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How to Make Communities Part of the Opportunity Zone Equation.

Three years ago, the federal government created Opportunity Zones as a way to encourage private investors to bring an influx of money to struggling urban and rural neighborhoods through tax incentives. The promise of Opportunity Zones to communities? Add affordable housing, boost small businesses owned by Black entrepreneurs and other people of color, and bring solid jobs to local residents, many of whom are living below the poverty level.

But last year, when Angeline Johnson arrived in Wichita, Kansas, as a FUSE executive fellow tasked by the City Manager's Office with encouraging equitable investment in Opportunity Zones (OZs), she discovered that some residents in northeast Wichita had mobilized to share concerns about their OZ designation.

"There was a legitimate fear of gentrification and displacement," Johnson said.

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