

Community acceptability of the first state-authorized overdose prevention center in the United States.

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Overview

74% of residents and employees within a 0.75-mile radius of the first state-authorized overdose prevention center (OPC) in the US supported an OPC opening in their neighborhood.

Background

- OPCs are spaces where people may use pre-obtained drugs under supervision. Trained staff can intervene in the event of an overdose.
- This investigation is the first to assess community acceptability for a forthcoming state-sanctioned OPC in a US setting.^{1,2}
- Previous research has highlighted OPC support from the general public and local businesses.³⁻⁵

Methods

- ESRI ArcGIS Workforce and Survey123 were used to generate survey assignments.
- Research staff surveyed 125 people who lived and/or worked in the neighborhood.
- Surveys lasted 5 minutes in length.

Figure 1. Eligible properties within 0.75 miles of the OPC.

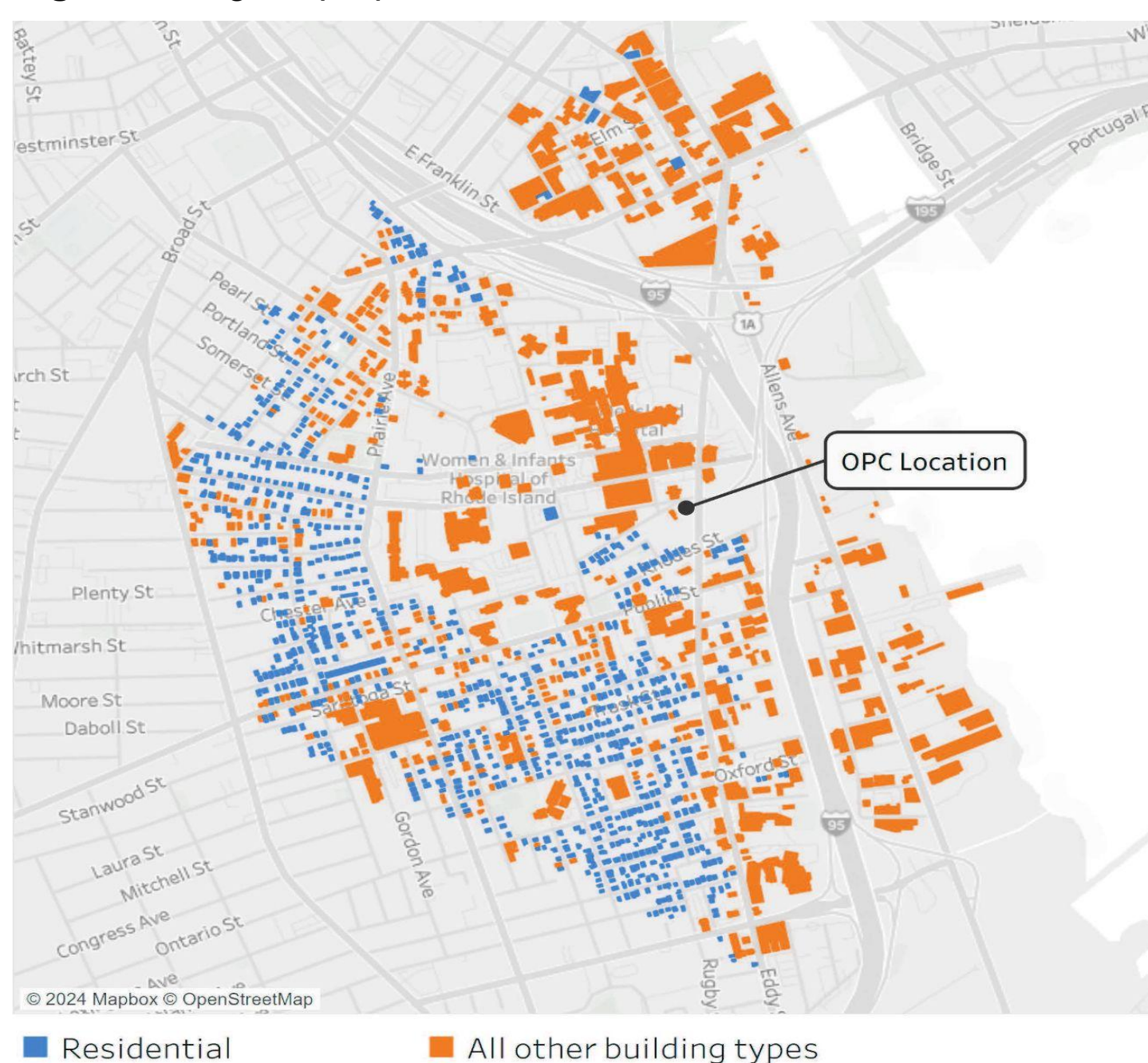
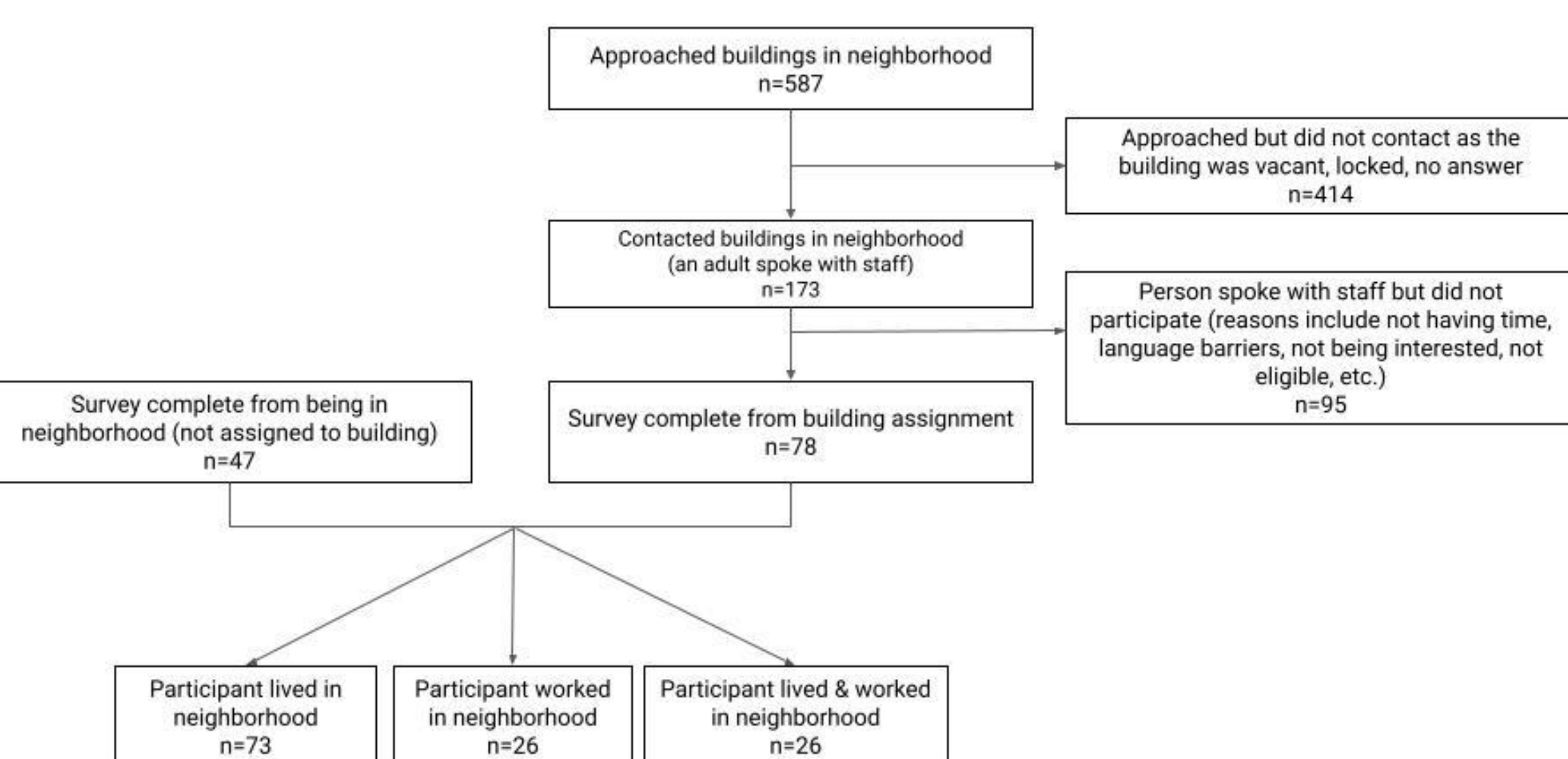
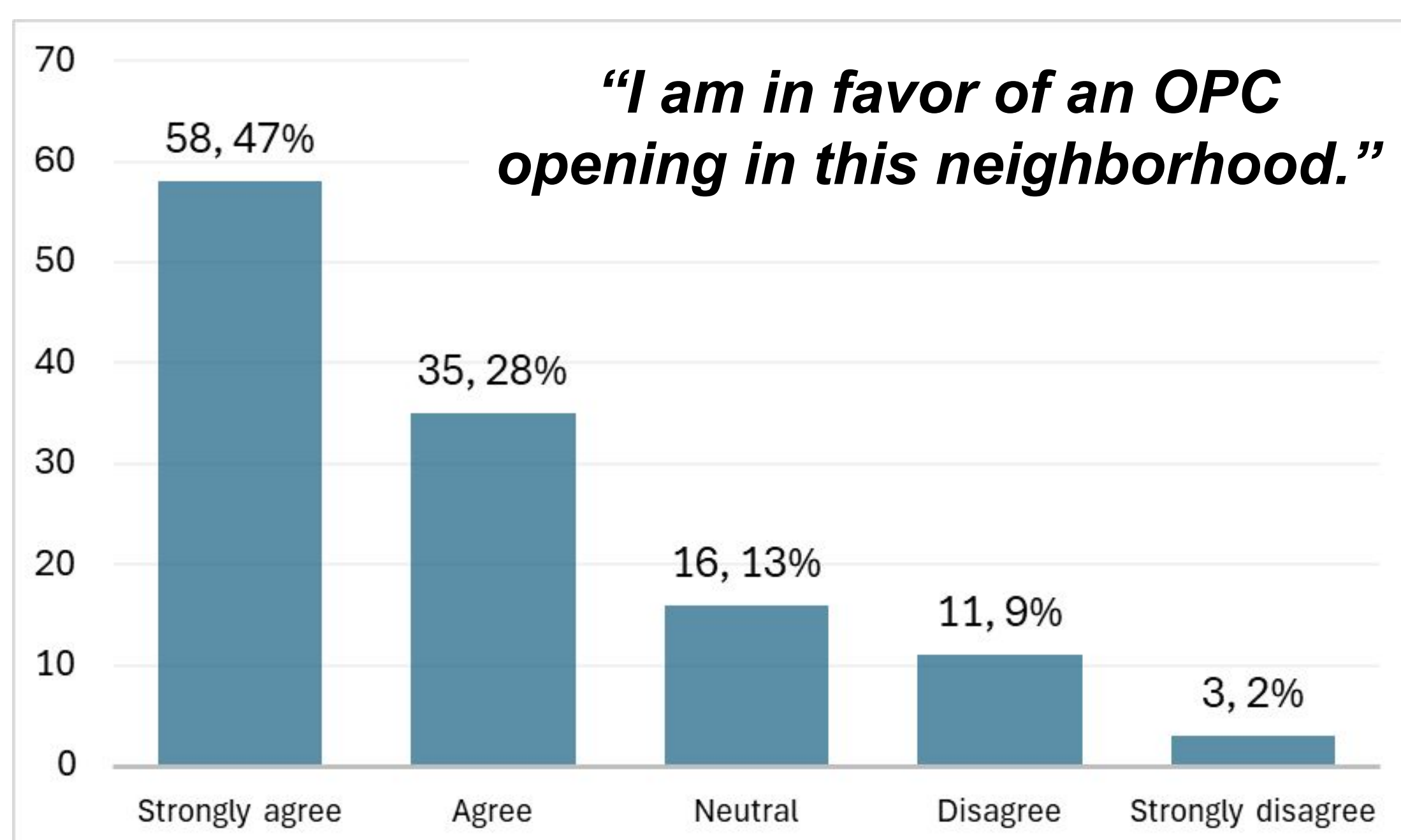


