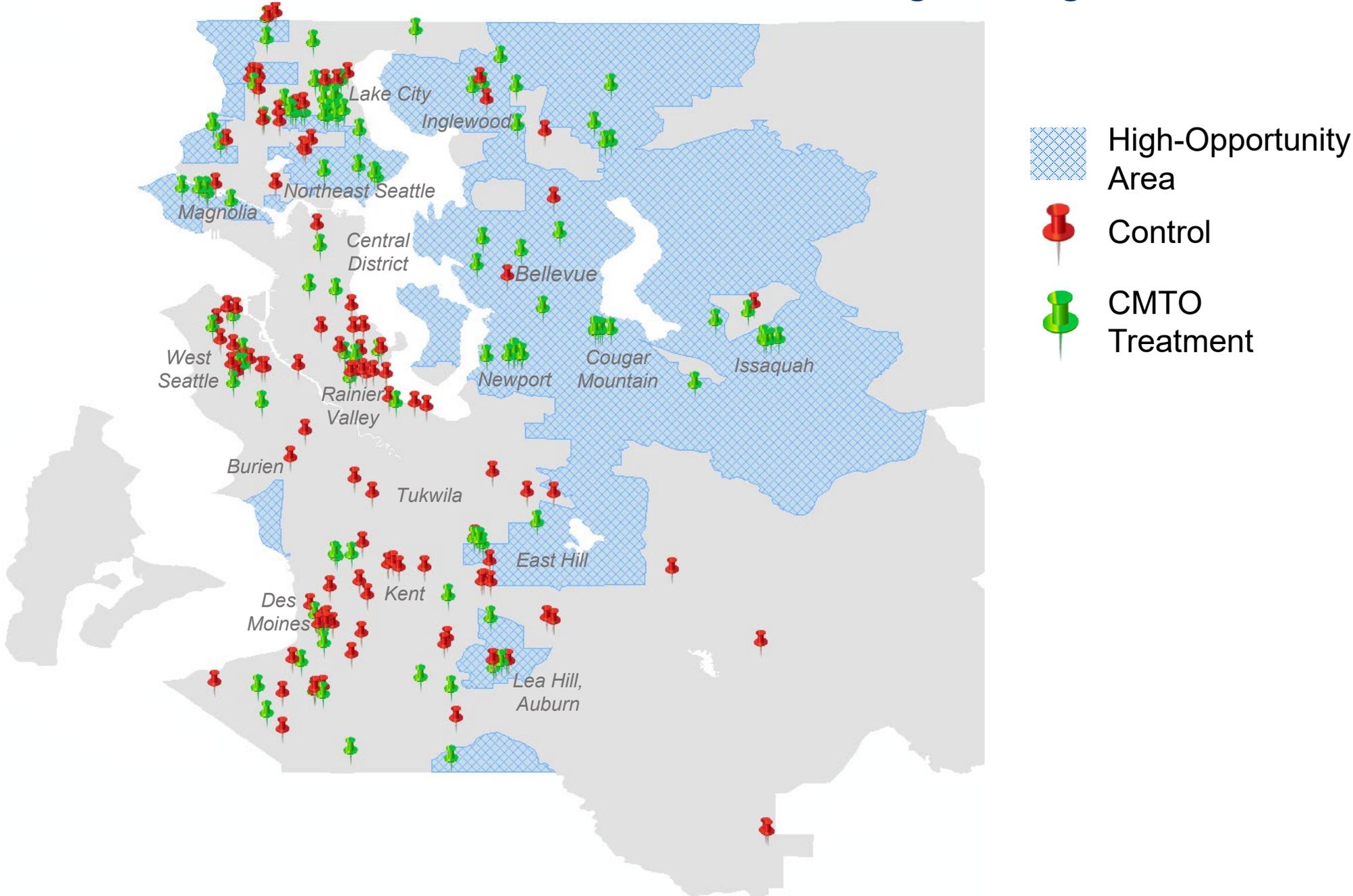


 High-Opportunity Area

Fraction of Families Who Leased Units in High Opportunity Areas



Destination Locations for Families that Leased Units Using Housing Vouchers



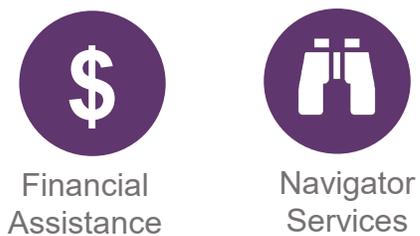
Findings: Segregation Largely Driven by Barriers, not Preferences

