



Annual Report
October 1, 2020 to
September 30, 2021
Submitted: November 12, 2021

Promise Zone (PZ): Evansville, Indiana

Lead Organization: ECHO Housing Corporation

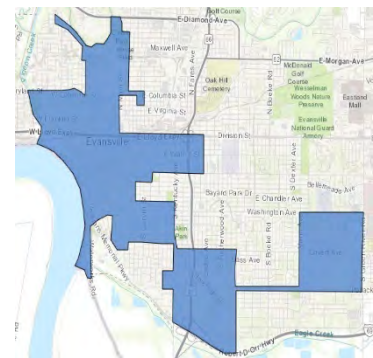
Lead Partner: City of Evansville Department of Metropolitan Development

Key Partners (current implementation partners): ECHO Community Health Care, United Neighborhoods of Evansville, Evansville Police Department, Housing Organizations United Serving Evansville (HOUSE), Vanderburgh County Health Department, Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, Building Blocks, Ivy Tech Community College Southwest, School Community Council After School Coalition, Welborn Baptist Foundation, St. Vincent Evansville, Youth First, Inc., Memorial Community Development Corporation, WorkOne Southwest, Evansville Water/Sewer Utility, Metropolitan Planning Organization, Old National Bank, Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (includes the Growth Alliance of Greater Evansville, Chamber of Commerce, and the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana), New Hope Baptist Church, Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library, Junior Achievement of Southwest Indiana, Aurora, Joshua Academy, United Caring Services, and Missing Pieces Community Development Corporation. In addition to the implementation partners, a number of other community partners are participating on workgroups and contributing significantly to the overall goals and objectives of the initiative.

SECTION 1-YEAR IN REVIEW

Promise Zone Overview

In June 2016, Evansville, Indiana was awarded a 10-year Promise Zone (PZ) designation by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). ECHO Housing Corporation serves as the lead organization, and the City of Evansville Department of Metropolitan Development is the lead partner. Additionally, 27 implementation partners have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing to support the goals and activities of the Promise Zone plan, and various other organizations throughout the Evansville community are working with implementation partners to support these efforts.



The Promise Zone serves the city's highest poverty, yet most promising neighborhoods. The target area population is low-income men, women, and children of all ages, races, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Primary challenges include poverty, low educational attainment, low-performing schools, blight, high crime, and limited access to health care and healthy foods.

Annual Summary (Oct. 1, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2021)

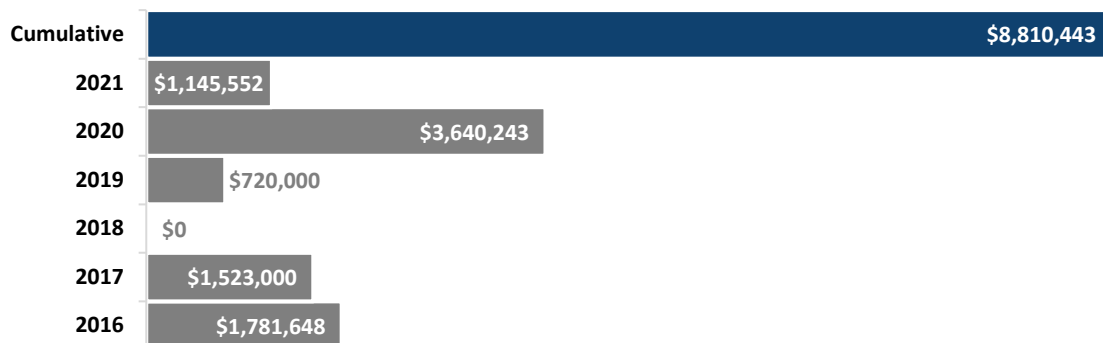
An overview of key milestones and accomplishments of the Evansville Promise Zone is provided below. Subsequent sections review progress for each of the specific goal areas. To understand the long-term impact, annual and cumulative data are presented as available.



Increased direct and leveraged community investment

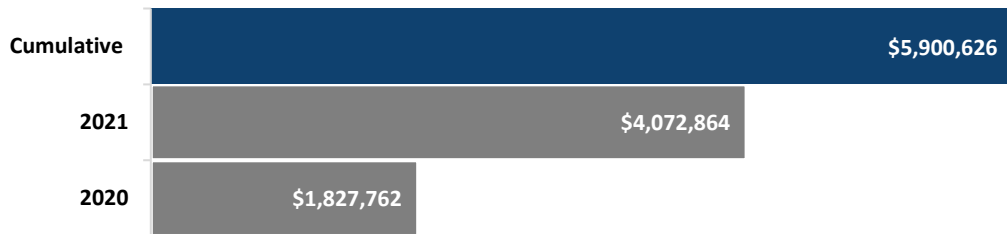
Significant community investment has been made in the Promise Zone since the June 2016 designation award. Investments reflect direct funding received through competitive grant or tax credit applications awarded to Promise Zone partners, as well as leveraged private and public investments occurring within the Promise Zone area. Investments impact the quality of life of Promise Zone residents.