Figure 2. Flow chart of sampling methodology and surveying of participants, Fall 2024.



Results

Figure 3. Distribution of OPC acceptability (N=125). Bivariate analyses compared 'strongly agree' and 'agree' to 'neutral,' 'disagree,' or 'strongly disagree.'



OPC support was significantly associated with younger age & recently observing someone who appeared to be homeless in the neighborhood.

- **Sociodemographics.** 48% women, 52% Hispanic or Latinx, mean age of 43 years. Those who supported an OPC were an average of 8 years younger.
- **Living & working arrangements.** 79% lived in neighborhood (among this group, 63% for more than 5 years), 40% worked in neighborhood.
- **Drug-related social experiences.** Many participants witnessed visible homelessness (72%), someone experiencing drug effects (59%), and drug-related litter (28%) at least every week.
- **Experiences of those opposed to the OPC (n=16).**
 - Concerns related to increased use of drugs or encouraging drug use, increased selling of drugs, decreased safety in neighborhood.
 - Would support them in theory or if there was sufficient evidence.

Conclusions

- The majority of those who lived and/or worked in the neighborhood of a forthcoming (and now recently opened) OPC supported its opening.
- Findings underscore the importance of grassroots education and public awareness campaigns in fostering OPC support at the local level.

Figure 4. OPC in New York City from opcnfo.org.



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Full manuscript recently accepted in the Journal of Urban Health.

Keep an eye out!