- Reducing barriers to neighborhood choice can increase moves to opportunity, increase upward mobility for low-income children
 - CMTO predicted to increase the lifetime household income of a child moving at age 1 by **\$210,000 (10.4%)**
 - Also predicted to increase college attendance rates, reduce teen birth rates, and reduce incarceration rates
- Expanding access high-opportunity neighborhoods provides an immediate tool for decreasing segregation and expanding economic opportunity
- Key follow-ups: persistence, experiences, satisfaction

Phase 2 Design: Three Treatment Arms



Comprehensive Support

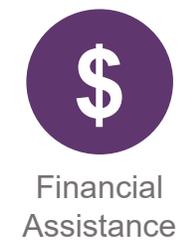


1. Comprehensive Support



Retain phase 1 program

2. Financial Incentives Only



Provide only financial incentives

3. Cost-Optimized Comprehensive Support



Reduce financial incentives and increase navigator caseloads

* Enrollment timeframes (interventions continue beyond enrollment)

CMTO Expansion Partners Across the Country



Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Act

Shown Here:

Referred in Senate (07/11/2018)

115TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 5793

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 11, 2018

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

AN ACT

To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out a housing choice voucher mobility demonstration to encourage families receiving such voucher assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Act of 2018”.

SEC. 2. HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER MOBILITY DEMONSTRATION.

(a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) may carry out a mobility demonstration program to enable public housing agencies to administer housing choice voucher assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 ([42 U.S.C. 1437f\(o\)](#)) in a manner designed to encourage families receiving such voucher assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.

(b) **SELECTION OF PHAs.**—

(1) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The Secretary shall establish requirements for public housing agencies to participate in the demonstration program under this section, which provide that the following public housing agencies may participate:

Reflections on the Process

1. Lessons Learned
2. Benefits
3. Challenges
4. Parting Advice

Appendix Tables and Figures

Treatment Interventions

CUSTOMIZED
SEARCH
ASSISTANCE

On average, non-profit staff spend **6.3 hours** with each household

DIRECT
LANDLORD
ENGAGEMENT

52% of rentals in high-opportunity areas made through links via non-profit staff

SHORT-TERM
FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE

Average financial assistance of **\$1,100** for security deposits, application fees, etc.

Program Cost: \$2,600 per family issued a voucher
(2.2% of average voucher payments over 7 years)

