



The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor of the State of New Jersey
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Subject: Support the Expansion and Designation of Qualified Opportunity Zones in Salem County

Dear Governor Sherrill,

On behalf of Salem County Board of Commissioners and our municipal partners, we respectfully request your consideration and support for the designation of the eligible census tracts identified in the attached Opportunity Zone nomination packet.

This request represents a collaborative effort between Salem County, municipal governments, and stakeholders to identify census tracts that would benefit significantly from Opportunity Zone designation. Our shared objective is to leverage this federal economic development tool to encourage private investment, stimulate job creation, and foster long-term economic revitalization in communities that have experienced persistent challenges.

The attached packet outlines the qualifications of each proposed census tract, including demographic and economic data demonstrating their eligibility and the potential impact of designation.

This initiative has received broad bipartisan and stakeholder support. Enclosed are letters of endorsement from business organizations, federal and state elected officials, and other community partners who recognize the importance of expanding investment opportunities in Salem County.

We respectfully ask that your administration review the enclosed materials and consider supporting the nomination of the eligible Salem County census tracts for Opportunity Zone designation. We believe these communities present compelling opportunities for strategic investment that will strengthen the county's economy while advancing the State of New Jersey's broader goals for equitable economic development.

Thank you for your consideration and continued commitment to supporting communities across New Jersey. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your administration and stand ready to provide any additional information that may assist in your review.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sean M. Sepsey", is written over a series of horizontal lines.

Sean M. Sepsey
Director of Economic Development
Salem County, New Jersey

Opportunity Zone 2.0 Designation Report, Recommendations and Next Steps

Issued: June 29, 2026

Census Tract Prioritization — Salem County, New Jersey

Seven eligible tracts across the City of Salem, Penns Grove, and Carneys Point

This document has been prepared by Sam Leone/Fox Trail Development for the Salem County Economic Development Department, the City of Salem, and participating stakeholders to inform recommendations to the Office of the Governor for census tracts to be nominated under the renewed federal Opportunity Zones program ("OZ 2.0").

1. Background: What Opportunity Zones Are & Why They Matter

The Opportunity Zone (OZ) program is a federal tax incentive created by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and made permanent by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act in July 2025. Its purpose is to channel private capital into economically distressed communities that have historically struggled to attract investment. Rather than relying on direct government grants, the program offers investors a tax benefit in exchange for making long-term investments in designated low-income census tracts — using market forces to do the heavy financial lifting of community and economic development.

Since 2018, the program has driven well over \$100 billion of private capital into designated tracts nationwide and has become one of the most significant place-based economic development tools available to governors and local leaders. Designated tracts tend to have lower incomes, higher poverty, and higher unemployment than the national average — exactly the profile of Salem City and the other candidate areas in this packet.

How the incentive works

Investors who realize a capital gain (from selling stock, a business, real estate, or other assets) can reinvest that gain into a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF), which in turn invests in property or businesses inside a designated zone. In return, they receive three layers of tax benefit:

- **Deferral** — federal tax on the reinvested capital gain is deferred, giving the investment more time to grow before taxes are owed.
- **Step-up in basis** — holding the QOF investment for at least five years reduces the taxable portion of the original gain (a 10% basis step-up; 30% for qualified rural funds).
- **Tax-free appreciation** — if the investment is held for at least ten years, any appreciation on the OZ investment itself is excluded from federal capital gains tax entirely. This is the program's most powerful draw.

Because the largest benefit rewards patient, long-term capital, the incentive is well suited to the kind of ground-up redevelopment, building rehabilitation, housing, and business growth that distressed downtowns like Salem's need.

What it can fund — and the community benefit

OZ capital is flexible and can support a wide range of project types: affordable and market-rate housing, mixed-use redevelopment, retail and commercial space, industrial and logistics facilities, and operating businesses. Nationally, the program has become a major engine of housing supply — by 2023, roughly one in five new multifamily units were being built in Opportunity Zones. For a community, the tangible benefits are new and rehabilitated buildings, jobs during construction and in the businesses that follow, a stronger local tax base, and renewed private confidence in places that had seen decades of disinvestment. OZ capital is also routinely “stacked” with other tools — New Market Tax Credits, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, historic tax credits, and state programs — to close financing gaps on projects that otherwise would not pencil out.

Success stories from communities like Salem

Based on publicly available information, it does not look like any entity has taken advantage of the existing OZ status of the two current tracts in Salem County. However, below are two success stories of how OZ status in similarly distressed communities has made a difference.

Erie, Pennsylvania.

Erie is a post-industrial city that lost roughly 4,000 jobs and 400 businesses between 2007 and 2016, with a downtown core sitting in one of the poorest ZIP codes in the United States and a USDA-designated food desert. Local leaders organized all of the city's zones into a coordinated “Flagship Opportunity Zone” and, working through the nonprofit Erie Downtown Development Corporation, attracted tens of millions in OZ investment. A flagship project — the Flagship City Market and Food Hall — combined a grocery store, food hall, and 28 residential units in a roughly \$27 million redevelopment of a long-abandoned downtown block, in a neighborhood where about 45% of families lived below the poverty line, and was estimated to bring over 250 jobs to the area. Erie's coordinated approach won national recognition and drew committed investors including local anchor employers. Its lesson for Salem: a small city with organized local leadership and a clear downtown plan can compete for serious private capital.

Birmingham, Alabama.

