



Promise Zones Third Round Rural/Tribal Application Guide

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Description of the Promise Zones Initiative

The Promise Zones Initiative seeks to revitalize high-poverty communities across the country by creating jobs, increasing economic activity, improving educational opportunities, reducing serious and violent crime, leveraging private capital, and assisting local leaders in navigating federal programs. This is the application guide for rural and tribal Promise Zones. The urban application guide is located at <http://www.hud.gov/promisezones/>. Promise Zones will not receive grant funding. The Promise Zone designation partners the Federal government with local leaders who are addressing multiple community revitalization challenges in a collaborative way and have demonstrated a commitment to results. Promise Zone Designees will receive:

- Opportunity to engage Five [AmeriCorps VISTA](#) members in the Promise Zone
- A federal liaison assigned to assist with navigating federal programs.
- Priority for certain competitive federal programs and technical assistance from participating agencies.
- Promise Zone tax incentives, if enacted by Congress.

Altogether, this package of assistance will help local leaders accelerate efforts to revitalize their communities. The Promise Zone designation will be for a term of 10 years, and may be extended as necessary to capture the full term of availability of the Promise Zones tax incentives, pending the enactment of tax incentives by Congress. During this term, the specific benefits made available to Promise Zones will vary from year to year, and sometimes more often than annually, due to changes in the agency policies and changes in appropriations and authorizations for relevant programs. All assistance provided to Promise Zones is subject to applicable regulations, statutes, and changes in Federal agency policies, appropriations, and authorizations for relevant programs. Subject to these limitations, the Promise Zone designation commits the Federal government to partner with local leaders who are addressing multiple community revitalization challenges in a collaborative way and have demonstrated a commitment to results.

Third Round Promise Zone Designation Process

The third round of Promise Zone designations will be made pursuant to this document. A total of 20 Promise Zone designations will be made by the end of calendar year 2016. To date, nine urban, two rural and two tribal communities have been designated. As a result of this competition, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) intends to designate five urban communities and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) intends to designate one rural and one tribal community. Applications for Promise Zone designations will be reviewed and evaluated by representatives from across the federal government including: USDA, HUD, Department of Education, Department of Justice, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Labor, Department of Transportation, Department of Treasury, Department of Commerce, Corporation for National and Community Service, National Endowment for the Arts, and the Small Business Administration. Reviewers will first verify that the application is submitted by a community eligible for selection, by

verifying that the application includes all required components, that the proposed Promise Zone meets the qualifying criteria, and that the Lead Applicant meets the eligibility criteria for the third round selection process (see page 6 and 7 for eligibility and qualifying criteria and page 23 for a complete list of the threshold requirements).¹

After verifying for each application that all the required components were submitted, that the Lead Applicant is eligible and the proposed Promise Zone would qualify, the reviewers will score all of the applications according to the points assigned to selection criteria shown in the *Application Guide* for the appropriate Promise Zones category (urban, rural or tribal).

After scoring each application according to the Application Guide criteria, USDA may consider, in addition to the application materials, information available from participating agency records, the name check review, public sources such as newspapers, Inspector General or Government Accountability Office reports or findings. Any evidence cited in the Goals and Activities Template may also be reviewed.

Categories and Sub-Categories

Rural applications will be ranked against other rural applications, tribal applications will be ranked against other tribal applications, and urban applications will be ranked against other urban applications within their Metro CBSA subcategory, as applicable. An application must score a total of 75 points or more out of 100 points, to be considered for a designation (scoring 75 points or more means that applications fall within the “competitive range”). Once scored, applications will be ranked competitively within each of the three Promise Zones categories and within the urban subcategories, as applicable.

Geographic Diversity (Replicability & Transferability)

The Promise Zones initiative will provide communities and the federal government with the opportunity to demonstrate and accelerate the impact of coordinated federal investment in communities in which stakeholders have come together with a focus on results. The participating federal agencies seek to establish a diverse cohort of quality designees in order to demonstrate strategies that may be useful for communities working on comprehensive revitalization in many contexts nationwide. Therefore, the agencies may select a lower-ranked application over a higher-ranked application, within a category or subcategory, from among those scoring 75 points or more overall, for purposes of establishing geographic diversity, so that lessons learned can be applied in other similar places around the country in the future.

Promise Zone Finalists

The participating federal agencies may also choose to name some applicants as "Promise Zone Finalists" as a result of this selection process.

¹Lead Applicants are not required to be a recipient of a previous federal grant.

The purpose of selecting Promise Zone Finalists will be to recognize communities whose applications reflect high-quality strategies under the criteria set forth in the *Application Guide*, but are not selected as Promise Zone designees. The participating federal agencies will seek to expand national knowledge about Promise Zone Finalist communities and their revitalization strategies by posting information submitted in the Finalists' applications on agency websites, and the participating federal agencies will communicate regularly with Finalists about opportunities for relevant funding or technical assistance that may become available, although no preference points, or other Promise Zone designation advantages in federal funding competitions will be awarded as a result of Finalist status.

Notifications of Decisions

Notification of decisions will be made by phone and letter. Additional notification may be sent by email to the designated applicant point of contact listed in the application.

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APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS AND DEADLINE

Overview

The Third Round Application Guide is the controlling document for the Third Round Selection Process. Application materials must be submitted according to the requirements and specifications articulated in this document, including any technical amendments published in the Federal Register or clarifications issued through Questions and Answers posted to the Promise Zones Initiative website at www.hud.gov/promisezones.

- A non-binding Application Request Form is due by XXXX, XX, 2015, 24 hours before the application submission deadline. The Application Request Form should include the Lead Applicant organization and tentative name of the proposed Promise Zone. The Application Request Form can be completed via Max Survey. However, USDA recommends that applicants **complete the Application Request Form to access the application on Max Survey several weeks prior** to the submission deadline. Once the form is submitted, the applicant will receive, no later than by the next business day, an individualized, tokenized link to access the Promise Zone application.
- USDA urges applicants to submit applications 72 hours prior to the application due date to address in a timely fashion any technical problems that the applicant may experience in MAX Survey. Applicants are also encouraged to participate in tutorial and help sessions that may be organized by HUD to support applicants in using the MAX Survey system. Notification of such sessions will be posted to the Promise Zone website and distributed via email during the application response period. Electronic copies of application materials must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST on [TBD] via MAX Survey. Your application must be **received** by MAX.gov. Your application is “received” when MAX.gov provides you a confirmation of receipt with a date and time stamp. **If you do not see this confirmation of receipt with a date and time stamp, your application has not been received.** Please note that busy servers, slow processing or upload issues due to large file sizes are not valid reasons for extensions, and only applications received via Max.gov by 5:00 PM EST will be considered.
- Receipt of a confirmation email from Max.gov does not indicate that the application contains all of the required information, only that information has been entered into the survey and/or files have been attached, and such information and files have been received. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the application checklist prior to clicking the “submit” button at the end of the survey, in order to check that they have included all required information. Once an applicant clicks the “submit” button, the applicant loses the ability to modify its information. After a submission, Max.gov provides an opportunity to download a copy of

submitted information in addition to providing an email confirmation of submission. Except as provided for below in regards to technical corrections to deficient applications, USDA may not consider any unsolicited information that applicants may want to provide after the application deadline.

