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The Field Guide by SelectGlobal, LLC

Your Monthly Compass for Global Expansion

July 2026

Welcome. This month we walk you through how a census tract becomes an Opportunity Zone under the 2.0 rules, what changed from 1.0, and why it matters for both manufacturers and EDOs. You will also notice a new format: a teaching section up top, then events, then two ways to talk back to us. Let's get started.

Michael T. Edgar, Founder and CEO

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THE TERRAIN

There Is No Map Drop: The Four Gates of QOZ 2.0

Everyone is waiting for the QOZ 2.0 map to drop. There is no drop. There is a four-gate pipeline. It went live on July 1, and states are moving through it at very different speeds. Here is how a census tract becomes an Opportunity Zone, and where the process stands this month.

Gate 1 - Who decides which tracts are even eligible?

Treasury already did. On April 6, the IRS published Rev. Proc. 2026-14, the official list of 25,332 census tracts nationally that qualify as Low-Income Communities under the tightened rules, 8,334 of them fully rural. The tightening matters. The income ceiling dropped from 80 percent to 70 percent of the area median. The contiguous-tract pathway was repealed outright. The poverty-rate route now carries a 125 percent income cap. Roughly a quarter of the old map does not survive the new tests. If a tract is not on the April 6 list, it is not in the game. History says there will be targeted appeals and tweaks at the margins, exactly as there were last round. But an exception is not a strategy, and you cannot swing for the fences if you are not on the field.

Gate 2 - Who picks from the eligible list?

The states, and this is where the divergence is live. Federal law imposes no uniform process, so each state built its own intake. Texas ran nominations through the Governor's Economic Development and Tourism Office, closed community submissions on June 26, and plans to transmit its list to Treasury no later than August 3. South Carolina's Department of Commerce closed community nominations on June 1, a month before the federal window even opened. Arizona's Commerce Authority closed tract recommendations from communities, counties, and tribes on May 8, the earliest intake in the country. If your tract sits in one of these states and was not put forward, that decision has largely already been made, and your attention shifts to Gates 3 and 4.

Gate 3 - When does the governor commit?

Each governor has 90 days from July 1, until September 28, with a single 30-day extension available, to nominate up to 25 percent of the state's eligible tracts, with a 25-tract floor. The governor's selection is the whole game. In the 2018 round, there is no evidence Treasury changed or denied a single tract a governor submitted. For anyone still trying to influence a nomination, the realistic window is measured in weeks, not months.

Gate 4 - When is the map final?

Treasury certifies each state's list within 30 days of receiving it, and it works state by state. In 2018, the first 18 states had locked maps by April 9 while the last submitters waited until July. The same rolling pattern is in place now: early states will have certainty months before the rest, a staggered national playing field that rewards whoever was watching state intakes instead of waiting for a drop. Every designation, whenever certified, takes effect January 1, 2027 and holds for ten years.

Why the map matters for a decade

A designation does not deliver capital. It buys eligibility for a magnet. The benefit that does the pulling is the ten-year exclusion: a project held ten years or more pays zero federal tax on its own appreciation at exit, which means the incentive bites hardest on large, appreciating, long-held projects. And the map is decennial. A tract that misses this cycle waits until 2036. We quantified exactly where the incentive crosses from passive amenity to decisive magnet, by deal size, in The Value

Ladder: https://www.selectglobal.net/select-global-llc-blog/opportunity-zone-value-ladder

FOR THE MANUFACTURER

The 2.0 map fixes the geography of a capital rail for ten years. The 2027-2028 overlap means closing under a current 1.0 tract and siting for the 2.0 map are both live plays. Which one you are running should be a decision, not a default.

FOR THE EDO

Run the honest screening question before spending political capital: what is the largest project your tracts can realistically attract this decade. Below roughly $50M, the designation rides along. Above it, it can decide the site. If your state's intake has already closed, your remaining leverage sits at the governor's office, not the portal.

Sources: IRS Rev. Proc. 2026-14 (April 6, 2026); OBBBA, Public Law 119-21, Section 70421; CRS Report R48952; U.S. Treasury press release, July 1, 2026; Texas EDT, South Carolina Department of Commerce, and Arizona Commerce Authority published nomination processes.

THE PITCH:

If this month's teaching unit was useful, it came from somewhere: a six-part series built between April and June that maps which jurisdictions can still build and what that means for anyone siting a plant or recruiting one. The whole Builders vs. Diplomats argument is now one PDF, sourced at the sentence level. It is free because the analysis is the proof and the network is the product.