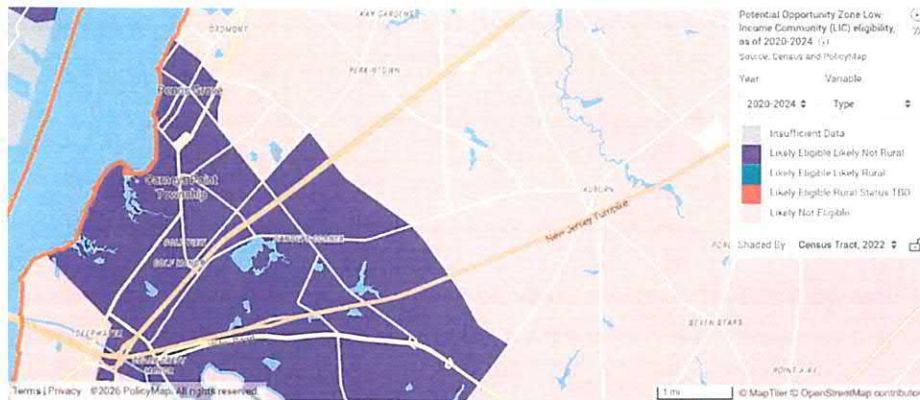
Birmingham launched the Birmingham Inclusive Growth (BIG) Partnership to steer OZ investment toward local priorities. One signature result was the redevelopment of the American Life Building — a downtown structure that had sat vacant for 36 years — into 140 workforce housing units, including several no-cost rentals supported by a local workforce-development nonprofit. The project shows how OZ capital can return a long-vacant landmark to productive use and deliver housing tied to local workforce needs — directly analogous to the kind of historic-building reactivation Salem's downtown could pursue.

These examples are illustrative of national outcomes; results depend heavily on local organization, project pipeline, and how designation is paired with other tools. The remainder of this questionnaire is designed to help Salem County and its municipalities position their strongest tracts to achieve similar results.

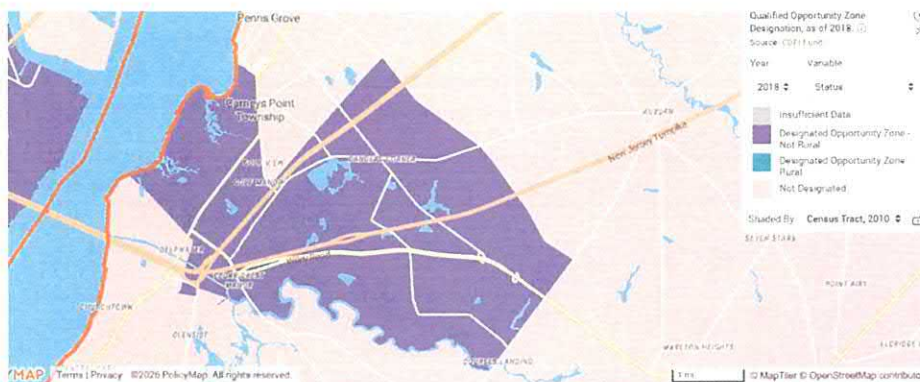
2. The Seven Eligible Tracts at a Glance

Maps below are PolicyMap exports (basemap © MapTiler / OpenStreetMap; data: U.S. Census and CDFI Fund) showing OZ 2.0 eligibility and current 2018 designation. Purple = likely eligible, not rural (Penns Grove & Carneys Point); teal = likely eligible, rural (City of Salem); peach = not eligible.

Penns Grove & Carneys Point



OZ 2.0 eligibility (2020–2024). Tracts 202, 203, 205, 206 shown as likely eligible (purple).



Current (2018) designation. Tract 206 is the existing Opportunity Zone.

City of Salem



OZ 2.0 eligibility (2020–2024). Salem's tracts 219, 220, 221 are likely eligible AND rural (teal) — unlocking enhanced incentives.



Current (2018) designation. Tract 221 is the existing Opportunity Zone.

Tract	GEOID	Municipality	Rural?	Current OZ?	Need rank based on economic demographics only (1 = highest)
Tract 221	34033022100	City of Salem	Yes	Yes (1.0)	1
Tract 220	34033022000	City of Salem	Yes	No	2
Tract 203	34033020300	Penns Grove	No	No	3
Tract 219	34033021900	City of Salem	Yes	No	4
Tract 202	34033020200	Penns Grove	No	No	5
Tract 205	34033020500	Carneys Point	No	No	6
Tract 206	34033020600	Carneys Point	No	Yes (1.0)	7

Rural note: the three City of Salem tracts (219, 220, 221) are rural-designated, which unlocks enhanced incentives — a Qualified Rural Opportunity Fund receives a 30% basis step-up (versus 10%) and a reduced “substantial improvement” threshold of 50% (versus 100%). This materially strengthens the investment case for Salem and is a strong argument for prioritizing its tracts.

Current-designation note: tracts 221 (Salem City) and 206 (Carneys Point) are already designated under OZ 1.0 and remain in effect through December 31, 2028. Re-nominating them under 2.0 preserves continuity; the larger strategic gain comes from adding high-need tracts not currently covered (e.g., 220, 203).

3. State & Federal Distress Status

Beyond OZ eligibility, each tract carries other state and federal distress indicators that strengthen the case for designation and signal where complementary programs (New Market Tax Credits, HUD/LIHTC, state revitalization tools) can be stacked with OZ capital. These designations are independent of OZ status but reinforce the need narrative.

What each indicator means

- NJ Municipal Revitalization Index (MRI): the NJ Dept. of Community Affairs ranks all 565 municipalities from most to least in need (rank 1 = most distressed). New Jersey used the MRI heavily in its 2018 OZ selection, so a low MRI rank is a strong state-level argument.