Corrections to Deficient Applications

In order to ensure fairness to all applications, If USDA finds a curable deficiency in an application, USDA will notify the applicant by email describing the clarification or technical deficiency. In order not to unreasonably exclude applications from being rated and ranked in situations where there are curable deficiencies, USDA will notify applicants of each technical deficiency and will do so on a uniform basis. USDA will send an email to the contact(s) listed in the application. Email notification will be sent from USDA with confirmation of delivery receipt requested. The email notification will be the official notification of the need to cure a technical deficiency. It is the responsibility of applicants to provide accurate email addresses for receipt of these notifications and to monitor their email accounts to determine whether a cure letter has been received. The applicant must carefully review the request for cure of a technical deficiency and must provide the response in accordance with the instructions contained in the deficiency notification. USDA may not seek clarification of items or responses that improve the substantive quality of an applicant's response to any rating factors. USDA may also contact the applicant to clarify other items in its application.

Clarifications or corrections of technical deficiencies must be received by USDA within the time limits specified in the notification. In no case shall the time allowed to correct deficiencies exceed 14 calendar days or be less than 48 hours from the date of the email notification. The start of the cure period will be the date stamp on the email USDA sends to the applicant. If the deficiency cure deadline date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, federal holiday, or other day when USDA's Headquarters offices in Washington, DC, are closed, then the applicant's correction must be received on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday, or other day when the USDA's Headquarters offices in Washington, DC, are closed.

Waiver of Electronic Submission Requirements

An applicant demonstrating good cause may request a waiver from the requirement for electronic submission. Applicants who are unable to submit their applications via Max Survey must submit a request by email to promisezones@hud.gov to make alternative arrangements by XXX, 2015, 15 days prior to the application due date. Applicants that are granted a waiver of the electronic submission requirements will not be given additional time to submit their applications. The deadline date for paper and electronic applications will remain the same. Paper applications received without a currently approved waiver and/or after the established deadline date will not be considered.

If such a request is received by the deadline, USDA may grant a waiver of the electronic submission requirement if the applicant demonstrates an inability to access Max Survey in a reliable way, or otherwise demonstrates good cause. If you receive a waiver, your paper application must be received by USDA before the application

deadline. Applicants requesting a waiver should submit their waiver requests via e-mail to promisезones@hud.gov. The subject line must contain the name of the applicant and “Request for Waiver to Electronic Application for Promise Zones.” Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and approvals or rejections for alternative submission will be sent by XXXX, 2015 by USDA. If an applicant is granted a waiver of the electronic submission, the approval notice will provide instructions for submission, as well as how and where to submit each copy. Paper applications received without a currently approved waiver from the Promise Zone office and/or after the established deadline date will not be considered.

To the extent that application components require resolutions, approvals or other actions by local governing boards, legislative bodies, regulatory bodies, or other entities with fixed schedules for consideration of such actions and such actions cannot be taken prior to the application deadline, applicants must submit the following information by the application deadline: description of the action to be taken, date on which the action is expected, and information necessary to demonstrate its relevance to the proposal. Depending upon the importance of such actions to a selected applicant’s Promise Zone Plan, the participating federal agencies may make the Promise Zone designation contingent upon the receipt of evidence that the action has been taken. Note: Tribal resolutions may be submitted after the application deadline.

Application Overview

The application consists of a combination of items directly entered into MAX Survey (executive summary, general abstract information, and a Goals and Activities Template) and a series of attachments that must be uploaded independently into MAX Survey. A more thorough breakdown of the application components is located on page 23 of this application guide.

The documents that **must** be uploaded into MAX Survey include:

- A Mapping tool data sheet (automatically generated for applicant when using the Promise Zone mapping tool as detailed within Application Section II, page 11);
- Letter(s) that demonstrates the commitment from the Unit of General Local Government (UGLG) leadership,
- An application narrative detailing items as requested in Application Sections III, IV, and V not to exceed 25 pages.
 - The preferred formatting for the narrative is as follows:

Double-spaced text to include any tables or figures (pages with single-spaced text will be counted as two pages), 8½ x 11-inch page size; Approximately one inch margins (½ inch margins or smaller will count as 2 pages); 12-point Times New Roman font (to include text that accompanies tables or figures); All pages should be numbered, any pages marked as sub-pages (e.g., with numbers and letters such as 25A, 25B, 25C), will be treated as separate pages Mark each section clearly (i.e. Section IV Part A: Needs and Assets). Note that shrunken pages, or pages where a minimized/reduced font are used, will be counted as multiple pages

- Additional Documents that when combined do not exceed 20 pages (does not include the mapping tool or narrative). These additional documents may include:
 - A to scale city map and community level map,
 - Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU),
 - Any additional letters of support, tables, figures, charts, or additional maps².

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² Optional Congressional letters of support will not be scored nor counted against the 20 page attachment limit. Congressional letters should be addressed to Secretary Vilsack submitted via promisozones@hud.gov. They should **not** be submitted through Max.gov.

APPLICATION SECTIONS

Section I – Executive Summary

An Executive Summary that describes the Promise Zone Plan, including (1) a brief description of the needs and assets of the proposed Promise Zone; (2) the goals of the Promise Zone; (3) activities to achieve goals; (4) the Lead Applicant’s capacity to achieve results; and (5) how the Promise Zone designation would accelerate or strengthen existing efforts at comprehensive community revitalization.

An optional submission of no more than 3 JPEG photographs that illustrated the proposed Promise Zone including landscapes, people, and communities is also encouraged. Since these photos may be used in promotional material in association with the announcement of the third round designees, be sure the photographs do not include images of individuals as this would require specific release forms from anyone in the image. The submission of photographs will in no way affect the scoring outcome of an application.

Section I Submission Requirements:

- I. Executive Summary via MAX Survey with a 2,000 character limit, including spaces (this limit is applied automatically to information entered into MAX Survey).
- II. **Optional:** Up to 3 optional JPEG images of the neighborhoods, buildings and streets within the proposed Promise Zone.

Section II – Eligibility Criteria

➤ Abstract

The abstract section of the Application form will serve as a summary of key application information and must clearly identify one Lead Applicant organization, staff point(s) of contact and provide the email and telephone contact information of the Lead Applicant. The abstract must also: identify the application category (rural, tribal, or urban); identify the implementation partners and local official support; describe the geography and provide the economic and population data provided from the mapping tool data sheet. Lead Applicants/ Lead Organizations must select whether they are applying for rural or tribal Promise Zone designation.

Lead Applicant Eligibility

Due to the nature of the initiative, Promise Zone activities are likely to be carried out by a variety of organizations and organization types. Eligible Lead Applicant/ Lead Organization for rural and tribal Promise Zone designations are:

- i. Local governments (which includes county, city, town, township, parish, village, governmental authority or other general-purpose political subdivision of a state or any combination thereof) and Federally-recognized tribes;³
- ii. Nonprofit organizations⁴ applying in partnership with local or tribal government;
- iii. Public Housing Agency⁵ applying in partnership with local government, or Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) applying in partnership with tribal government;
- iv. Local Education Agencies (LEAs)⁶ applying in partnership with local or tribal government; or
- v. Community colleges applying in partnership with local or tribal government.

Note: See Definitions for Lead Applicant, page 20.

Note: Only one Promise Zone application may be submitted in association with the same Unit of General Local Government (UGLG) or tribal area per application cycle. If more than one application is submitted for a Promise Zone meeting the qualifying criteria, the one submitted with local government support will be accepted. If more than one application is submitted with local government support in association with a UGLG or tribal area, including applications that cross jurisdictional lines, all of the applications with support from that UGLG or tribal area will be disqualified for the application cycle.

Community Eligibility Criteria

All of the following must be present in an application for a proposed Promise Zone to be eligible for designation:

³ See Definitions for “Tribal Applicants” and “Federally-recognized Tribes”, page 20.

government may apply as a tribal applicant with written government support from the partnering Federally-recognized tribe.

⁴ Including Workforce Investment Boards (WIBS) and Community Action Agencies (CAA). See Definitions for Nonprofits, page 20.

