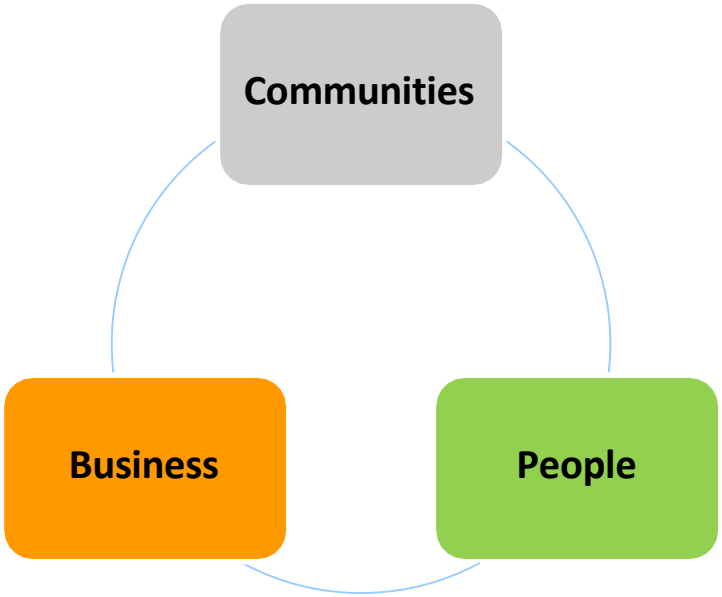
Opportunity Zones in Massachusetts

Our Economic Development Strategy: *Opportunities for All*

To **promote the vitality of communities**, *Opportunities for All* calls for empowering municipalities and providing them with the tools to unlock local and regional priorities.

To **grow businesses**, *Opportunities for All* emphasizes the need to streamline state support, reduce the cost of doing business, and encourage cluster development in high-priority industries.

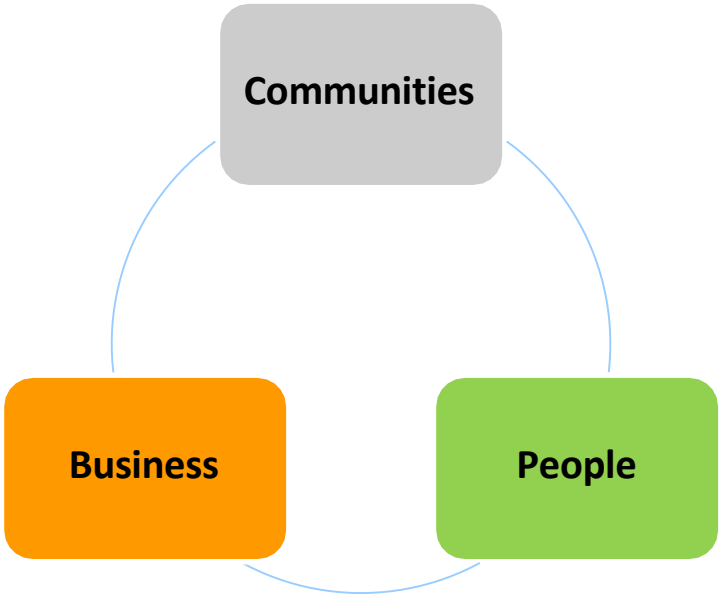


To **support the prosperity of residents**, *Opportunities for All* calls for investments in workforce training, and increasing links between training providers and employers to better prepare people for the economy of the future.

Opportunities for All: Results

- **$331M** in **167 infrastructure projects**
- **More than 13,000 new housing units**, incl. 11,000 affordable units and 600 units of workforce housing
- Substantial **expansion of Gateway City housing investment**: 1,300+ unit pipeline
- $30M to **50 collaborative workspaces**

- $50M+ job creation incentives to spur the **creation of 9,500 jobs; $3.5B private investment**
- $623M Life Sciences bill supporting **education, R&D, workforce training**
- **$38M in manufacturing R&D** through M2I2