\$8,810,443 in cumulative federal grant awards and allocations received (since June 2016)



- **\$1,145,552** received (Oct. 1, '20 to Sept. 30, '21)
 - \$900,000 US Department of Labor, Advantix Development Corporation (Youth Build); \$245,552 Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (broadband connectivity).
- **\$3,640,243** received (Oct. 1, '19 to Sept. 30, '20)
 - \$2,489,432 USDOE Full-Service Community Schools Grant, Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation; \$690,554 OJJDP Opioid Affected Youth Initiative, Vanderburgh County Prosecutor's Office; \$460,257 US Department of Labor Homeless Veterans Reintegration Grant, ECHO Housing.
- **\$720,000** received (Oct. 1, '18 to Sept. 30, '19)
- **\$0** received (Oct. 1, '17 to Sept. 30, '18)
- **\$1,523,000** received (Oct. 1, '16 to Sept. 30, '17)
- **\$1,781,648** received (Jun. 6, '16 to Sept. 30, '16)

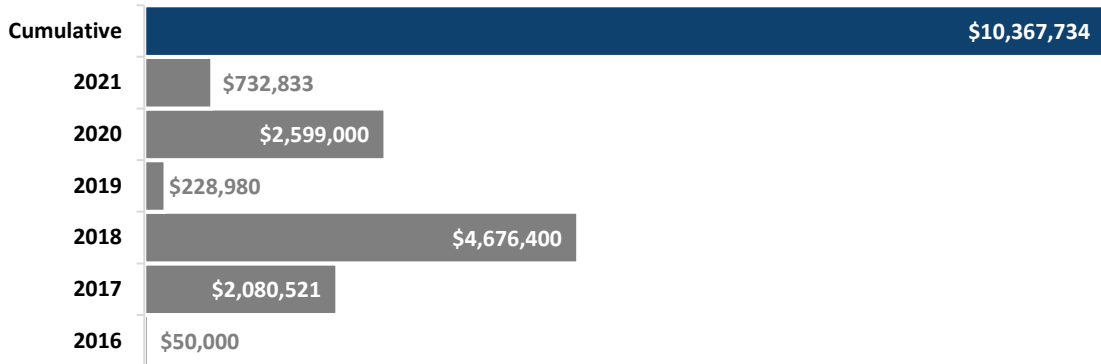
\$5,900,626 in cumulative federal grant allocations supporting the Promise Zone (Note: New investment tracking beginning in October 2019 to September 2020 reporting period)



As a HUD Entitlement Community, the City of Evansville receives a direct allocation from the federal government to provide decent housing and economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. While the funds are available city-wide, the City has flexibility in developing these programs, and many of its allocations focus on neighborhoods of the Promise Zone where the highest concentration of low- and moderate-income persons resides. The City's fiscal year for HUD allocations does not follow the same reporting period as that of the Promise Zone, and projects may take multiple years to complete. Main categories to which funds have been allocated include:

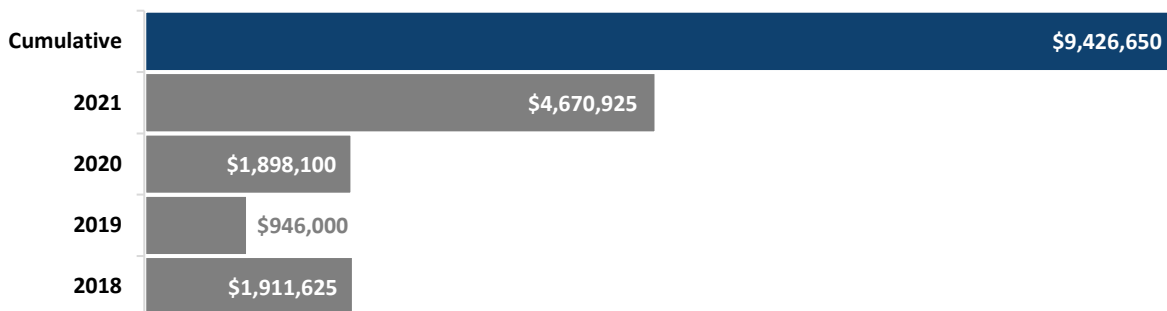
- **\$4,072,864** allocated (Oct. 1, '20 to Sept. 30, '21)
 - \$303,375 *Emergency Solutions Grants (provided to Promise Zone partners, Aurora, United Caring Services, and others for sheltering and the prevention of homelessness).*
 - \$761,955 *Public Service Community Development Block Grant (Tri-State Food Bank, Meals-on-Wheels, YMCA, and CAPE are a few of the agencies who will provide services in Food and Nutrition, Senior Services, and Youth Services).*
 - \$3,007,534 *Non-Public Service Community Development Block Grant (organizations such as Advantix, New Hope, CAPE, Carver Community Organization, Hope of Evansville, ECHO Housing, and Memorial CDC will provide a variety of programs in housing, family enrichment and transportation).*
 - \$637,000 *HOME (Aurora, CAPE, Hope of Evansville, and Memorial CDC will be awarded funds for building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income residents).*
- **\$1,827,762** allocated (Oct. 1, '19 to Sept. 30, '20)
 - \$1,190,263 *Community Development Block Grant (Food & Nutrition Services, Youth & Childcare Services, Home Repairs and Down Payment Assistance, Youth Employment); \$325,000 HOME Investment Partnership Program; \$229,219 Emergency Solutions Grant for sheltering and prevention of homelessness.*
 - \$83,280 *allocated by Evansville MPO from the Section 5310 program, which allows local nonprofits to acquire vehicles to aide seniors and individuals with disabilities (Missing Pieces CDC, The ARC of Evansville).*

