

Leaders in Economic Development Converge to Bring Relief for Taxpayers and Communities via Opportunity Zone Programs

Actively Stewarding Economic Support to Underserved Communities by Harnessing the Power of IRS Tax Incentives for Opportunity Zone Business Formation

ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES, April 21, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With Tax Day 2022 officially behind American citizens many modern decision-makers are setting 'new year's fiscal fitness resolutions' to improve upon their prior year's efforts financially, and are now considering not just their personal returns but also the true impact that their investment choices could make on the world around them. The shifting economic landscape, emerging technologies, and Environmental, Societal, & Governance (ESG) concerns incentivize and inform new perspectives on how to best constructively achieve these goals and the means to do so.

At the recent Opal Group Conference (West Palm Beach, FL 27-29 March 2022), these timely topics were discussed as leaders from the Real Estate and ESG sectors gathered to exchange knowledge and ideas, such as learning about how to effectively amplify 'The Impact of Opportunity Zones for Changing Communities' and other strategies for supporting their stakeholders' maturing focus on triple-bottom-line engagement.

Leafwise Ltd. (leafwiseltd.com) Principal & CEO Sage Alexander, COZA, spoke on three panels about strategies to utilize the Opportunity Zone Program to build affordable housing, spur new businesses, foster a robust job market, and revitalize communities across the nation. Sage emphasized that the time is right to act on taking advantage of the multilateral benefits extended by the program to investors, entrepreneurs, organizations, and their communities at-large. Thus, putting much more economic decision making power in the hands of the American people whilst simultaneously rewarding them for investing money back into the well-being of



their own communities.

As a leader and expert navigator of the Opportunity Zone ecosystem, Sage addressed formation and structuring of Qualified Opportunity Funds and Opportunity Zone Businesses, offered perspective on the types of Opportunity Zone Projects that are underway as well as their expected returns on both an economic and societal level, and explained how the program can be dynamically and practically applied to nearly any business use case (from agriculture to NFTs and everything in-between) to enjoy maximum benefit for all participants, their families, and their fellow citizens.

Mr. Sage Alexander provided clarity about the complexities of the Opportunity Zone Program, which was formed as an economic development tax incentive by the IRS as part of the Tax Cuts & Jobs Act of 2017 in an effort to encourage investment and growth in many areas of the

country—over 8,900 currently-identified zones across the US and its territories with more to be added. While the benefits to capital gains investors are very clear and attractive (savings of the 23.8% long-term capital gains taxes otherwise due at exit for a non-OZ investment, initial deferral, and more), few business leaders are aware of the advantages afforded to Opportunity Zone Designated Businesses, nor are those with a passion for both enterprise and positive change informed about how to best get involved at a fund level.

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Sage Alexander

Alongside long-time colleague and business partner Alexandr Cernak, Sage Alexander has recently teamed up with an established leader in the Opportunity Zone space who has successfully formed over 100 funds across the United States since the inception of the program in 2017 as premier OZ Consultants, Managers, and Administrators. [Collectively, they launched Auspicious Opportunities](https://auspiciousopportunities.com) (auspiciousopportunities.com), a QOF designed to

incubate a vertical [Real Estate Construction and Development OZB, The Divine Group](https://divinegroup.us) (divinegroup.us), that will bring affordable housing, commercial infrastructure, mixed-use developments, micro communities, and traditional real estate projects to life while optimizing the Opportunity Zone Program each step of the way for the sake of both stakeholders and



society as a whole. Leafwise LTD's Advisory and Management of all facets of Opportunity Zone infrastructure ensure the proper fulfillment of the program by providing measurable and lasting support to those impacted by projects they steward, including guiding OZ businesses towards many of the B-Corp/Benefit Corporation best practices in operations and consideration of ESG metrics prior to inception or restructuring even if not initially certified as such.

When asked about the top highlights of attending the conference, Mr. Sage Alexander expressed "I was invigorated to contribute to such a dynamic confluence of like-minded business leaders focusing their energy to affect meaningful progress for the triple-bottom-line economy. Never before has there existed such a powerful mechanism [U.S. Opportunity Zones] for simultaneous public-private gain, and by both properly harnessing the steeds of private sector stimulus to the chariot of directed societal benefit and steering it rightly, we can create exponential abundance and sustainably relieve the suffering of many in underserved areas of our great nation and beyond."

Hearing from several key speakers about their attendance at the UN Climate Change COP26 (Scotland, November 2021) many of the initiatives pledged to make climate restoration a global priority seem to have 'fizzled out'. These global factors, combined with many Americans reporting duress emotionally and financially, have led Sage, Alexandår, and their colleagues at Leafwise to commit themselves to skillfully applying the intricacies of the Opportunity Zone Program to invigorate the economy, ultimately creating both meaningful returns for stakeholders and long-lasting beneficial impact on the lives of real people and their communities.

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