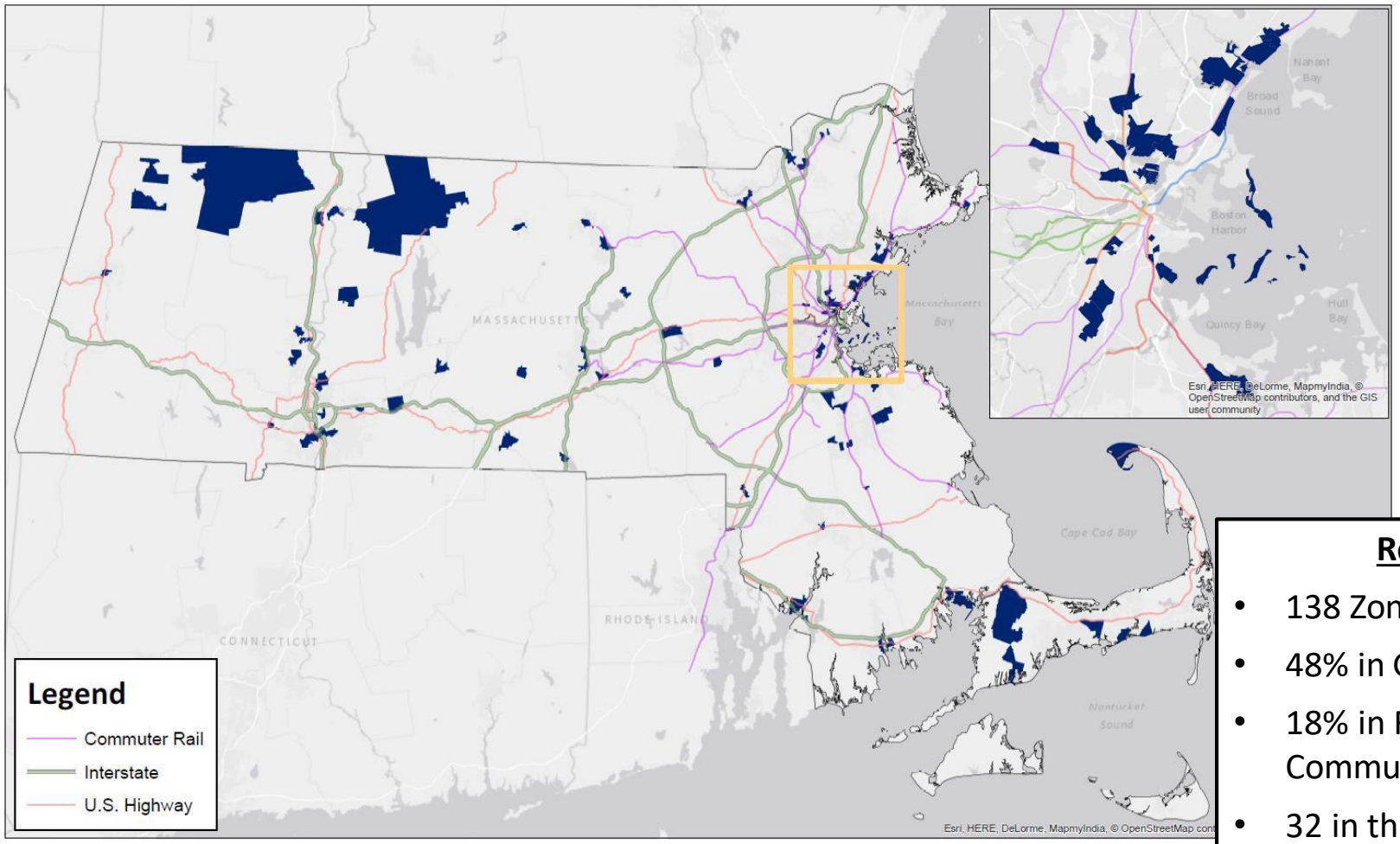


- **214,000+ new private-sector jobs**
- $50M to **support skills training in priority sectors**
- First **registered apprenticeship program focused on tech talent** in MA: Apprentii

Opportunity Zones - Process

- Massachusetts administered a **competitive process** for communities to apply for Opportunity Zone designation, and engaged with all 110 communities that had eligible tracts
- Zone nominations were evaluated by HED against three major criteria:
  - **Opportunities:** sites and businesses that are opportunities for private investment and development
  - **Planning:** community describes the planning work done in the tract or tracts identified in the application
  - **Demographics:** poverty rate, median family income, and unemployment rate in the tract or tracts in the application, and in the wider communities

Opportunity Zones - Results



Results

- 138 Zones
- 48% in Gateway Cities
- 18% in Rural Communities
- 32 in the 10 communities with lowest MFI

Massachusetts Update

- Active engagement with municipalities, interested investors, and developers
- Applying our existing economic development toolbox
- Community Information and Opportunity Zone mapping available at Mass.Gov/Opportunity-Zone-Program

City of Lowell

Located 40 minutes north of Boston (by car or train) and proximate to two airports,—Boston Logan International and Manchester-Boston Regional (NH)—Lowell is home to a major research institution in UMass Lowell, several established and emerging companies, and a National Park. In 2018, Lowell's Downtown Canalway Cultural District was designated as one of one of the American Planning Association's Great Neighborhoods; it boasts 60+ shops and restaurants, and hosts several annual events that draw 500,000+ visitors per year.