City of Salem ranks 4th and Penns Grove 2nd statewide — both among the most distressed municipalities in New Jersey — while Carneys Point ranks 83rd.

- NMTC distress tiers (New Market Tax Credit): “Severe Distress” and “Deep Distress / High-Migration Rural County” are higher-need classifications than baseline NMTC eligibility, and they make a tract more competitive for NMTC allocations that can be paired with OZ investment.
- HUD Qualified Census Tract (QCT): a HUD designation (high poverty or low income) that unlocks enhanced Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (a 30% basis boost) — directly relevant to any housing component of an OZ project.

Consolidated status by tract

Tract	Municipality	NJ MRI rank	NMTC distress status	HUD QCT
T221	City of Salem	4	Severe Distress	No
T220	City of Salem	4	Deep Distress / High-Migration Rural County	Yes
T203	Penns Grove	2	Deep Distress / High-Migration Rural County	Yes
T219	City of Salem	4	Severe Distress	Yes
T202	Penns Grove	2	Severe Distress	Yes
T205	Carneys Point	83	Severe Distress	No
T206	Carneys Point	83	Baseline eligibility only	No

Note: NMTC “Severe Distress” also applies to neighboring tract 204 (Carneys Point/Oldmans area), which is not OZ-eligible and therefore not a nomination candidate; it is omitted from the table above. Municipal MRI ranks are statewide out of 565 municipalities (lower = more distressed).

How this sharpens the ranking

The added layers reinforce the need-based order. The two tracts carrying the most severe combined distress profile are 220 and 203 — each is NMTC “Deep Distress / High-Migration Rural County,” a HUD QCT, and sits in a top-4 MRI municipality (Salem #4, Penns Grove #2). Tract 220 is especially compelling because it is not yet an OZ, is rural-designated (enhanced incentives), is a HUD QCT, and carries the deepest NMTC tier — making it the strongest “add” candidate alongside the already-designated 221. By contrast, tract 206 carries only baseline NMTC eligibility and sits in a much less distressed municipality (Carneys Point #83), consistent with its position at the bottom of the need ranking.

4. Program Context & Timeline

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (July 4, 2025) made Opportunity Zones permanent, with zones redesignated every ten years and tightened eligibility.

Key OZ 2.0 timeline

- January 29, 2026 — Census Bureau released the ACS 2020–2024 data that defines tract eligibility.
- July 1, 2026 — the Governor's nomination window opens (roughly 90–120 days).

- Up to 60 days after submission — U.S. Treasury certifies nominated tracts.
- January 1, 2027 — new designations take effect, running through December 31, 2036.
- New Jersey's existing (2018) tracts remain in effect through December 31, 2028.

Eligibility rules (how these seven qualified)

- Income test: tract median family income $\leq$ 70% of the state/metro benchmark (down from 80%).
- Poverty test: poverty rate $\geq$ 20%, with median family income $\leq$ 125% of the benchmark.
- The contiguous-tract provision was eliminated; New Jersey may nominate about 129 of ~516 eligible tracts statewide (the 25% cap).
- Enhanced rural incentives apply to rural-designated tracts — relevant to Salem City's 219, 220, and 221.

5. Feedback Solicitation/Questionnaire Process

Fox Trail coordinated with Salem County Economic Development to conduct a questionnaire process with representatives from the City of Salem, Penns Grove, and Carney's Point.

The City of Salem responded with clear, definitive feedback as to the importance of designating all three of the census tracts in City of Salem. This feedback is included in the Appendix.

As of 4PM on June 17th, Penns Grove and Carney's Point have not provided completed questionnaires.

6. Results/Recommended Tracts for Designation

Based on the data offered within this summary, and within the Appendix, it is recommended that Salem County support the City of Salem's initiative to obtain designation for all three of its eligible tracts. Additionally, designation of Census Tract 203 in Penns Grove should be supported. The recommendation process would include issuing a letter to the NJ Governor's office indicating these recommendations, along with additional support as needed, including backup information as is included here and in the questionnaires. Additionally, Fox Trail will coordinate with Salem County Economic Development to help secure additional letters of support for these census tracts.

Consolidated tract data

Tract	Municipality	Med HH inc.	Poverty	Per-cap.	Rural	Curr.OZ	MRI rank	NMTC distress	HUD QCT
T221	City of Salem	≈ \$33,000	≈ 38–42%	≈ \$17,500	Yes	Yes	4	Severe Distress	No

Tract	Municipality	Med HH inc.	Poverty	Per-cap.	Rural	Curr.OZ	MRI rank	NMTC distress	HUD QCT
T220	City of Salem	≈ \$36,000	≈ 30–34%	≈ \$18,500	Yes	No	4	Deep Distress / High-Migration Rural County	Yes
T203	Penns Grove	≈ \$38,000	≈ 35–45%	≈ \$17,500	No	No	2	Deep Distress / High-Migration Rural County	Yes
T219	City of Salem	≈ \$45,000	≈ 22–28%	≈ \$22,000	Yes	No	4	Severe Distress	Yes
T202	Penns Grove	≈ \$48,000	≈ 25–35%	≈ \$20,000	No	No	2	Severe Distress	Yes
T205	Carneys Point	≈ \$55,000	≈ 18–24%	≈ \$24,000	No	No	83	Severe Distress	No
T206	Carneys Point	≈ \$58,000	≈ 18–24%	≈ \$25,000	No	Yes	83	Baseline eligibility only	No

Reference benchmarks (ACS 2020–2024): City of Salem place median household income ≈ \$40,650, poverty ≈ 31.2%; Penns Grove borough ≈ \$45,781, poverty ≈ 44.1%, per-capita ≈ \$19,275; Carneys Point township ≈ \$77,273, poverty ≈ 11.4% (township-wide average is pulled up by affluent outlying areas — only the denser northern tracts 205/206 qualify). Salem County ≈ \$78,412 / 12.8%; New Jersey ≈ \$103,556 / 9.7%.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2020–2024 5-year estimates via Census Reporter place profiles; NJ Dept. of Labor list of census tracts with poverty ≥ 25% (confirming Salem tracts 220, 221, 203); eligible-tract identification per the Novogradac OZ 2.0 map as provided by the County.

