

# Opportunity Zones

*A new program to connect private investment to low-income communities nationwide*

## Overview

The Opportunity Zones program was established by Congress in the Tax Cut and Jobs Act as an innovative approach to spurring long-term private sector investments in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide. The program is based on the bipartisan **Investing in Opportunity Act**.

The program establishes a mechanism that **enables investors with capital gains tax liabilities** across the country to receive favorable tax treatment for investing in **Opportunity Funds** that are certified by the U.S. Treasury Department. The Opportunity Funds use the capital invested to make equity investments in businesses and real estate in **Opportunity Zones** designated by each state.

## Program Need

More than half of America's most economically distressed communities contained both fewer jobs and businesses in 2015 than they did in 2000.

New business formation is near a record low. The average distressed community saw a 6% decline in local businesses during the prime years of the national economic recovery.

The U.S. economy is increasingly dependent on a handful of places for growth. Five metro areas produced as many new businesses as the rest of the country combined from 2010 – 2014. Now is the time to diversify.

## Opportunity Zones

Governors **designated to 25%** of that state's eligible low-income census tracts (same definition as for New Markets Tax Credits) to become Opportunity Zones.



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## Investor Incentives

U. S. investors currently hold **\$2.3 trillion in unrealized capital gains**, representing a significant untapped resource for economic development. Opportunity Funds will allow these investors throughout the country to deploy their resources as Opportunity Zone investments.

The Opportunity Zone program is designed to incentivize long term investments:

Investment Length	Benefits Received
Fewer than 5 years	Deferred payment of existing capital gains until the date that the Opportunity Fund investment is sold or exchanged
5 - 7 years	Benefits above + 10% of tax on existing capital gain is canceled
7 - 10 years	Deferred payment of existing capital gains until December 31, 2026 or the date that the Opportunity Fund investment is sold or exchanged (whichever comes first) + 15% of tax on existing capital gain is canceled
Greater than 10 years	Benefits of 7 - 10 year investment + investors pay no capital gains tax on the Opportunity Fund investment (investments are exempt from any capital gains beyond those which were previously deferred)

### Opportunity Funds:

- Must be certified by the U.S. Treasury Department.

- Must be organized as a corporation or partnership for the purpose of investing in Qualified Opportunity Zone Property.

- Must hold at least 90% of their assets in Qualified Opportunity Zone Property.

- Qualified Opportunity Zone property includes newly issued **stock, partnership interests, or business property** in a Qualified Opportunity Zone business.

- Opportunity Fund investments are limited to **equity investments** in businesses, real estate, and business assets that are located in a Qualified Opportunity Zone. Loans are not eligible for the tax incentives. Opportunity Fund investments in real estate are subject to a substantial rehabilitation requirement.