*Note: Families **not** required to move to high-opportunity areas*

Intervention Process Timeline

Family Contacted

Notified of selection from waitlist



Voucher Issued



Unit Selected

Family approved by landlord for unit



Lease Signed



Intake Appointment

Consent
Randomization
Baseline survey



Nonprofit Staff Meet with Families and Landlords

Rental application coaching
Opportunity area education
Visiting locations

Linking families to units

Search assistance
Landlord recruitment

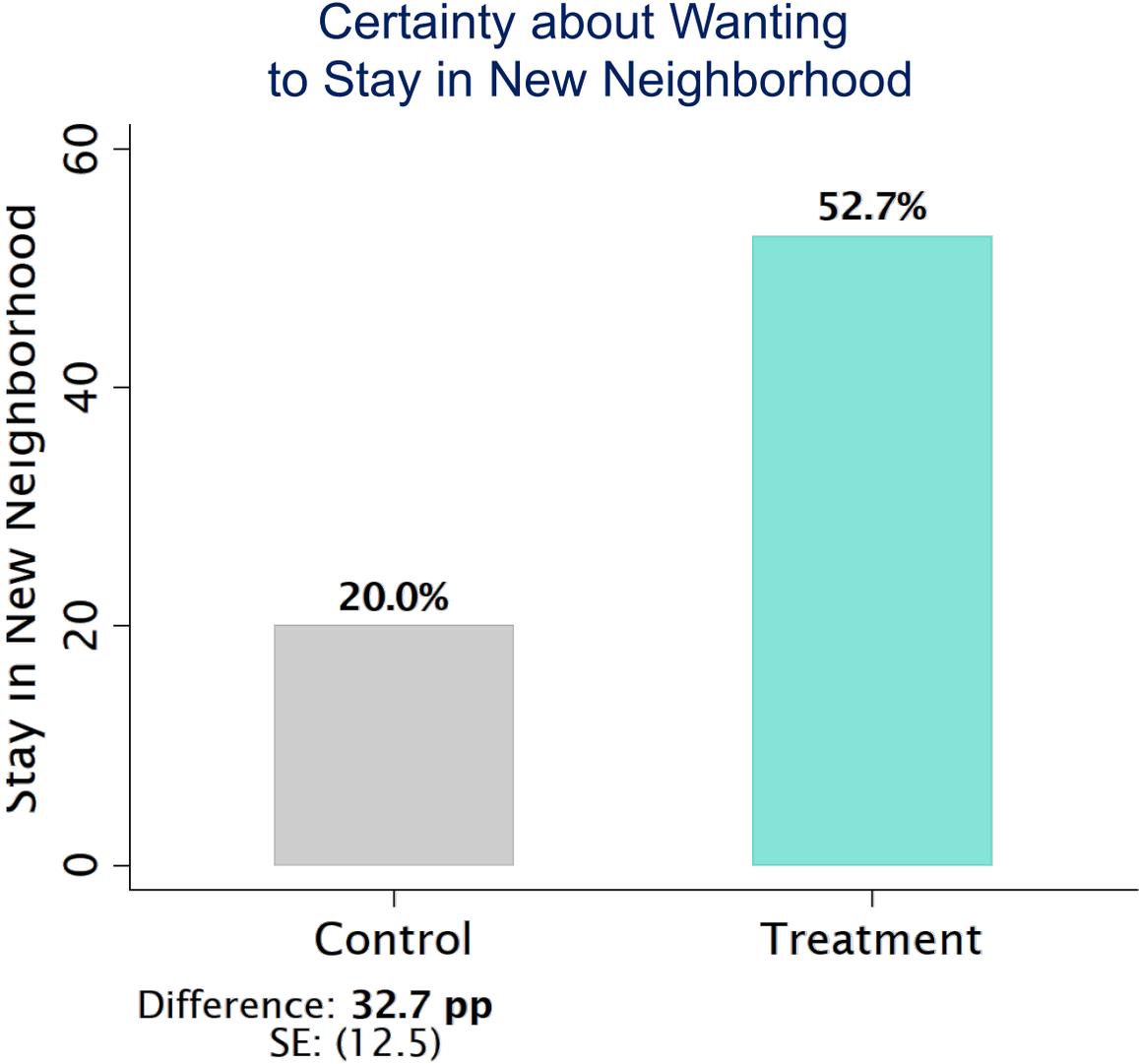
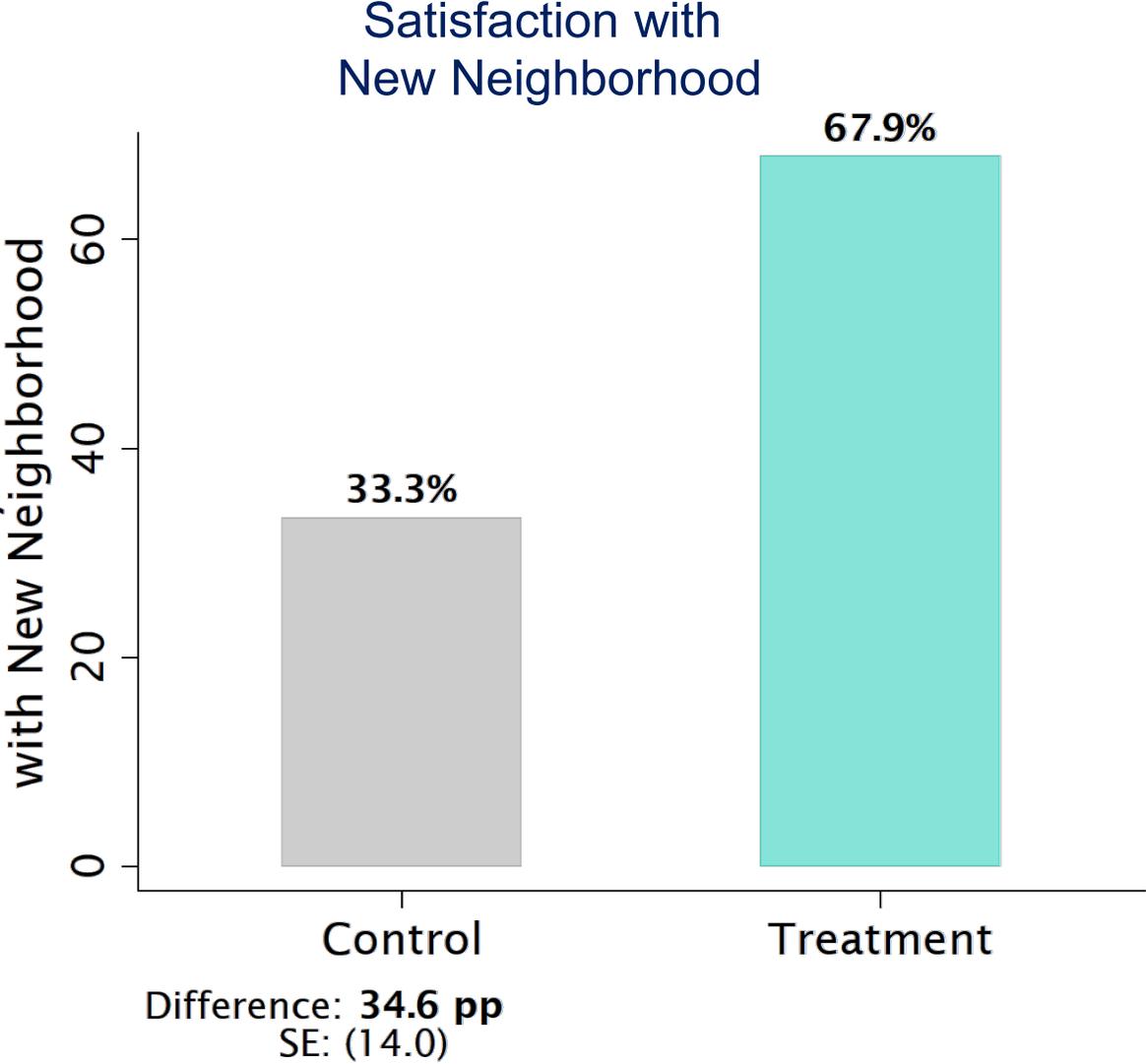