⁵ See Definition for Public Housing Agency, page 20.

⁶ See Definitions for LEA, page 20.

- i. Rural and tribal Promise Zones must encompass one or more census tract(s) across a contiguous⁷ geography; tribal applicants may have non-contiguous areas. Rural applicants can define their boundaries by either census tracts or by county, where multiple counties are included. Tribal applicants can define boundaries which may encompass: one or more census tracts and nearby tribally-controlled areas; or reservations; or consortia of tribal and non-tribal jurisdictions.
- ii. Promise Zone boundaries must encompass a population of at least 10,000⁸* for rural applicants, and no more than 200,000 residents for rural and tribal; tribal applicants have **no minimum**⁹ The population limit of 200,000 may not include any incorporated municipalities or unincorporated areas with individual populations greater than 50,000. Rural and tribal Promise Zones may fall in non-metro and metro counties.
- iii. The rate of overall poverty or Extremely Low Income rate (whichever is greater) of residents within the Promise Zone must be at or above 20 percent, and the Promise Zone must contain at least one census tract with a poverty rate at or above 30 percent.¹⁰
- iv. Local leadership must demonstrate commitment to the Promise Zone effort. Tribal Proposed Promise Zone boundaries may cross UGLG or tribal area lines, but **one Lead Applicant must be identified**, and for cross-jurisdictional applications, written commitment must be demonstrated by the government of *all* UGLGs or tribal areas involved.
- v. The Promise Zone mapping tool is located at <http://www.huduser.org/PZ2013/promiseZone.html>. The tool allows applicants to draw a boundary at the community-level and provides data, in the form of a PDF document sent to the user via email, on poverty level/Extremely Low Income rate (ELI), highest census tract poverty level, and population, as well as a map of the boundary. See section IV [pg. X] for more information on the mapping tool data.

Note: If the application does not meet all of these qualifying criteria, it will not be considered for designation as a Promise Zone.

⁷ Promise Zone boundaries that cross state lines and water borders can be considered contiguous.

⁸ Change from previous round: 10,000 minimum population. Additionally, tribal applicants have no minimum.

⁹ The population limit of 200,000 is intended to allow for regional collaboration among multiple communities of varying sizes and capacities. The rural eligibility criteria ensure, by definition, that rural Promise Zone applications cannot include communities over 50,000.

¹⁰ Applicants are required to use the Promise Zones mapping tool to determine the overall poverty rate and the highest census tract poverty level. The mapping tool determines the overall poverty rate in two ways and uses the higher percentage. See the Definitions section on page 20 for more information.

Limitations on Qualifying UGLGs

- i. An UGLG can serve as a Qualifying UGLG for only one Promise Zone application per selection round. If more than one application is submitted within the boundaries of a Qualifying UGLG for a Promise Zone meeting all of the other qualifying criteria, only the application for which the Qualifying UGLG has demonstrated support will be accepted. If more than one application is submitted with support from the same Qualifying UGLG, including applications that cross UGLG boundaries, all of the applications from such Qualifying UGLG will be disqualified from the Round 3 selection review process.
- ii. If a Promise Zone designated in Rounds 1 or 2 is located within the boundaries of a Qualifying UGLG in which a new application is being made in Round 3, the applicant must include a statement from the Qualifying UGLG explaining how, if a second Promise Zone designation is made, the Qualifying UGLG plans to work with all of the Promise Zone designees at the same time and sustain the level of effort, resources, and support committed to each Promise Zone under its respective Promise Zone plan for the full term of each designation. This explanation should be evidenced by commitments from the Qualifying UGLG in materials submitted by its Executive in support of the application.
- iii. Proposed Promise Zone boundaries may cross UGLG boundaries. In such cross-jurisdictional applications one Lead Applicant must be identified for the Promise Zone application, and commitment must be demonstrated by the leadership of all of the Qualifying UGLGs.

Section II Submission Requirements:

- i. The PDF mapping tool data sheet is required to demonstrate poverty level and population levels. *The mapping tool PDF map and data sheet will not count toward 25 page narrative or 20 page additional materials page limits.*
- ii. Mapping tool data information to be entered on Max Survey.
- iii. Letter(s) demonstrating commitment from UGLG or tribal area government, including tribal resolutions for tribal applicants involved in the Promise Zone. For applications across UGLG or tribal area lines, commitment must be demonstrated by leadership of all UGLG or tribal areas involved.¹¹ The letter(s) will not count toward the 20 pages of additional information.*¹²

¹¹ To the extent that application components require resolutions, approvals or other actions by governing boards, legislative bodies, tribal councils, regulatory bodies or other entities with fixed schedules for consideration of such actions, and such actions cannot be taken prior to the application deadline,

Note: If the local elected executive leadership is in transition, the manager or council may submit a letter of support. A letter from the incoming local leader may also be included in application materials. The letters will not count toward the 20 page limit for attachments.

Section III – Selection Criteria: Need (10 points)

The applicant’s submission materials must contain the mapping tool data sheet and sufficient information to verify the following data within the boundaries of the proposed geographic area of the Promise Zone, to the greatest level of specificity possible using available data sources. Data will be compared with that submitted by other applicants in the applicant pool. Points will be awarded for:

- i.** Higher poverty rate/extremely low income rate – Concentration of households in poverty or with extremely low incomes (whichever is greater) residing within the proposed Promise Zone;
- ii.** Lower employment rate – Employment rate for working-age adults within the Promise Zone; and
- iii.** For rural applicants only: Higher Part I serious and violent crime rate – Rate of Part I serious and violent crimes within the Promise Zone.

Note: Secondary sources or locally published data can be used to supplement the mapping tool, with justification of why supplemental data is necessary and attribution to the data source. If the Lead Applicant requests to use alternative data sources to meet the eligibility criteria or for the Need application section, a one-page explanation noting the alternative data source must be submitted along with the Promise Zone mapping tool data sheet to promisезones@hud.gov with the subject line “Alternative data source request” by XXXXXXXX, 2015 to be approved by the relevant designating agency.

Section III Submission Requirements:

A narrative describing the nature and scope of crime in the Promise Zone, highlighting Part I Violent Crime data*¹³. Applicants should provide any available local/state data for the Promise Zone (including data, Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR)¹⁴, calls for service, and survey results from target area residents) to support the discussion. As applicable, applicants should identify any hot spots where a large proportion of crime or types of

applicants must submit the following information by the application deadline: description of the action to be taken, date on which the action is expected, and information necessary to demonstrate its relevance to the proposal. Depending upon the importance of such actions to a selected applicant’s Promise Zone Plan, the agencies may make the Promise Zone designation contingent upon the receipt of evidence that the action has been taken.

¹² Change from previous round: Additional documents are limited to 20, rather than 35. Letters of support will not be counted towards the total

¹³ Change from previous round: Requirement has shifted from data to narrative. Data is still solicited where available.

¹⁴ Information on UCR data can be found at <http://www.bjs.gov/ucrdata/offenses.cfm>

crime occur, as compared with crime rates in the overall jurisdiction, and provide additional information about what is causing the crime to occur in the crime hot spots (e.g. the crime drivers¹⁵). Applicants may use charts and graphs to display data.

Suggested 2 page limit of the 25 page narrative.

Note: Though tribal crime data will not be considered in “Need” scoring, due to differing systems of reporting crime on tribal lands, tribal applicants may submit complimentary data to include the most recently produced statistics on tribal crime rates.