7. Next Steps

On June 24, 2026, the Salem County Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution supporting the designation of all 7 qualified tracts in Salem County, by order of the priority indicated in Section 6 above.

Support letters have been collected and the full package will be delivered to :

- Governor Mikie Sherrill
- New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
- New Jersey Economic Development Authority

It will be important to continue following up with the Governor's office and the State until the tract designation process is completed, which could be as late as Fall, 2026.

Appendix

- 1) Salem County Resolution Supporting Designation of the Qualified Opportunity Zone Tracts in Salem County.
- 2) City of Salem Resolution – Seeking Designation of all three City of Salem tracts.
- 3) Support letter from the 3rd Legislative District
- 4) Support letter from the Salem County Chamber of Commerce.
- 5) Support Letter from Congressman Jeff Van Drew.
- 6) Support Letter from South Jersey Economic Development District.
- 7) Support Letter from Chamber of Commerce of Southern New Jersey
- 8) Support Letter from Perdomo Worldwide
- 9) Support Letter from Southern New Jersey Development Council



Tourism, Cultural & Heritage, and Economic Development Committee

RESOLUTION URGING THE GOVERNOR OF NEW JERSEY TO SUPPORT THE DESIGNATION OF THE QUALIFIED OPPORTUNITY ZONES IN THE COUNTY OF SALEM

WHEREAS, the Opportunity Zone (OZ) program is a federal tax incentive created by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and made permanent by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act in July 2025; and

WHEREAS, its purpose is to channel private capital into economically distressed communities that have historically struggled to attract investment. Rather than relying on direct government grants, the program offers investors a tax benefit in exchange for making long-term investments in designated low-income census tracts, using market forces to do the heavy financial lifting of community and economic development; and

WHEREAS, since 2018, the program has driven well over \$100 billion of private capital into designated tracts nationwide and has become one of the most significant place-based economic development tools available to governors and local leaders; and

WHEREAS, OZ capital is flexible and can support a wide range of project types: affordable and market-rate housing, mixed-use redevelopment, retail and commercial space, industrial and logistics facilities, and operating businesses; and

WHEREAS, Salem County is home to seven (7) available census tracts that qualify for consideration as Opportunity Zones, with some of the most economically distressed communities in the State of New Jersey including the borough of Penns Grove (MRI rank 2), and the City of Salem (MRI rank 4); and

WHEREAS, based off economic demographics, re-development opportunities, and supporting infrastructure, the County of Salem is urging Governor Mikie Sherrill to designate census tracts 34033022100, 34033022000, 34033020300, 34033021900, 34033020200, 34033020500, and 34033020600 as Opportunity Zones in order of priority; and

WHEREAS, upon designation, the County of Salem Department of Economic Development shall market and promote the Opportunity Zones to potential investors and developers through GIS mapping on the department's searchable properties database, physical and digital investment guides, pitch sessions, regional and national conferences.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Salem County Board of County Commissioners that Governor Mikie Sherrill consider designation census tracts 34033022100 (City of Salem), 34033022000 (City of Salem), 34033020300 (Borough of Penns Grove), 34033021900 (City of Salem), 34033020200 (Borough of Penns Grove), 34033020500 (Township of Carneys Point), and 34033020600 (Township of Carneys Point) as Opportunity Zones in order of priority in the upcoming designation cycle.

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true resolution adopted by the Salem County Board of County Commissioners on June 24, 2026.


STACY L. PENNINGTON
Clerk of the Board

RECORD OF VOTE

COMMISSIONER	RESOLUTION MOVED	RESOLUTION SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Deputy Director Taylor			✓			
Commissioner Timmerman			✓			
Commissioner Collier		✓	✓			
Commissioner Ramsay	✓		✓			
Director Laury						✓

✓ Indicates Vote

Department Initials 

**CITY OF SALEM
RESOLUTION 2026-148**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM URGING THE GOVERNOR OF NEW JERSEY, THE NEW JERSEY CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND THE LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THIRD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT TO SUPPORT THE DESIGNATION OF THE ENTIRE CITY OF SALEM AS A QUALIFIED OPPORTUNITY ZONE

WHEREAS, the federal Opportunity Zone program was established pursuant to the **Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017**, codified under **26 U.S.C. §§1400Z-1 and 1400Z-2**, for the purpose of encouraging long-term private investment in economically distressed communities through capital gains tax incentives; and

WHEREAS, Opportunity Zones provide substantial economic incentives to investors through the deferral and partial exclusion of capital gains taxes when invested through Qualified Opportunity Funds into designated census tracts; and

WHEREAS, the Opportunity Zone framework was recently amended and made permanent under federal law, creating a new designation cycle beginning in 2026 and effective January 1, 2027, allowing Governors to nominate new qualifying census tracts for federal certification; and