Lease Up

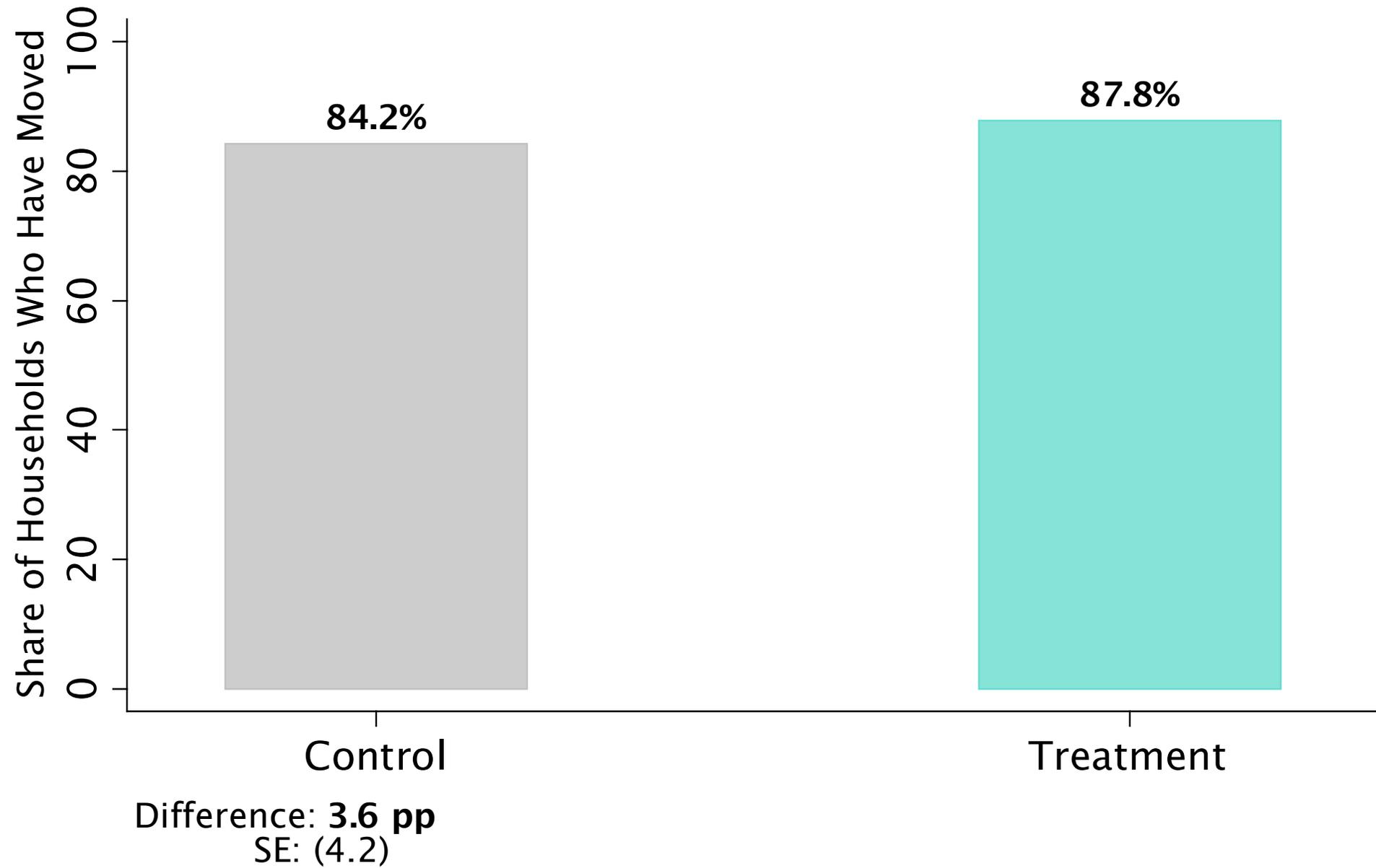
Receive paperwork and financial assistance (e.g. assistance for deposit)