Section IV – Selection Criteria: Strategy (40 points)

Section IV – Part A: Needs and Assets Assessment (10 points)

The narrative will include the quality of applicant’s current assessment of the needs and assets of the proposed Promise Zone, including identified gaps in current neighborhood revitalization efforts and areas of opportunity. Where relevant, the assessment should include breakdowns of indicators by specific subpopulations (including age, race, national origin, gender, and individuals in households where languages other than English are spoken) or specific geographic areas within the neighborhood. The assessment should also include relevant information on crime dynamics or hot spots, education, barriers to employment, existing regional economic growth efforts and industries, areas of commercial blight and/or environmental concern, private economic activity, access to capital, transportation options and mobility and/or other characteristics related to connectivity and public safety.

Section IV Part A Submission Requirements:

i. A narrative summarizing needs and assets of the proposed Promise Zone community. The narrative should describe proposed Promise Zone boundary and provide a justification regarding why the boundaries were determined as such. As applicable, the assessment should include data points and analysis based on information that is no more than 24 months old.

Suggested 2 page limit of the 25 page narrative.

- a. *Note:* If crime is a focus in the community’s plan, applicants should provide a break out of the number of incidences for each type of relevant Part I and Part II crime per 1,000 people that will be addressed as part of the Promise Zone Plan.

¹⁵ Refers to the underlying causes of criminal offending and victims' experiences of crime. It recognizes that certain circumstances of people's lives are associated with a greater likelihood of offending and victimization. For example, the following may be considered examples of “crime drivers” - concentrated poverty, high unemployment, low performing schools, and limited infrastructure such as housing, public transportation, social services, and business.

- ii. Optional: Provide additional map(s), if relevant, that clearly labels: the proposed Promise Zone, and if applicable, the boundaries of other federal investments.
- iii. Optional: Attachments providing detail on community needs and assets referenced in the narrative. *Attachments count toward the 35 page limit.*

Section IV- Part B: Promise Zone Plan (25 points)

The narrative will include the strength of the applicant’s plan for revitalizing the Promise Zone and addressing the Promise Zones initiative goals: creating jobs, increasing economic activity, improving educational opportunities, reducing serious and violent crime, leveraging private capital, and other community goals such as increasing access to quality affordable housing, promoting health and access to healthcare, improving community infrastructure and promoting civic engagement.

The following factors will be rated:

- i. Rationale and Sequencing of the Promise Zone Plan including elements such as:
 - Extent to which the plan addresses synergies and potential conflicts among identified goals, including addressing connections among different policy areas;
 - Extent to which the plan articulates a rationale for setting priorities among different goals and activities, and if necessary, addresses the timing of implementation of specific goals and activities;
- ii. Alignment of Activities of the Promise Zone Plan including elements such as:
 - Extent to which the plan addresses activities of partners and non-partners doing work in the proposed Promise Zone or work that would have an effect on Promise Zone activities or success.
 - Extent to which the plan will contribute to or benefit from broader regional economic development, livability or revitalization efforts.
- iii. Responsiveness of the Promise Zone Plan to the gaps and opportunities identified in the assessment of needs and assets in Section IV – Part A;
- iv. Accountability and Measurement of the Promise Zone Plan including elements such as:
 - a. Extent to which the Promise Zone Plan establishes a clear system for accountability and measurement of progress and performance among the partners, for example, the plan and timeline for finalizing the set of intended outcomes, metrics for measuring progress towards those outcomes, and timelines for when each metric will be measured and when milestones and outcomes will be achieved; and
 - b. Barriers to implementation of the Promise Zone Plan including elements such as:
 - i. Inclusion of specific goals and activities that address removing barriers and improving systems that impede delivery of services, such as changes in policies, delivery capacity,

technology and program reporting including barriers related to cross-jurisdictional work, if applicable.

Note: For example, if improving transportation is a goal of the Promise Zone Plan, include specific efforts – planned or underway – to address infrastructure and flow in a way that will provide for more reliable and affordable transportation options. If job creation is a goal of the Promise Zone Plan, address how job-driven training for workers is addressed. Consider: how employers will identify the skills and credentials required for in-demand jobs and help develop training programs; how workers and job seekers will access education and training that meets their unique needs and the requirements for good jobs and careers; and how you will assist employers find workers who have or can acquire those skills.

Section IV Part B: Submission Requirements

- i.** An overarching narrative of the Promise Zone Plan. The narrative should cover all the selection criteria listed above. Narrative should not repeat specific information presented in the Goals and Activities Template.

Suggested 2 page limit of the 25 page narrative.

- ii.** Complete the Goals and Activities Template within Max Survey for each proposed goal in the Promise Zone. The applicant must complete at least one template for each applicable Promise Zone goal and may identify additional community goals if needed. The MAX Survey will allow the applicant to identify up to six goals each of which may include up to four activities. The applicant is required to select at least three of the Promise Zone Initiative goals and may select up to 3 additional identified community goals. See the Goals and Activities Template on page 30 for examples. The Goals and Activities Template will not count toward the narrative's 25 page limit.

Section IV – Part C: Promise Zone Sustainability and Financial Feasibility (5 points)

The narrative will include the sustainability and financial feasibility of the Promise Zone Plan and coordinating structure should be illustrated on each of the following factors:.

- i.** Across all of the identified goals, the strength of the plan for obtaining funds for activities;
- ii.** Soundness of the organizational structure for retaining commitment and coordination of implementation partner organizations that promotes sustainability of the Promise Zone Plan, including public and private partnerships and stakeholders, during the planned life of the Promise Zone.

Section IV Part C: Submission Requirements

- i. A narrative outlining the budget projection for funding project coordination for the first 5 years of designation; and
- ii. A narrative description of how a Promise Zone designation would bolster efforts to secure additional funds for partnership structure and/or specific Promise Zone goals and activities.

Suggested 2-3 page limit of the 25 page narrative for sub-sections i & ii above.

Note: financial support sections of the Goals and Activities template will be considered for scoring.

Section V – Selection Criteria: Capacity and Local Commitment (50 points)

Section V Part A: Partnership Structure and Commitment (10 points)

Reviewers will assess the soundness of the partnership structure and the strength/extent of partnership commitment.

Examples of such partnership commitment may include:

- i. Local anchor institution commitment (e.g., hospitals, colleges/universities, major employers and business leaders, national and community foundations);
- ii. City council, county, Local Planning Organization, tribal and state officials;
- iii. Local educational officials, criminal justice officials, housing authority officials, transit authorities/operators and the workforce investment board;
- iv. Involvement by resident and community organizations in development of overall strategy and commitment to continued involvement; and
- v. Involvement of neighborhood-serving businesses and/or business associations.

Reviewers will rate the following factors:

- i. The clarity of roles and responsibilities, including factors such as:
 - Clarity of implementation partner responsibilities for executing components of the Promise Zone Plan;
 - Appropriateness of implementation partners based on their designated role in the Promise Zone Plan (Section IV-Part B);
 - The role of Promise Zone residents in the governance structure; and
 - Clarity of partnership governance structure.
- ii. The strength of accountability mechanisms for ensuring effective partnerships, including oversight processes and contractual measures and remedies for non-performance.
- iii. The strength/extent of commitment to coordinate work and investments to achieve outcomes within the Promise Zone (that is not contingent upon receipt of a Promise Zone designation).

Section V Part A Submission Requirements

- i. A narrative detailing the partnership structure, including the specific roles and responsibilities of each implementation partner organization, and the role of residents and the accountability mechanisms. If different offices within a larger organization (for example, departments within city government) are responsible for particular functions, please specify. Should AmeriCorps VISTA members be available to support the Promise Zone Plan, describe potential roles and responsibilities and potential organizational sponsors¹⁶.
- ii. A Promise Zone-specific diagram of the partnership structure that clearly shows the structure for implementing, coordinating, governing, and reporting on the different goals and activities for the Promise Zone Plan. Diagram should be included within the narrative attachment and counts toward the 25-page limit for the narrative.