WHEREAS, portions of the City of Salem are presently designated Opportunity Zones, but significant portions of the municipality remain excluded despite experiencing equal or greater economic distress; and

WHEREAS, the City of Salem is one of the oldest municipalities in the State of New Jersey, established in 1675, and is geographically compact at approximately two square miles, with a substantial percentage of its land area consisting of wetlands, thereby limiting developable land inventory; and

WHEREAS, the City continues to face severe economic distress, including but not limited to:

- elevated property tax burdens;
- significant foreclosure rates;
- aging housing stock;
- vacant and abandoned properties;
- environmental contamination and brownfield conditions;
- disinvestment in residential neighborhoods;
- infrastructure challenges at the port and industrial corridor;
- underutilized landfill and industrial land; and
- the need for workforce housing and commercial revitalization; and

WHEREAS, the City's strategic redevelopment priorities include:

- redevelopment of the port and logistics corridor;
- productive reuse of landfill and industrial land;
- downtown Broadway revitalization;
- neighborhood stabilization and homeownership growth;
- brownfields redevelopment;
- commercial attraction and retention;

- affordable and workforce housing development; and
- industrial job creation; and
-

WHEREAS, full municipal Opportunity Zone designation would create uniform economic development incentives across the City and eliminate fragmented investment boundaries that often discourage comprehensive redevelopment planning; and

WHEREAS, citywide Opportunity Zone designation would provide substantial benefits including:

1. attracting private equity investment;
2. reducing investor capital gains tax burdens;
3. increasing feasibility of redevelopment projects;
4. strengthening nonprofit-community development partnerships;
5. improving access to layered financing structures;
6. increasing adaptive reuse of blighted structures;
7. promoting mixed-use and residential redevelopment;
8. supporting industrial and maritime development at the port; and
9. increasing ratables and long-term tax stabilization; and

WHEREAS, the City of Salem believes that a full-city designation aligns with the legislative intent of Opportunity Zone law by targeting communities with persistent and concentrated economic distress.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Salem as follows:

Section 1.

The City Council formally requests that the Governor of New Jersey nominate all eligible census tracts encompassing the entirety of the City of Salem for Qualified Opportunity Zone designation in the upcoming federal designation cycle.

Section 2.

The City Council respectfully urges the State legislative delegation representing the Third Legislative District and the federal Congressional delegation serving Salem County to advocate for and support this designation.

Section 3.

The City Council directs the Business Administrator, Department of Housing and Economic Development, and municipal planning professionals to prepare supporting economic distress documentation, redevelopment maps, foreclosure data, tax burden analysis, vacancy statistics, and investment strategy materials in support of this request.

Section 4.

Upon designation, the City shall market and promote the City of Salem as a “**Citywide Opportunity Zone Investment Community**” through:

- investor prospectuses;
- redevelopment site portfolios;
- port development marketing;
- brownfield redevelopment packages;
- nonprofit housing partnerships;
- NJEDA financing coordination through New Jersey Economic Development Authority;
- national developer outreach;
- tax-credit layered project packaging; and
- coordinated economic development campaigns.

Section 5.

A certified copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to:

- the Office of the Governor;
- the President of the New Jersey Senate;
- the Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly;
- the Third Legislative District delegation;
- Salem County officials;
- the New Jersey Congressional delegation; and
- the U.S. Department of Treasury Community Development Financial Institutions Fund.

ATTEST:


Ben Angeli, RMC

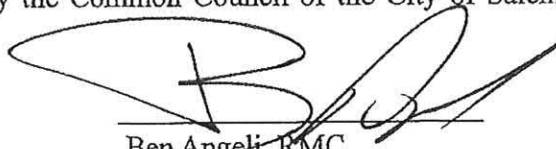
CITY OF SALEM

Tim Gregory, Council President

COUNCIL	MOVED	SECONDED	Y	N	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
S. Cline			X			
K. Henson			X			
V. Jared			X			
S. Kellum		X	X			
J. Key			X			
J. Long	X		X			
D. Wright			X			
T. Gregory			X			

I, Ben Angeli, Clerk of the City of Salem, in the County of Salem, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Common Council of the City of Salem on May 11, 2026.

5-11-26
Date


Ben Angeli, RMC



NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE
3RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
GLOUCESTER, SALEM AND CUMBERLAND COUNTIES

HEATHER SIMMONS
ASSEMBLYWOMAN

JOHN BURZICHELLI
SENATOR

DAVID BAILEY, JR.
ASSEMBLYMAN

June 24, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor of the State of New Jersey
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Re: Support for Expansion and Designation of Qualified Opportunity Zones in Salem County

Governor Sherrill,

The NJ Third Legislative District members Senator John Burzichelli, Assemblywoman Heather Simmons and Assemblyman Dave Bailey, Jr. respectfully submit this letter in support of the designation and expansion of Qualified Opportunity Zones within the County of Salem.

The Opportunity Zone program has proven to be one of the most effective federal place-based economic development tools available to states and local governments.

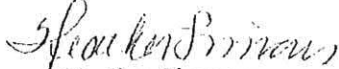
Salem County is home to some of the most economically challenged communities in New Jersey, yet it also holds significant untapped potential. Within the county, seven census tracts meet the criteria for Opportunity Zone designation, including areas in the Borough of Penns Grove (MRI rank 2), and the City of Salem (MRI rank 4); which rank among the most distressed in the State based on economic indicators. Based on economic demographics, redevelopment opportunity, and existing infrastructure, we respectfully urge consideration of the designation census tracts **34033022100 and 34033022000 (City of Salem), 34033020300 (Borough of Penns Grove), 34033021900 (City of Salem), 34033020200 (Borough of Penns Grove), 34033020500 and 34033020600 (Township of Carneys Point)** as Opportunity Zones, in order of priority, in the upcoming designation cycle.