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

July 15 | Anatomy of an Email Scam

An ITA/GC luncheon program with **Louise Kern, President of Global Business Information Services (GloBIS)**. Using three real emails she received, ranging from an obvious scam to a convincing supplier-registration fraud impersonating a major corporation, Kern walks through a practical, repeatable method for spotting phishing, business-email compromise, and impersonation attempts. Attendees learn to read sender and Reply-To addresses, investigate suspicious domains, interpret email headers across Outlook, Gmail, and Apple Mail, and use AI tools to flag the technical red flags, all without a technical background. Designed for business professionals, not IT specialists. Wednesday, July 15, 2026, Carlucci Rosemont, 6111 North River Road, Rosemont, IL. 11:45 registration, 12:00 luncheon and presentation, 2:00 adjourn. ITA/GC members and guests $55, non-members $80.
Register: eventbrite.com

September 16-18 | SiteLink Forum, Cypress County

SiteLink Forum brings its measured, in-depth model to Cypress County, Alberta, in southeastern Alberta on the Canada-U.S. border next to Medicine Hat. The three days combine structured presentations, peer learning, and direct collaboration. Structured sessions and complementary events, golf and local tours among them, offer participants real time to talk at length with a curated set of site selection professionals. A disclosure and an invitation in one: I am one of the featured site selector speakers, so if you are attending, find me. Registration closes September 2. September 16-18, 2026, Cypress County, Alberta, Canada.

September 23-25 | LiveXchange Fall Forum

A reimagined LiveXchange format splits the program across two Toledo venues: conference sessions and boardroom presentations at the Renaissance Toledo Downtown Hotel, with 1:1 meetings between site selectors and economic developers hosted in the luxury suites at the Toledo Mud Hens Baseball Club.

Whether or not you have attended a LiveXchange event before, this one is worth the trip. Early interest is high; register early. September 23-25, 2026, Toledo, OH.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

The International Trade Association of Greater Chicago (ITA/GC) has spent nearly five decades doing one thing well: helping people do international business.

Founded in 1978, the 501(c)(6) nonprofit is one of the largest associations of its kind in Illinois, with more than 500 members across the U.S. and abroad. Its focus is practicality. Seminars, panels, monthly meetings, a member directory, and the Illinois International Business Calendar all serve a single purpose: knowledge that is personal, current, and actionable. The association holds the President's "E" Award for Export Service, one of the highest U.S. honors for contributions to international trade. It maintains no political affiliation and takes no policy positions.

ITA/GC is led by Executive Director Richard Paullin, who has run the organization since 1994. His career spans more than four decades in trade development: Special Advisor on Manufacturing to the Under Secretary for International Trade at the U.S. Department of Commerce, Chairman of the Illinois District Export Council, and earlier work building Caribbean Basin and Pacific Rim trade corridors that moved over $110 million in cumulative trade and investment. He has conducted business in mainland China since 1988. SelectGlobal CEO Michael T. Edgar serves on the association's board of directors.

Within SelectGlobal's world, ITA/GC is not a Constellation execution node. It is something more foundational: the regional trade community SelectGlobal is rooted in. It is the forum where allied-nation manufacturers, exporters, and the economic development ecosystem actually convene, and the credibility anchor for serious international commerce in the Greater Chicago corridor. Where the Constellation supplies specialists on demand, ITA/GC supplies the community and the convening layer that surrounds the work.

What sets ITA/GC apart is its discipline about substance. No pay-to-play credentialing, no awards-for-dues machinery, no policy agenda. Just durable relationships and practical knowledge, built over nearly fifty years. That orientation toward the actionable over the abstract is exactly why the partnership fits.

Connect with ITA/GC → www.itagc.org

THE COMPASS CHECK

We want to make sure this newsletter provides value to you. How did we do?

Short List

Needs Due Diligence

Site Rejected

NAVIGATING TOGETHER

As we refresh our systems this quarter, a quick favor: If SelectGlobal's insights on global expansion are valuable to you, help us serve you better by:

Reply to this email with the topic you want to see next month. I read every response, and the best question becomes the next issue.

Confirm your newsletter subscription

Forward this newsletter to a colleague

IN CLOSING

The second half of 2026 runs straight into the US Midterms. Expect a lot of announcements, and not much true signal. The 48 rails and G40 actors we track look resilient through the noise, on an 18-to-24-month view, and that is the read we will keep testing here each month. See you in August.

ABOUT SELECTGLOBAL

SelectGlobal is a jurisdictional intelligence firm that maps where validated federal and state demand intersects with geographic realities, then connects allied-nation manufacturers to those windows before capital is committed. The Fork Framework (tm) gives established international companies two structured paths into the U.S. market: a Virtual Path to test demand over 3 to 6 months, or a Physical Path when the case is proven. The LatticeWorks Constellation (tm) coordinates 250+ municipalities and 68+ trade commissioners on behalf of each engagement. Principal-led by Michael T. Edgar, NCARB-certified architect, former U.S. Investment Advisory Council member, and ITAGC board member. www.selectglobal.net