Economy

- Home to several tech firms, such as Kronos (cloud based HR management), MACOM (semiconductors), AutoLiv (vehicle safety technology), and Plum Choice (software)
- Largest employer: Lowell General Hospital
- Two higher ed. institutions: UMass Lowell (18K+ enrollment) and Middlesex Community College (12K+ enrollment)
- Hosts a Boston Red Sox affiliated "A" minor league baseball club: the Lowell Spinners
- Vibrant downtown dining and cultural scene

Opportunity Zone Goals

- Encourage investment in Lowell's downtown that will result in more commercial and residential users
- Facilitate investment along the Route 110 corridor, which connects downtown Lowell and the Gallagher Terminal (transportation hub) to Cross Point (major employment center) and the intersection of Routes 3 and 495
- Leverage the presence of the Gallagher Terminal, UMass Lowell, and large employers (Kronos and MACOM) to stoke investment
- Improve roadway, streetscape, and utility infrastructure along major corridors

Recent Success

- Recent major investments: $50 million "Thorndike Exchange" mixed-use project (61 market rate residential units + 15K sf of commercial) and $15 million expansion of MACOM's world headquarters
- $34.7 million in total committed public investment in City-wide transportation infrastructure improvements
- Since 2000, over 3 million sf in vacant downtown buildings have been rehabilitated

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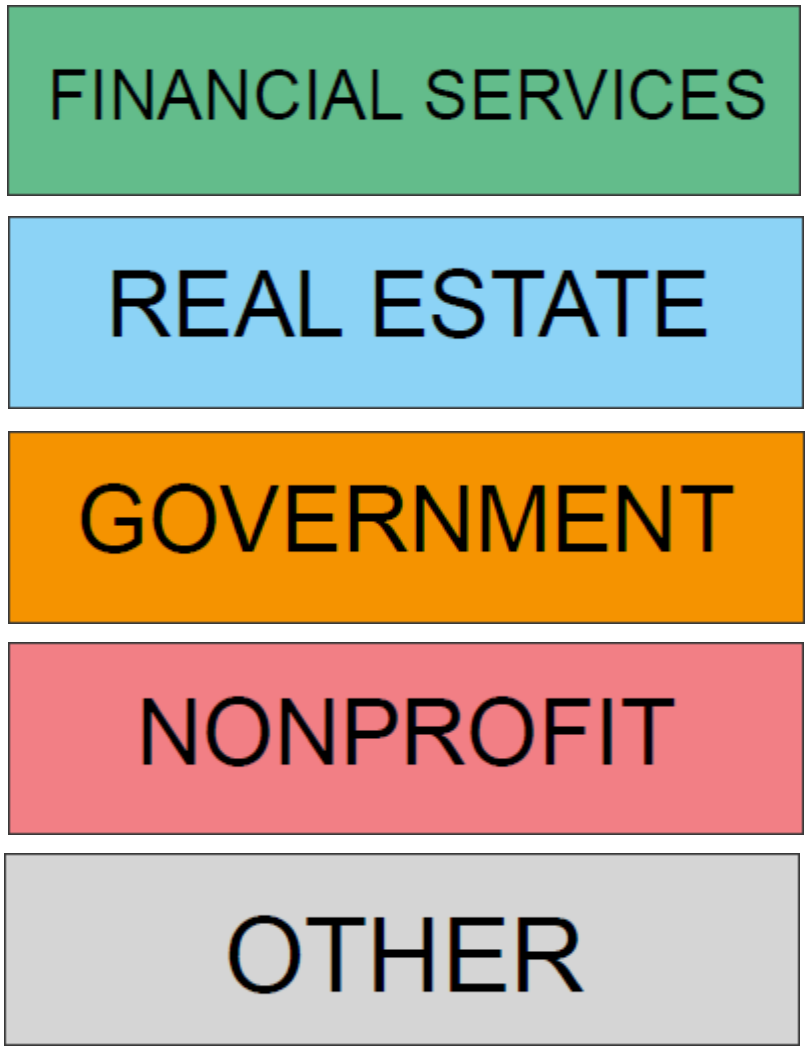
Conference Goals

- **Convene**
  - Bringing together representatives from financial services, real estate, nonprofits, and municipal officials
- **Educate**
  - Providing clarity how the program functions, what it offers, and its potential to drive growth
- **Learn**
  - Encouraging informative discussion that helps communities, investors, and developers use the program