Upon designation, the Salem County Department of Economic Development is prepared to actively market and promote these Opportunity Zones to potential investors and developers. This effort will include GIS-based property mapping, digital and print investment guides, targeted outreach, pitch sessions, and participation in regional and national economic development conferences to ensure maximum visibility and impact.

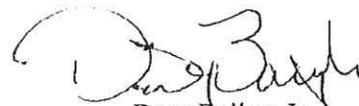
We believe the expansion of Opportunity Zones in Salem County will serve as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth, job creation, housing development, and long-term revitalization in communities that are ready for reinvestment in our district.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important economic development opportunity.

Sincerely,


Heather Simmons
Assemblywoman


John Burzichelli
Senator


Dave Bailey, Jr.
Assemblyman

GLASSBORO DISTRICT OFFICE
711 N. MAIN STREET
GLASSBORO, NJ 08028
(856) 226-3530
FAX: (856) 243-2830

www.LD3NJ.com

SALEM DISTRICT OFFICE
199 EAST BROADWAY
SALEM, NJ 08079
(856) 279-2920
FAX: (856) 339-0808



Executive Board

Mike Gorman, Chair of the Board, Salem Community College

Jason Reese, Immediate Past Chair

Theresa Widger, Board Secretary, PSEG Nuclear

Dawn Ellis, Vice Chair, Franklin Bank

Lisa Darnell, Incoming Vice Chair, Fulton Bank

Ron Zarin, Treasurer & CFO, Zarin & Associates, CPA's

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Lou Joyce, LCJPP

Jason Huff, Chemours

Elliot Hernandez, PRAC NJ

Doug Painter, Astro Sign Company

Meghan Rush, SCWS

Harvey Saunders, Calvary Community Development Corp.

Jason Copare, Salem Medical Center and Inspira Affiliate

Peter Morano, South Jersey Gas

Doug Wright, Ranch Hope

429 Hollywood Ave, Carneys Point SalemCountyChamber.com

June 24, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor of the State of New Jersey
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Re: Support for Expansion and Designation of Qualified Opportunity Zones in Salem County

Dear Governor Sherrill,

On behalf of the Salem County Chamber of Commerce and the business community we represent, we respectfully submit this letter in strong support of the designation and expansion of Qualified Opportunity Zones within the County of Salem.

The Opportunity Zone (OZ) program, created under the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and made permanent by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act in July 2025, has proven to be one of the most effective federal place-based economic development tools available to states and local governments. By incentivizing long-term private investment in economically distressed communities, the program helps unlock capital for redevelopment without relying solely on direct public subsidy. Since its inception in 2018, the program has directed well over \$100 billion in private investment into qualifying communities nationwide, supporting housing, infrastructure, commercial redevelopment, and business growth.

Salem County remains home to some of the most economically challenged communities in New Jersey, yet it also holds significant untapped potential. Within the County, seven census tracts meet the criteria for Opportunity Zone designation, including areas in the City of Salem and the Borough of Penns Grove, which rank among the most distressed in the State based on economic indicators.

Based on economic demographics, redevelopment opportunity, and existing infrastructure, the Salem County Board of County Commissioners and the Salem County Chamber of Commerce respectfully urge consideration of the following census tracts for designation, in order of priority:

- 34033022100 (City of Salem)
- 34033022000 (City of Salem)
- 34033021900 (City of Salem)
- 34033020300 (Borough of Penns Grove)
- 34033020200 (Borough of Penns Grove)
- 34033020500 (Township of Carneys Point)
- 34033020600 (Township of Carneys Point)

We further wish to emphasize that, upon designation, Salem County is prepared to actively market and promote these Opportunity Zones to potential investors and developers. This effort will include GIS-based property mapping, digital and print investment guides, targeted outreach, pitch sessions, and participation in regional and national economic development conferences to ensure maximum visibility and impact.

We believe the expansion of Opportunity Zones in Salem County will serve as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth, job creation, housing development, and long-term revitalization in communities that are ready for reinvestment.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important economic development opportunity. The Salem County Chamber of Commerce stands ready to assist your administration in advancing initiatives that strengthen New Jersey's communities and expand economic opportunity for all residents.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Jones
Executive Director

DR. JEFFERSON VAN DREW
2ND DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

WASHINGTON OFFICE
2447 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-6572

DISTRICT OFFICE
1001 TILTON ROAD, SUITE 101
NORTHFIELD, NJ 08225
(609) 625-5008



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 25, 2026

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION INTEGRITY,
SECURITY, AND ENFORCEMENT

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND
MARITIME TRANSPORTATION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor of the State of New Jersey
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Re: Support for Expansion and Designation of Qualified Opportunity Zones in Salem County

Dear Governor Sherrill,

I am writing to express my strong support for expanding and designating Qualified Opportunity Zones in Salem County.

Established through the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 and made permanent by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act in July 2025, the Opportunity Zone program has become a highly effective economic development resource for states and local communities.

The program encourages long-term private investment in distressed areas, helping to generate redevelopment activity without depending exclusively on direct public funding. Since the program began in 2018, more than \$100 billion in private capital has been invested in eligible communities across the country, supporting housing, infrastructure, commercial projects, and business expansion.