Suggested 3-4 page limit of 25 page narrative for sub-sections I & ii above.

- iii. A preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be finalized upon designation. The lead organization and all implementation partners should sign the MOU. The MOU should clearly state the role and responsibilities of partners, and note the commitment to data tracking and sharing. The preliminary MOU counts toward the 20-page attachment limit.
- iv. Optional: Letters of support.¹⁷

Note: The preliminary MOU and all letters of support (to include Letter(s) that demonstrates the commitment from Tribal Governments or Chief Executives of all Qualifying UGLGs) will not count toward the additional 20 pages of information.

Section V Part B: Capacity of Lead Applicant (10 points)

Reviewers will assess the capacity of the Lead Applicant organization to achieve outcomes through implementation of sophisticated, multi-layered neighborhood revitalization efforts. Reviewers will also assess the degree to which prior experience of the lead organization is similar to, or has prepared the applicant for, the scale, scope, and complexity of the proposed Promise Zone effort.

As applicable to the Promise Zone Plan, reviewers will rate the following factors:

¹⁶ More information about AmeriCorps Vista can be found at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/ameri-corps-vista>

¹⁷ Optional letters of support from partner organizations included with the application will count against the 20 page attachment limit; however, optional Congressional letters of support will not be scored nor counted against the 20 page attachment limit. Congressional letters should be addressed to Secretary Vilsack and submitted via promisезones@hud.gov.

- i. Role of current organizational leadership within the community and this type of work at the local level;
- ii. Previous success achieving intended outcomes through identifying and implementing evidence-based strategies appropriate to goals;
- iii. Previous success leveraging and managing public, private or tribal capital investments; this can include loan and grant programs offered by various federal, state and tribal entities, tribal equity programs for business development and/or tribal investments in the local economy;
- iv. Previous success identifying and managing multiple non-profit, for-profit, tribal, public sector and philanthropic partners towards successful project completion and positive outcomes. For tribal applicants, this may include private success managing housing, healthcare and/or first responder collaborations and partnerships; this may also include success with industries related to development of natural resources (e.g. oil, gas, coal, forestry, mining, fishing or agriculture); and
- v. For tribal applicants, evidence of the proposed Promise Zone advancing tribal self-determination.

Section V Part B: Submission Requirements:

- i. A narrative describing the lead organization's capacity to achieve Promise Zone outcomes through implementation of sophisticated, multi-layered neighborhood revitalization efforts. Provide examples of past relevant experience and results achieved.
- ii. A narrative assessing the financial stability of the lead organization and discussion of any issues that could affect its ability to play the lead organization role in the Promise Zone Plan. Include evidence as relevant to illustrate capacity and financial stability. The narrative must specifically address any past performance issues under any federal grants, and how the proposed Promise Zone will avoid such issues in future grants that may be made with Promise Zone preferences¹⁸.

Suggested 2-3 page limit of the 25 page narrative for sub-sections i & ii above.

Nonprofit lead organizations must submit their most current IRS Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Public sector lead organizations (local

¹⁸ The application must note past performance issues under Federal grants and bankruptcies within in the past 5 years. To the extent that the Lead Applicant or any of the partner organizations listed in the application has experienced a recapture of funds, disallowance of costs, monitoring finding, Inspector General finding, or failure to expend funds within the performance period under a federal grant, the applicant must disclose the incident(s), and in its narrative discuss the issues raised, and how, if funds are awarded in the future with Promise Zone preferences, those grants will not experience similar problems. Failure to disclose past performance issues may result in disqualification of the application depending upon the importance of the role that the organization with performance issues will play in the Promise Zone Plan as proposed.

governments, including an office or department within local government, public housing agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, etc.) must submit their most current OMB Circular A-133 (now 2 CFR Part 200) audit report, including balance sheet (statement of Net Position), Statement of Activities (Income Statement), Statement of Cash Flows, Notes to the Financial Statements, Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs, Report on Compliance for Each Major Federal Program, Report on Internal Controls Over Compliance, and Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards. The Lead Applicant should include IRS Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax or the most recent OMB Circular A-133 audit. *Section is not counted against page limit requirements.*

Note: sub-section i & ii submissions will count towards the page limits and scored for 8 points, sub-section 3 will not count towards the page limits and scored for 2 points (10 points total for Section V Part B).

Section V Part C: Capacity of Implementation Partner Organizations (10 points)

Applicants should illustrate:

- the capacity of implementation partner organizations to implement Promise Zone Plan.
- the capacity of implementation partner organizations most relevant to roles and responsibilities within the plan. Points will be based on the degree to which prior experience of each implementation partner is similar to or has prepared the applicant to successfully fulfill their roles and responsibilities in the context of a situation with the scale, scope, and complexity of the proposed Promise Zone effort.

Section V Part C: Submission Requirements

- i.** A narrative describing implementation partner organizations' capacity to implement their roles and responsibilities under the proposed Promise Zone Plan. A definition of implementation partners is included in the Appendix. Also include any information related to past performance issues under federal grants.

Suggested 2-3 page limit of the 25 page narrative.

Section V Part D: Data and Evaluation Capacity (5 points)

Reviewers will assess the extent of the prior experience that the organization responsible for data and evaluation has to collect, manage, share, and use data for evaluation and continuous improvement towards each intended outcome. Plans to address challenges should be described. This should include describing any existing data sharing agreements, experience using technology to track metrics, and/or plans to promote access to data in a way that protects privacy, such as local data protections, informed consent procedures, and staff training.

Identify the organization (lead organization or implementing partner organization) that will manage data collection and evaluation for the Promise Zone goals and activities. Reviewers will also evaluate how organizations relevant to the Promise Zone Plan, such as police departments or local education agencies, have been and/or will be engaged in providing and analyzing data.

Section V Part D: Submission Requirements

- i. A narrative explaining the prior experiences of the organization to manage, share, and use data. Discuss how data, including operational outputs and outcome indicators, will be used in the management of activities in the Promise Zone Plan.

Suggested 1-2 page limit of the 25 page narrative.

Section V Part E: Resident Engagement Capacity (5 points)

The narrative will include the extent of past experience in resident engagement by the organization responsible for facilitating resident engagement. Applicants should describe the proposed strategy for resident engagement in the Promise Zone Plan, including engagement with current residents and New Americans that may include immigrants and refugees. How has the organization addressed barriers to meaningful, constructive involvement of all residents including racial and ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups?

Reviewers will rate all of the following factors:

- i. Involvement by resident and community organizations in development of overall Promise Zone Plan;
- ii. Engagement with current residents and New Americans that may include immigrants and refugees. Narrative should address how the strategy

addresses barriers to meaningful, constructive involvement of all residents, including racial and ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups; and

- iii. Extent to which the strategy ensures sustained, informed, inclusive, and substantive resident participation in the continued development implementation and oversight of the Promise Zone Plan.
- iv. Similarity between proposed Promise Zone activities and the previous efforts of the organization responsible for such engagement; and
- v. Extent of resident input on project design and execution for those previous efforts.

Section V Part E: Submission Requirements

- i. A narrative describing the role of residents in developing the Promise Zone Plan and the proposed strategy for ongoing resident engagement in the Promise Zone Plan, including engagement with current residents and New Americans that may include immigrants and refugees. Narrative should address how the strategy addresses barriers to meaningful, constructive involvement of all residents including racial and ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups.
- ii. The organization responsible for leading resident engagement should be clearly identified in the diagram of partnership structure required in Section V, Part A. The narrative here should provide detailed information on the organization's past experience with resident engagement.

iii.

Suggested 1-2 page limit of the 25 page narrative.

