

# HEALTHY AMERICA

## OPPORTUNITY ZONES CHECKLIST

A practical framework for developing health-centered Opportunity Zones that connect care, wellness, food systems, economic development, workforce opportunity, and community investment.

How to use this checklist: Mark each item as it is evaluated, assigned, or completed. Use the notes area to identify local priorities, responsible partners, funding needs, and next steps. The framework can be adapted for urban, rural, regional, or tribal communities.

### 1. Community Vision & Readiness

- ☐ Define the geographic boundaries and population to be served.
- ☐ Complete a community health, nutrition, housing, and economic needs assessment.
- ☐ Identify urban, rural, tribal, veteran, and underserved population priorities.
- ☐ Establish measurable goals for health access, jobs, investment, and quality of life.
- ☐ Create a local steering committee with residents, employers, providers, and civic leaders.

### 2. Healthcare Services

- ☐ Primary care, direct primary care, and family medicine access.
- ☐ Urgent care, mobile clinics, telehealth, and remote patient monitoring.
- ☐ Behavioral health, substance-use recovery, and crisis-support services.
- ☐ Dental, vision, maternal, pediatric, and senior care.
- ☐ Specialty care, diagnostics, laboratory, pharmacy, and rehabilitation services.
- ☐ Hospital, rural hospital, community health center, and physician-network partnerships.

### 3. Wellness & Prevention

- ☐ Nutrition counseling, fitness, healthy-aging, and chronic-disease prevention.
- ☐ Integrative, functional, regenerative, and evidence-informed wellness providers.
- ☐ Community health education, screenings, vaccination, and prevention campaigns.
- ☐ Employer wellness, school wellness, and family health programs.
- ☐ Healthy food access, culinary education, and medically tailored nutrition.

### 4. Real Estate, Housing & Infrastructure

- ☐ Identify suitable sites, buildings, land, and redevelopment opportunities.
- ☐ Engage developers experienced in healthcare, mixed-use, and community projects.
- ☐ Plan clinics, wellness centers, housing, retail, food distribution, and shared facilities.
- ☐ Assess utilities, broadband, transportation, parking, and accessibility.
- ☐ Include affordable and workforce housing where appropriate.
- ☐ Use sustainable, resilient, modular, or adaptive-reuse construction solutions.

### 5. Regenerative Farming & Food Systems

- ☐ Recruit regenerative farms, urban agriculture, greenhouses, and food producers.
- ☐ Develop farm-to-community, farm-to-school, and farm-to-healthcare supply chains.
- ☐ Support food hubs, cold storage, distribution, markets, and community kitchens.
- ☐ Promote soil health, water stewardship, local production, and nutrition security.
- ☐ Connect growers with training, land access, purchasing contracts, and capital.

## 6. Veterans & Priority Populations

- ☐ Include veteran healthcare, behavioral health, housing, and employment services.
- ☐ Partner with veteran service organizations, the VA, and community providers.
- ☐ Create pathways for veteran-owned businesses, contracting, and entrepreneurship.
- ☐ Address disability access, transportation, caregiver, and family-support needs.
- ☐ Build targeted programs for seniors, children, people with disabilities, and caregivers.

## 7. Entrepreneurship & Small Business

- ☐ Provide business planning, mentoring, incubation, and accelerator programs.
- ☐ Offer financial literacy, procurement, compliance, and technology assistance.
- ☐ Recruit healthcare, wellness, food, construction, and service-sector entrepreneurs.
- ☐ Support minority-, women-, veteran-, and locally owned businesses.
- ☐ Create shared workspaces, commercial kitchens, labs, and business-service hubs.

## 8. Workforce, Job Training & Apprenticeships

- ☐ Map employer demand and current workforce gaps.
- ☐ Partner with schools, colleges, workforce boards, unions, and credentialing bodies.
- ☐ Create apprenticeships in healthcare, construction, agriculture, technology, and operations.
- ☐ Develop short-term credentials, career ladders, internships, and earn-and-learn programs.
- ☐ Include local hiring goals, reentry pathways, youth employment, and wraparound supports.

## 9. Capital, Credits & Funding

- ☐ Confirm Opportunity Zone eligibility and applicable federal, state, and local incentives.
- ☐ Identify qualified funds, investors, family offices, lenders, and community-development capital.
- ☐ Prepare project budgets, financial models, feasibility studies, and investor materials.
- ☐ Evaluate tax credits, grants, bonds, philanthropy, CDFIs, and public-private partnerships.
- ☐ Create a capital stack and phased funding plan for each project component.
- ☐ Establish financial controls, reporting, compliance, and community-benefit tracking.

## 10. Partnerships, Governance & Implementation

- ☐ Develop the initial blueprint and comprehensive strategic plan.
- ☐ Secure commitments from healthcare, wellness, development, agriculture, and workforce partners.
- ☐ Define governance, ownership, leadership roles, and decision-making authority.
- ☐ Create an implementation schedule with milestones, responsibilities, and budgets.
- ☐ Establish legal, regulatory, zoning, licensing, insurance, and risk-management reviews.
- ☐ Launch communications, community engagement, investor outreach, and partner recruitment.
- ☐ Measure health outcomes, jobs, businesses created, investment, food access, and community impact.

### Priority next steps

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Healthy America Opportunity Zones bring together the partners, capital, services, and implementation capacity needed to improve health outcomes while creating durable local economic opportunity.**