Salem County includes some of New Jersey's most economically distressed communities, but it also presents meaningful opportunities for future investment and redevelopment. Seven census tracts in the county qualify for Opportunity Zone consideration, including areas of Penns Grove Borough, which is ranked second on New Jersey's Municipal Revitalization Index, and the City of Salem, ranked fourth. These rankings reflect the significant economic need present in these communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully request consideration of the following census tracts for Opportunity Zone designation in the upcoming cycle:

1. 34033022100 (City of Salem)
2. 34033022000 (City of Salem)
3. 34033020300 (Borough of Penns Grove)
4. 34033021900 (City of Salem)
5. 34033020200 (Borough of Penns Grove)

6. 34033020500 (Township of Carneys Point)
7. 34033020600 (Township of Carneys Point)

If these tracts are designated, the Salem County Department of Economic Development stands ready to promote them to investors and developers. Its efforts will include GIS-based property mapping, digital and printed investment materials, targeted outreach, pitch sessions, and participation in regional and national economic development conferences to help ensure these zones receive broad visibility.

Designating and expanding Opportunity Zones in Salem County would help encourage sustainable economic growth, create jobs, support housing development, and advance long-term revitalization in communities prepared for reinvestment.

Thank you for your consideration of this important economic development opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Van Drew', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jefferson Van Drew
Member of Congress



South Jersey Economic Development District

2745 S. Delsea Drive, Vineland, NJ 08360
856-649-8028

June 26, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor of the State of New Jersey
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Re: Support for Expansion and Designation of Qualified Opportunity Zones in Salem County

Dear Governor Sherrill,

On behalf of the South Jersey Economic Development District we respectfully submit this letter in strong support of the designation and expansion of Qualified Opportunity Zones within the County of Salem; a County within my district comprising of also Atlantic, Cumberland and Cape May.

The Opportunity Zone (OZ) program, created under the federal 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and made permanent by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act in July 2025, has proven to be one of the most effective federal place-based economic development tools available to states and local governments.

By incentivizing long-term private investment in economically distressed communities, the program helps unlock capital for redevelopment without relying solely on direct public subsidy. Since its inception in 2018, the program has directed well over \$100 billion in private investment into qualifying communities nationwide, supporting housing, infrastructure, commercial redevelopment, and business growth.

Salem County remains home to some of the most economically challenged communities in New Jersey, yet it also holds significant untapped potential. Within the county, seven census tracts meet the criteria for Opportunity Zone designation, including areas in the Borough of Penns Grove (MRI rank 2), and the City of Salem (MRI rank 4); which rank among the most distressed in the State based on economic indicators.

Based on economic demographics, redevelopment opportunity, and existing infrastructure, we respectfully urge consideration of the designation census tracts **34033022100 (City of Salem), 34033022000 (City of Salem), 34033020300 (Borough of Penns Grove), 34033021900 (City of Salem), 34033020200 (Borough of Penns Grove), 34033020500 (Township of Carneys Point), and 34033020600 (Township of Carneys Point)** as Opportunity Zones, in order of priority, in the upcoming designation cycle.



South Jersey Economic Development District

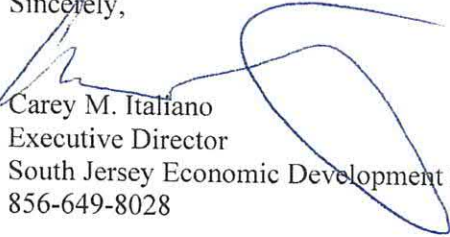
2745 S. Delsea Drive, Vineland, NJ 08360
856-649-8028

We further wish to emphasize that, upon designation, the Salem County Department of Economic Development is prepared to actively market and promote these Opportunity Zones to potential investors and developers. This effort will include GIS-based property mapping, digital and print investment guides, targeted outreach, pitch sessions, and participation in regional and national economic development conferences to ensure maximum visibility and impact.

We believe the expansion of Opportunity Zones in Salem County will serve as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth, job creation, housing development, and long-term revitalization in communities that are ready for reinvestment. Development prospects that could result from this designation could be but not limited to maritime uses, ship building industries, and other commercial/warehousing that can take advantage of Salem County's rail network.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important economic development opportunity.

Sincerely,



Carey M. Italiano
Executive Director
South Jersey Economic Development District
856-649-8028



June 26, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor of New Jersey
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Sherrill:

The Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey writes in support of the Salem County Board of County Commissioners' resolution, adopted June 24, 2026, and a companion resolution passed by the City of Salem, urging your administration to designate Salem County's seven eligible census tracts as federal Opportunity Zones under the renewed OZ 2.0 program. We respectfully ask that you give these tracts strong consideration as you finalize New Jersey's nominations.

Salem County contains some of the most economically distressed communities in New Jersey. The City of Salem ranks fourth and Penns Grove second out of the state's 565 municipalities on the NJ Municipal Revitalization Index, where a lower rank reflects greater need. Several of the seven tracts also carry HUD Qualified Census Tract status and the NMTC program's most severe distress classifications, and the three City of Salem tracts are rural-designated, which unlocks an enhanced 30% basis step-up for investors. These are exactly the communities the Opportunity Zone program was built to reach.

The Chamber understands that the state can nominate only a quarter of its eligible tracts, and that hard choices lie ahead. Salem County and the City of Salem submitted their resolutions with that constraint in mind, ranking the seven tracts in priority order. Based on the supporting analysis prepared for the county, we would underscore the strength of the case for the City of Salem's three tracts (221, 220, and 219) and for Penns Grove's Tract 203, which combine the deepest distress indicators with rural incentive eligibility and meaningful redevelopment potential.