Section V- Part F: Strength and Extent of Local Government Commitment (10 points)

Reviewers will assess the strength and extent of commitment from relevant local government entities to target local funds and locally-controlled state and federal funds (not contingent upon receipt of Promise Zone designation) to achieve proposed Promise Zone outcomes.

Section V Part F: Submission Requirements

- i. Letter from local government executive, attached in Section II—Qualifying Criteria. Letter should describe the commitment of local government to coordinate work and investments, including targeting of local and locally-controlled state and federal funds toward Promise Zone activities. *The letter must list specific programs, amounts of commitment,*

distinguish between existing and new commitments, and note how funds will be realigned to support the Promise Zone Plan.

- ii. *If applicable, for UGLG or tribal area in which a Promise Zone has already been designated:* An explanation of how, if a second Promise Zone designation is awarded, the UGLG or tribal area plans to work with all of the designated communities at the same time and sustain the level of effort, resources and support committed to each Promise Zone under its respective Promise Zone Plan for the full term of each Promise Zone designation. This explanation should be included in the UGLG or tribal area letter of commitments.

Note: The letter from local government executive(s), required for Section II- Qualifying Criteria, will be used to evaluate this selection criterion. Please include only one copy of the letter within the application submission. See Section II—Qualifying Criteria page 11 for more information about this letter.

THRESHOLD REQUIREMENTS

To be rated and ranked, all Applicants and applications must meet all threshold requirements of this application guide. Applicants must demonstrate compliance with the threshold requirements through the information provided in their application, unless instructed otherwise in this application guide. The threshold requirements of this application guide include:

- Completed Executive Summary (Section I)
- Completed Abstract (Section II-Eligibility Criteria, pg. 10)
- Meet all Lead Applicant Eligibility Criteria including submission of letters of commitment from community leaders of all qualifying UGLGs such as: elected tribal leaders and councils, town council chairmen] (Section II-Eligibility Criteria, pg. 11)
- Meet all Community Eligibility Criteria-including submission of the mapping tool data sheet (Section II-Eligibility Criteria, pg. 12)
- Project Narrative (not to exceed 25 pages)

If an application does not meet all threshold requirements, USDA will not consider the application as eligible and will not rate and rank it. Applicants must review and follow documentation requirements provided in this Thresholds Requirements section and the instructions on application organization, content and submission provided above.

SUMMARY OF APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Applications must provide a clear description of how the Promise Zone designation would accelerate and strengthen the community's efforts at comprehensive community revitalization. If any of the components listed below are not included, the application will not be eligible for consideration:

1. Executive Summary, entered on MAX Survey (2000 character limit).
2. Abstract, entered on MAX Survey (various character limits).
3. Mapping tool data sheet. **All pages of the mapping tool must be included and do not count against page limitations.**
4. Letter(s) that demonstrates the commitment from UGLG and tribal area leadership, including the tribal leaders or chief executives of the UGLGs represented in the Promise Zone. For applications across UGLG lines, a commitment must be demonstrated by leadership of all UGLGs involved (See Footnote 8 for approval delay). **All letters will not count towards the additional 20 pages of information.**
5. Narrative, **25 pages or less** that includes the most important information for purposes of Promise Zone selection, including a Promise Zone-specific diagram of the partnership structure (see the formatting requirements on page 8). Any pages beyond this limit will not be considered or reviewed. **The narrative does NOT count against the additional 20 pages of information.**
6. To scale city map and community level map. **Maps will count towards the additional 20 pages of information.**
7. Goals and Activities Template (page 31), entered on MAX Survey (various character limits)
8. Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (page 19). **The MOU will count towards the additional 20 pages of information.**
9. *Additional documentation:* Applicants may include additional materials in Microsoft Word or PDF format as attachments, including any tables, figures, charts, or additional maps. **All additional documentation will count towards the additional 20 pages of information.** Applicants are encouraged not to restate commitments made in the MOU in additional Letters of Support. Any pages beyond this limit will not be considered or reviewed.
10. *Optional:* Up to 3 optional JPEG images of the neighborhoods, buildings and streets within the proposed Promise Zone. Photographs should not include images of individuals, as this would require specific release forms from anyone in the image. The submission of photographs will not count toward page limits and will not affect the scoring outcome of an application.

DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFYING INFORMATION

Applicant/lead organization: The lead applicant is the organization that will, if selected, act as lead organization for a designated Promise Zone. Due to the nature of the initiative, Promise Zone activities are likely to be carried out by a variety of organizations and organization types. Eligible Lead Applicants for Promise Zone designation are: (1) Local governments (which includes county, city, town, township, parish, village, governmental authority or other general-purpose political subdivision of a state or any combination thereof) and Federally-recognized tribes¹⁹; (2) Non-profit organizations applying in partnership with local government or tribal government; (3) Public housing agencies applying in partnership with local government or tribal government, or Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) applying in partnership with tribal government; (4) Local Education Agencies (LEAs) applying in partnership with local government or tribal government; (5) Community colleges applying in partnership with local or tribal government. The lead organization will execute a Promise Zone designation agreement and be responsible to USDA for fulfilling the responsibilities of the Promise Zone designation. These responsibilities will include organizing and/or coordinating activities pursuant to the plan proposed in the designated community's application, and administering any funding or other benefits that designation may confer in the future to designated Promise Zones. The lead organization will also be responsible for tracking outcomes, periodically reporting to the participating federal agencies, and participating in evaluation activities as requested by federal agencies. The lead organization will provide certification to other organizations applying for grants and other benefits that, if received, would help to advance the Promise Zone Plan. Organizations receiving such certifications will provide them in federal funding competitions and the conferring of benefits to designated Promise Zones.

To the extent that the lead organization is unable to directly perform any of these duties, it will delegate them specifically to an implementation partner organization, and continue to oversee the fulfillment of all of the responsibilities under the Promise Zone designation agreement. The lead organization will be responsible for replacing the roles that implementation partner organizations and other partners may play in the Promise Zone Plan in the event that one or more such partners are unable to fulfill their responsibilities. Transfer of the lead organization to an organization other than the lead applicant will require approval by participating federal agencies, pursuant to the terms of the Promise Zone designation agreement.

“Tribal applicants”: Federally-recognized tribes as well as duly established political subdivisions of a Federally-recognized tribe.

A **“Federally-recognized tribe”** is any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community of Indians, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act [43 USCS §§ 1601 et seq.], that is recognized as eligible for the

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special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.) A Non-profit organization applying in partnership with a Federally-recognized tribal government may apply as a tribal applicant with written government support from the partnering Federally-recognized tribe.

Data and Evaluation:

All lead organizations of designated Promise Zones, implementation partner organizations in the Promise Zone strategies, and any federal grantees whose federally funded work contributes to Promise Zone strategies will be required to participate in evaluation of Promise Zones and related federal grant activities that may be conducted, as well as tracking outcome and performance indicators.

Lead organizations, implementation partners, and federal grantees contributing to Promise Zones must agree to work with evaluators designated by participating federal agencies, and other agency partner staff working on evaluation-related activities, as specified in their respective grant agreements, regulations and other requirements. Guidance on evaluation, performance/outcome indicators, measures and data sources will be forthcoming, but all participants will be expected to put forth their best efforts to connect HUD/USDA or other partners working on indicators tracking activities with data collected at the local level (e.g. from city government for urban zones, county for rural zones, and tribal government for tribal zones). For Promise Zone lead organizations and implementation partners, this may include providing access to program personnel and all relevant programmatic and administrative data, as specified by the evaluator(s) or federal PZ staff under the direction of a federal agency, as legally attainable, during the term of the Promise Zone designation and/or grant agreement. (See page [X] for definitions of lead organization and implementation partner organizations.)

