



Bowser Administration Seeks Public's Input on Opportunity Zones

Wednesday, February 28, 2018

New federal program creates investment incentives in low-income areas

Today, the Bowser Administration released a [web-based survey](#) seeking the public's input about where to locate Opportunity Zones, a designation that provides tax incentives to encourage investment in low-income areas.

“As we continue building a safer, stronger DC, the Opportunity Zones program is a new tool we can use to strengthen neighborhoods throughout our city,” said Mayor Bowser. “We want our decision to be informed by residents and stakeholders so that we can use this tool as effectively as possible and catalyze the types of investments that will create more pathways to the middle class for Washingtonians.”

Opportunity Zones are a new community development program established by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to encourage long-term investments in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide. The Opportunity Zones program provides a tax incentive for investors to re-invest their unrealized capital gains into Opportunity Funds. The incentive could help to promote investments in new public infrastructure, affordable housing, businesses, or capital improvements.

The federal program allows states to choose up to 25 percent of eligible census tracts as Opportunity Zones. In the District, 97 census tracts meet the eligibility requirements and the District can designate up to 25 for the program. The designation must be completed by March 21, 2018.

The District has currently identified 18 possible Opportunity Zone designations and is seeking the public's input on the remaining seven which are grouped into three categories: East of the River, Retail Corridors, and Creative Industries and Manufacturing. Using a [web-based survey](#) designed by The Lab @ DC, the public can choose the zones that are categorized based on needs, existing investments, and anticipated opportunities. The deadline to complete the survey is March 12, 2018.

The three categories are described below.

Option 1 - East of the River

These census tracts contain a substantial amount of housing, lower than average amounts of commercial land, and multiple parks. They cover areas of the Kenilworth, Bellevue, Congress Heights, Washington Highlands, Anacostia, Woodlawn, and Eastlawn Gardens neighborhoods.

Option 2 - Retail Corridors

These census tracts contain large amounts of commercial land and several mixed-use retail corridors. They cover areas in the Brightwood, LeDroit Park, Brentwood, Twining, Fairfax Village, and Naylor Gardens neighborhoods.

Option 3 - Creative Industries & Manufacturing

These census tracts contain a high percentage of commercial land, most of the District's industrial land, two multi-use neighborhood centers, and a Main Street mixed-use corridor. They cover areas in the Brentwood, Eckington, Ivy City, and Trinidad neighborhoods.