Satisfaction with New Neighborhoods

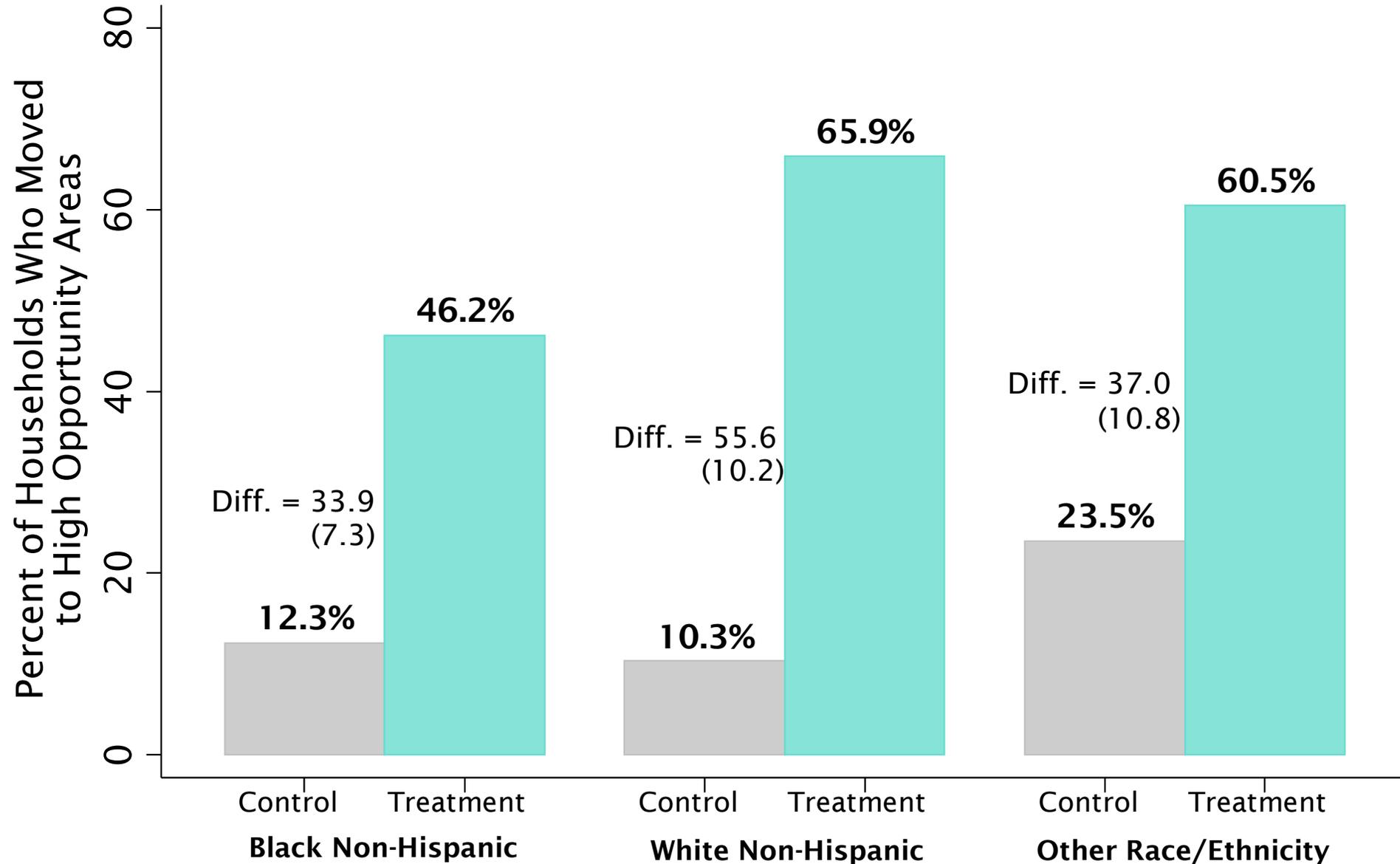
Based on Surveys Six Months Post-Move



Fraction Who Has Leased Any Unit within Six Months of Voucher Issuance



Treatment Effects By Race and Ethnicity



Qualitative Evidence: Five Key Mechanisms Underlying CMTO Treatment Effects

1. Emotional Support
2. Increased Motivation to Move to Opportunity
3. Streamlining the Search Process
4. Landlord Brokering
5. Short-Term Financial Assistance

Qualitative Evidence on Mechanisms

Emotional/Psychological Support

“A light bulb went on...It was this whole flood of relief. It was this whole flood of, “I don’t know how I’m going to do this” and “I don’t know what I’m going to do” and “This isn’t working,” and yeah...I think it was just the supportive nature of having lots of conversations with [the Navigator].” –*Jackie*

Brokering with Landlords

“When you find a place, I will come with you and we will help you to fill out the application. I will talk with the landlord, I will help you to do a lot of stuff, that maybe sometimes will be complicated.” –*Leah*

Strategic Short-Term Financial Assistance

“I’m not going to be able to pay here and then there [in the new apartment] ...They were able to get me more money, so that they would pay more of my first portion of my rent. Because they understood the situation that I was in.” –*Jennifer*

Qualitative Evidence on Mechanisms

Increased Motivation to Move to Opportunity

“She [the CMTO Navigator] made me cry when she kind of explained to me what the program does, like it's not just we pay your rent . . . it's for to make sure that not only you are in a good area but **your kid can grow up in a good area and be successful it's like it made me so happy to think that my son is going to be in a area that can just help him be a good part of society.**”—

Melinda

Streamlining the Search Process (Reducing “Bandwidth Tax”)

“It was like me staring at my phone [to do online housing searches] like while he's playing around and the **less I have. . . to do that takes away from like me focusing on him or the other things that I need to do is the better.**”—*Lisa*

The Pieces Fit Together

“Some **landlords**, your **credit** could get denied like here like mine did. . . because I had that credit resume **explaining** the four derogatory marks on my credit, how they got there...how I'm getting them off if I'm on a payment plan. . . And because of that, [landlord] was just like, ‘Well, I mean, you seem smart, you seem like you're prepared, these things on your credit don't seem like a big deal’...” And sure enough, she was like, ‘**Just give her a chance, just higher deposit.**’”—*Nicole*