Mapping Tool Overview²⁰

The Promise Zone mapping tool overlays the locally defined neighborhood/community boundaries with data associated with that area and estimates the rates of certain indicators in that area using a proportional allocation methodology. For metropolitan areas, the tool uses Census block group (as defined for Census 2010) as the smallest statistical boundary for the available data. For non-metropolitan areas, the tool uses census tract data to account for less precision in low-population areas. If the locally defined neighborhood/community is partially within two different Census areas, the data for each factor or threshold criteria are calculated based on the portion of the 2010 housing units located in each Census area for the vacancy variables and 2010 population for the population, poverty, and employment variables. The 2010 housing unit and population count data are available to HUD at the block level and thus can be used as the underlying data to apportion each block group and tract's appropriate share of importance.

²⁰ <http://www.huduser.org/PZ2013/promiseZone.html>

For example, based on a user defined geography, 80 percent of the housing units in the locally defined neighborhood/community are in a block group with a poverty rate of 40 percent and 20 percent of the units are in a block group with a poverty rate of 10 percent. The "community poverty rate" would be calculated as: $(80\% \times 40\%) + (20\% \times 10\%) = 34\%$.

Mapping Tool Data Sources:

The data are from a variety of sources:

1. **ACS 2011** refers to the US Census American Community Survey 2007-2011 five-year estimates. These are the most recent nationally available data for small geographies at the same Census 2010 boundaries as the other data provided, using a statistical technique that combines five years of data to create reliable estimates for small areas.
2. **CHAS 2010** refers to the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) special tabulations HUD receives of Census ACS data. The CHAS data used for this tool are based on ACS 2006-2010 five-year estimates see <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/cp.html> for more information.
3. **Census 2010** refers to block-level 2010 decennial counts of housing and population.
4. **USPS 2013** refers to the United States Postal Service long-term vacancy data as of June 30, 2013.

Evidence - Levels of evidence:²¹

The five evidence levels are:

1. **No evidence** means that the applicant has not provided evidence that they have collected any qualitative or quantitative data to date.
2. **Pre-preliminary evidence** means the applicant presents evidence that it has collected quantitative or qualitative data from program staff, program participants, or beneficiaries that have been used for program improvement, performance measurement reporting, and/or tracking. An example could be gathering feedback from program participants following their receipt of the intervention.
3. **Preliminary evidence** means the applicant presents an initial evidence base that can support conclusions about the program's contribution to observed outcomes. The evidence base consists of at least one non-experimental study conducted on the proposed program (or another similar program that uses a comparable intervention). A study that demonstrates improvement in program beneficiaries over time on one or more intended outcomes OR an implementation (process evaluation) study used to learn and improve program operations would constitute preliminary evidence. Examples of research that meet the standards include: 1) outcome studies that track

²¹ Corporation for National and Community Service, Operation AmeriCorps NOFO 2014, http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Operation_AmeriCorps_NOFO_2014.pdf-evaluation

program beneficiaries through a service pipeline and measure beneficiaries' responses at the end of the program; and 2) pre- and post-test research that determines whether beneficiaries have improved on an intended outcome.

4. **Moderate evidence** means the applicant presents a reasonably developed evidence base that can support causal conclusions for the specific program proposed by the applicant with moderate confidence. The evidence base consists of one or more quasi-experimental studies conducted on the proposed program (or another similar program that uses a comparable intervention) with positive findings on one or more intended outcome OR two or more non-experimental studies conducted on the proposed program with positive findings on one or more intended outcome OR one or more experimental studies of another relevant program that uses a similar intervention. Examples of research that meet the standards include: well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies that compare outcomes between the group receiving the intervention and a matched comparison group (i.e. a similar population that does not receive the intervention).
5. **Strong evidence** means the applicant presents an evidence base that can support causal conclusions for the specific program proposed by the applicant with the highest level of confidence. This consists of one or more well-designed and well-implemented experimental studies conducted on the proposed program with positive findings on one or more intended outcome.

Examples of local government and other partner commitment: Commitments may be made to the Promise Zone Plan by many organizations acting in the community in ways that support Promise Zone goals and activities. The level of intensity and duration of such commitments may range from occasional assistance and expressions of general support, to the ongoing roles and day-to-day responsibilities taken on by implementation partners, to the lead organization's responsibility for overall coordination, reporting and delivery of results. Examples of commitments that would be less intensive and consistent than those of an implementation partner might include in-kind donations of the use of meeting space, equipment, telecommunications services, or staffing for particular functions; letters or other expressions of support for Promise Zone activities and applications for resources at the local, state and federal level; participation in steering committees or other advisory bodies with respect to the overall Promise Zone Plan or particular elements of it; permanent donations of funding, land, equipment, facilities or other resources; or the provision of other types of support without taking on a formal role in the day-to-day operations and advancement of the Promise Zone Plan as described in the definitions of implementation partner or lead organization.

Implementation partner organization: An implementation partner organization is an organization that agrees to fulfill specific responsibilities to carry out the day-to-day work and operations of the Promise Zone Plan, as detailed in the community's Promise Zone application and any amendments, documents referenced in the Promise Zone designation agreement, and other documents that may exist among the partner organizations in the Promise Zone Plan.

Local Education Agency: As defined by the Department of Education Race to the Top Notice, a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools; or a Tribal Education Department.

Nonprofit: Nonprofits eligible to be an applicant under this notice are entities that are classified as such in accordance with section 501(c) of the Federal Tax Code and have been designated as such by their state government. A nonprofit organization can be organized for the following purposes: charitable, religious, educational, scientific, or other similar purposes in the public interest. To obtain tax-exempt status, qualified organizations must file an application with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and receive designation as such by the IRS. For more information, go to www.irs.gov. Entities that are in the process of applying for tax-exempt status, but have not yet received nonprofit designation from the IRS by the application deadline date, will not be considered an eligible applicant. All nonprofit applicants must submit either their IRS determination letter to prove their 501(c) status or the letter from the state government to prove their nonprofit status.

Public Housing Agency: The term “public housing agency” has the meaning provided in section 3(b)(6) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a).

Supporting partner organization: A supporting partner organization is an organization that will not carry out day-to-day work of the initiative, but will contribute resources or advise on the direction of the Promise Zone strategy.

Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs): Organizations designated by a Federally-recognized Tribe to administer federal funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. A TDHE may be a department within the tribe, tribal housing authority with separate board of commissioners, or a nonprofit organization.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON SPECIFIC VARIABLES

Concentration of People in Poverty is calculated with data at the block group level from ACS 2011 for metropolitan areas and the tract level for non-metropolitan areas.

This indicator represents the percent of people within the target geography who are below the poverty line. The estimated concentration of Extremely Low Income (ELI) households represents an approximation of the percent of households within the specified area whose household combined income is below 30% of the HUD defined Area Median Income (AMI). This ELI indicator is calculated with data from the block group level from Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) 2010. The final number included in this report for "poverty rate" is the greater of these two indicators.

Employment Rate is calculated with data at the block group level from ACS 2011 for metropolitan areas and the tract level for non-metropolitan areas. This indicator represents the percent of the labor force (age 16 and above) that is employed or in the labor force. Neither the numerator nor the denominator includes people in the armed forces or those outside of the labor force.

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES TEMPLATE

Use the template below to lay out the goals and activities of the proposed Promise Zone Plan. Complete the template in MAX Survey for each relevant goal in the Promise Zone application. MAX Survey will allow the Applicant to identify up to six goals, each of which include up to four activities per applicable goal area.

Check the box to acknowledge the following statement:

- I give HUD and USDA permission to share information included in mapping tool data sheet and the Goals and Activities Template.

