USDA Rural Development
Building Opportunity, Removing Barriers

Opportunity Zone Forum
October 10, 2018
What are OZs?

The Opportunity Zones (OZ) program was established by Congress to spur long-term private sector investments in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide. It is designed to help address the persistent poverty and uneven recovery of too many American communities.

https://eig.org/opportunityzones/history
Rural Development Focuses on Rural Prosperity

Key Indicators of Prosperity
Key Indicators

Quality of Life

• Affordable housing is becoming more difficult to attain
• Insufficient access to medical care or even basic necessities like drinking water can become an issue

Workforce

• Rural employment has grown slower than urban employment and was the slowest to recover from the recession
Key Indicators

Technological Innovation

• Rural areas need to be able to properly use modern innovations to increase farmland output and improve crop quality, nutritional value and food safety.

Economic Development

• Infusing rural areas with stronger businesses and agricultural economies empowers America
39 percent of rural Americans lack sufficient access to high speed internet. Strengthening e-Connectivity can strengthen every one of the other key indicators for prosperity.
The Rural Utilities Service

Rural Utilities Programs

• Water and Waste Disposal Programs
• Electric Direct Loans/Loan Guarantees
• Telecommunications & Rural Broadband Direct Loans and Loan Guarantees
• Community Connect Grants
• Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loans/Grants
Distance Learning & Telemedicine (DLT)

• Connects households, schools and healthcare centers to each other and to the rest of the world.

• Is a tool that enables increased productivity for farms, factories, forests, mining and small businesses.
The Rural Housing Service

Community Facilities / Public Safety
The Rural Business Service

Business Programs

Energy Efficiency Programs

Cooperative Programs
The Rural Housing Service

Single-Family Housing

Multi-Family Housing
Infrastructure • Partnerships • Innovation BUILD PROSPERITY
Innovation Center

INNOVATION CENTER
A Virtual Team

- Regulations & Polices
- Data Analytics
- Risk Management
- Partnerships

Developing innovative products, policies & practices to empower rural community prosperity
From Capacity Building to Resilience

Phase: Developing
- Grants Only
  - Low Capacity

Phase: Emerging
- Grants + Direct Loans
  - Low/Mid Capacity
- Direct Loans + Loan Guarantees
  - Mid/High Capacity

Phase: Advanced
- Private Markets
  - High Capacity

Foundations & Other Partners
Communities with Low Capacity

Banks and Lending Institutions
Communities Ready for Lending
Working to form alliances with other public and private organizations that share RD’s commitment to increasing prosperity in rural America