Opportunity Zone designation has driven over \$100 billion in private capital nationally since 2018, and comparable communities, from Erie, Pennsylvania to Birmingham, Alabama, have used that capital to bring vacant downtown buildings and long-stalled redevelopment projects back to life. Salem County's downtown corridors are ready for that same investment. Designation would give county and municipal leaders a meaningful tool to attract capital, support housing and small business growth, and build on the momentum already underway in South Jersey.

On behalf of our more than 1,200 member businesses and 200 nonprofits across southern New Jersey, we urge you to designate Salem County's recommended census tracts as Opportunity Zones. Thank you for your consideration, and for your continued partnership with South Jersey's business community.

Sincerely,

SALEM CITY INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENTS LLC

June 25, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor of the State of New Jersey
125 West Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

RE: Support for Continued Designation and Expansion of Qualified Opportunity Zones in the City of Salem

Dear Governor Sherrill,

I am writing to you to express my support for designation of the following tracts as Opportunity Zones within the City of Salem:

- 34033022100 (City of Salem) This is currently designated under the original legislation and should be re-designated under Opportunity Zone 2.0.
- 34033021900 (City of Salem) The former Salem Glassworks is located within this tract.
- 34033022000 (City of Salem)

In January, 2026, my firm Perdomo Worldwide, purchased more than 28 acres in the City of Salem. The property consists of the former Salem Glassworks, a long defunct and decaying property consisting of more than 500,000 square feet of building space that once offered hundreds of jobs to the local community. The original Salem Glass Works operated from 1895 to 1934, as a major employer and a key part of South Jersey's glassmaking industry. Later, it would continue on as Anchor Cap and Closure Corporation, and then finally Anchor Glass, until closing for good over a decade ago. The site features industrial infrastructure including a rail spur.

Investing in this property was a big decision for me and my firm. There is a substantial amount of investment required to prepare the site for a future use, including demolition and remediation activities for the existing 500,000 square foot building that is no longer in usable condition and is functionally obsolete. Some of the key factors that weighed into my decision to move forward are the following:

- The site is located adjacent an existing opportunity zone (tract 34033021900) which helps to potentially attract interest and additional investment to the area.
- The City of Salem, as well as Salem County, and their respective Economic Development departments, seem aligned in their interest in furthering investment and development activity in the City, which is much needed, with the City of Salem ranking among the most distressed communities within the State.

SALEM CITY INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENTS LLC

- I believe that, through public-private partnerships, solid planning efforts, and the effective use of key programs such as the Opportunity Zone program, sites like this one, as well as the surrounding area, will have an opportunity to be reborn and once again thrive, providing an improved quality of life, employment opportunities, and an improved tax base for the area.

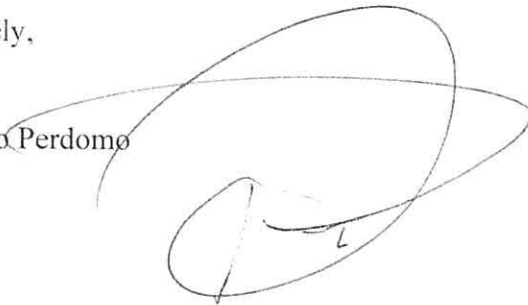
Upon designation, I have confidence that Salem County and Salem City are prepared to actively assist private developers and landowners such as Perdomo in marketing and promoting the Opportunity Zones to potential investors and developers, as well as to assist in leveraging the program with other forms of public and private capital, which is often a key benefit of the program.

Thank you for your leadership and for your consideration of this important request.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Orlando Perdomo

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Orlando Perdomo', written over the printed name.



June 30, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor, State of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Via email: shannon.mcgee@nj.gov

Re: Salem County Opportunity Zone Designation

Dear Governor Sherrill,

On behalf of the Southern New Jersey Development Council (SNJDC), we strongly support the nomination of the seven eligible Salem County census tracts listed below as Qualified Opportunity Zones for the designation period beginning January 1, 2027.

Created under the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and made permanent by federal legislation enacted in July 2025, the Opportunity Zone program encourages long-term private investment in low-income communities. This new designation round gives New Jersey an important opportunity to direct capital toward redevelopment, housing, business growth, infrastructure investment, and job creation.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury and Internal Revenue Service have identified the following seven Salem County tracts as eligible low-income communities. The SNJDC joins the Salem County Board of County Commissioners in urging their inclusion in New Jersey's nominations, in the following order of priority:

- 34033022100 (City of Salem)
- 34033022000 (City of Salem)
- 34033021900 (City of Salem)
- 34033020300 (Borough of Penns Grove)
- 34033020200 (Borough of Penns Grove)
- 34033020500 (Township of Carneys Point)
- 34033020600 (Township of Carneys Point)

The three City of Salem tracts are also federally identified as rural, positioning them to benefit from the enhanced incentives available for investment in rural Opportunity Zones. Salem County is home to some of New Jersey's most economically distressed communities, including areas within the City of Salem and the Borough of Penns Grove that rank among the most distressed in the State based on key economic indicators. Across Salem, Penns Grove, and Carneys Point, these tracts also offer redevelopment opportunities and infrastructure capable of supporting new investment.



We respectfully ask that all seven tracts be included in New Jersey's nominations to the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Their designation would help strengthen local tax bases, attract new projects, expand housing and business opportunities, create jobs, and advance long-term revitalization in Salem County and the broader South Jersey region.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important economic development opportunity.

Sincerely,

Marlene Asselta, President
Southern New Jersey Development Council