Non-federal organizations including foundations, social investors, researchers, consultants, and networks of professionals and organizations have expressed interest in the work underway in communities applying for Promise Zone designations. Community stakeholders and other members of the public also request information from time to time.

Note: Applicants may select up to six goals in total. Applicants must select at least three of the four Promise Zone Initiative goals in their Goals and Activities Template. The four Promise Zone Initiative goals are: Create Jobs, Increase Economic Activity, Improve Educational Opportunities, and Reduce Violent Crime. Applicants may also choose up to three other community goals from the following list: Increase Access to Quality Affordable Housing, Promote Health and Access to Healthcare, Improve Community Infrastructure and Promote Civic Engagement. The range of potential goals has been drawn from experience with the first round Promise Zone designees and review of second round Promise Zone applications.

Promise Zone Goal
<p>Select at least 3 of the Promise Zone Initiative goals from options listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create jobs <input type="checkbox"/> Increase economic activity <input type="checkbox"/> Improve educational opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce violent crime <p>Select up to 3 other community goals from the options listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increase access to quality affordable housing <input type="checkbox"/> Promote health and access to healthcare <input type="checkbox"/> Improve community infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Promote civic engagement
Description of Promise Zone Goal – 250 character limit
<p>[Description of the goal and how it connects to the needs identified in Section IV-A.] <i>Example: Increase educational opportunities and college and career readiness for all children living and attending school in the proposed Promise Zone. Increase graduation rate for all students. In the proposed Promise Zone, there is a 43% high</i></p>

<i>school graduation rate.</i>	
Description of Technical Assistance Need– 250 character limit	
[Describe any technical assistance needed to implement activities related to this goal. .]	
Activity 1 – 250 character limit	
[Description of an activity or intervention for implementing this goal. Distinguish between new and ongoing activities.]	
<i>Example:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expand college preparatory program for high school students to help with financial aid, testing, and college applications [Ongoing]</i> 	
Policy Area	
Below is a list of goals for Promise Zones. Please select the policy area that best represents the proposed activity:	
<i>Note: Policy areas will appear as dropdown options.</i>	
<u>Create Jobs:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Development <input type="checkbox"/> Family Asset Building <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<u>Increase Economic Activity:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector Investment <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<u>Improve Educational Opportunities:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood <input type="checkbox"/> K-12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<u>Reduce Violent Crime:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Crime Prevention and Intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Community Policing and Trust <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety Capacity Building <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<u>Expand Affordable Housing:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Development <input type="checkbox"/> Homeownership <input type="checkbox"/> Renter Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<u>Improve Health and Wellness:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Food Access <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Health <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<u>Improve Community Infrastructure:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Corridors <input type="checkbox"/> Community Infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Broadband <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<u>Increase Civic Engagement:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity Building <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Rationale/Evidence- 500 character limit	
Discuss how or why you believe the proposed activity will lead to the achievement of the goal in this specific context.	
Implementation Partners- 500 character limit	
[List implementation partner organizations, including roles and responsibilities for each.]	
<i>Example:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The School District 123 and Principal of the neighborhood high school located in the Promise Zone. The School District will provide additional resources to school counselors and provided targeted interventions to students at-risk of dropping out.</i> 	

Committed Financial Support

List all firm financial commitments for implementing this activity. For each commitment, select the type of funding source from the drop down menu. Indicate the source of funds, activity, amount, start and end date for each source, and identify the organization receiving the funds. Type N/A if not applicable

Example:

<u>Financial Commitment</u>	<u>Financial Commitment</u>	<u>Financial Commitment</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Below-Market	Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Below-Market	Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Below-Market
Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Credit	Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Credit	Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Credit
Proceeds	Proceeds	Proceeds
Source: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/>	Source: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/>	Source: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/>
Private/Philanthropic	Private/Philanthropic	Private/Philanthropic
Source of Funds: General Fund, School District 123	Source of Funds: Promise Neighborhoods Grant, Dept. of Education	Source of Funds: Private Grant, Foundation ABCD
Activity: Salary for additional school counselor	Activity: Develop a family engagement program	Activity: Establish summer college prep program
Amount: \$75,000	Amount: \$10,000	Amount: \$200,000
Start and end date: August 2015-July 2020	Start and end date: August 2015-July 2020	Start and end date: June 2016-August 2018
Recipient: Neighborhood High School	Recipient: School District 123	Recipient: Neighborhood High School

Financial Support Needed

List the financial support needed for implementing this activity. For each financial need, select the type of funding source from the drop down menu. Indicate the activity, estimated amount, date of needed funds and intended organization receiving the funds start and end date for each source, and identify the organization receiving the funds. Type N/A if not applicable.

Example:

<u>Financial Need 1</u>	<u>Financial Need 2</u>	<u>Financial Need 3</u>
<p>Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Below-Market</p> <p>Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Credit</p> <p>Proceeds</p> <p>Activity: Funds to purchase test preparation materials for students</p> <p>Estimated Amount: \$25,000</p> <p>Start and end date: Beginning September 2016</p> <p>Recipient: School District 123</p>	<p>Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Below-Market</p> <p>Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Credit</p> <p>Proceeds</p> <p>Activity: Funds to increase professional development opportunities related to college- and career readiness for educators</p> <p>Estimated Amount: \$50,000</p> <p>Start and end date: Beginning September 2016</p> <p>Recipient: Neighborhood High School</p>	<p>Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Below-Market</p> <p>Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Credit</p> <p>Proceeds</p> <p>Activity: Funds to establish a data collection system to track student achievement</p> <p>Estimated Amount: \$100,000</p> <p>Start and end date: Beginning September 2016</p> <p>Recipient: School District 123</p>

Committed Non-Financial Support

[List any committed non-financial support for this activity. List the source and type of support, activity, start and end date for each resource and identify the organization receiving each resource. Type N/A if not applicable.]

Example:

- Source and type: AmeriCorps Grant, Corporation for National and Community Service
- Activity: AmeriCorps member currently helps a small number of students after school
- Start and end date: August 2014-July 2015
- Recipient: Neighborhood High School

Non-Financial Support Needed

[List the types of non-financial support needed for implementing this activity. List the type of support, activity, start and end date for each resource and identify the intended organization receiving each resource. Type N/A if not applicable.]

Example:

- *Type: Volunteers*
- *Activity: Need 10-15 total, part- and full-time staff and volunteers to expand the afterschool program beyond a small group of students*
- *Start and end date: September 2015-2018*
- *Recipient: Neighborhood High School*

Expected Outcomes and Measurement- 500 character limit

[List measures or metrics that will be used to determine whether the activity is leading to the achievement of the goal or any interim outcomes.]

Example:

- *Increase graduation rate 10 percentage points by 2018*
- *Increase in student and parent satisfaction on school district survey*
- *Increase in college acceptance rate*

Data Collection, Tracking and Sharing –500 character limit

[For top-level tracking of progress of subgoals, describe how data will be collected, tracked and shared.]

Example:

- *Track graduation, college acceptance, and student and parent satisfaction rates*
- *Share information annually with Promise Zone partners and community*

Timeline/Milestones for Implementation – 500 character limit

[Briefly describe anticipated timeline and milestones for implementation of this activity. Omit information on needed financial or non-financial support that would be redundant with information provided above.]

Example:

- *Hire extra afterschool staff by the beginning of 2015-16 school year*
- *Have a completed and staffed tracking system by 2016-17 school year*
- *Secure Federal grant funding by 2017*

Any federal regulatory and/or statutory barriers

[Describe any federal regulations and/or authorizing statutes that create barriers to the implementation of the activity, with citations, or type N/A if not applicable.]

Example:

- *N/A*