\$10,367,734 in cumulative local and state grant awards and funding (not including tax credit awards; includes some federal allocations from the city to support Promise Zone operations and key initiatives (i.e., administration, consulting, PZ Express) (since June 2016)



- **\$732,833** received (Oct. 1, '20 to Sept. 30, '21)
 - PZ operations (\$124,000; ECHO Housing); Housing/capacity assistance (\$208,833; Hope of Evansville/Forefront Community Therapy); Afterschool and community school programming (\$400,000 over 4 years awarded to the YMCA); IDOE 21st CCLC: Renewability (awarded for three schools but only one [Delaware] is directly in the Promise Zone) (August 2021 award funding through July 2026).
- **\$2,599,000** received (Oct. 1, '19 to Sept. 30, '20)*
 - PZ operations (\$124,000; ECHO Housing); Afterschool and community school programming (\$1,500,000 over 4 years awarded to Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC); IDOE 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC): Cohort 10, September 2020 award-funding through July 2025 [Glenwood, Cedar Hall, Lincoln, Lodge]); Afterschool and community school programming \$975,000 over 4 years awarded to EVSC; IDOE 21st CCLC: Renewability [McGary, Caze, Fairlawn] September 2020 award-funding through July 2025). *Note: Updated in 2021 report to include 21st CCLC awards in September 2020.
- **\$228,980** received (Oct. 1, '18 to Sept. 30, '19)
- **\$4,676,400** received (Oct. 1, '17 to Sept. 30, '18)
- **\$2,080,521** received (Oct. 1, '16 to Sept. 30, '17)
- **\$50,000** received (Jun. 6, '16 to Sept. 30, '16)

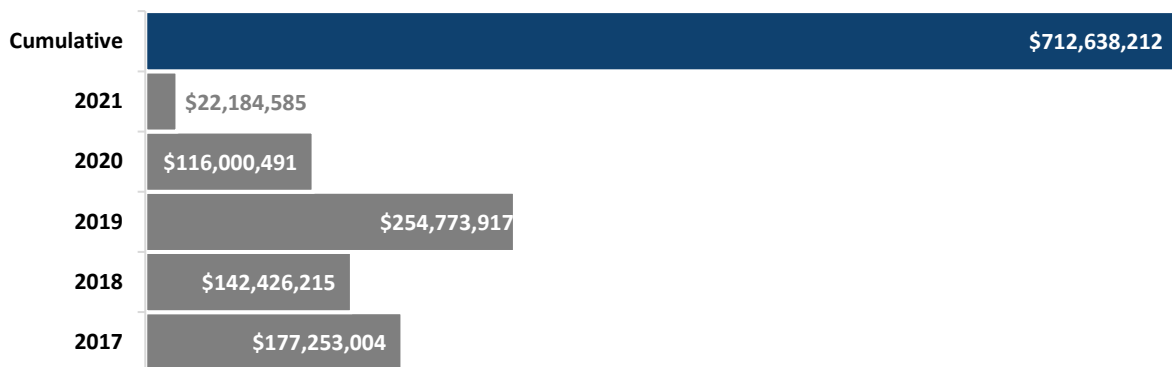
\$9,426,650 in cumulative Promise Zone capital investments reported through the Southwest Indiana Small Business Development Center (through December 2020)



- (Oct. 1, '20 to Sept. 30, '21) Total 2020 Promise Zone capital investment (reported in January 2021 and includes portions of prior performance year) equals \$4,670,925; reported for 35 clients of the ISBDC (based on FY 2020).
- (Oct. 1, '19 to Sept. 30, '20) Total 2019 Promise Zone capital investment (reported in January 2020 and includes portions of prior performance year) equals \$1,898,100; reported for 15 clients of the ISBDC (based on FY 2019).
- (Oct. 1, '18 to Sept. 30, '19) Total 2018 Promise Zone capital investment (reported in January 2019 and includes portions of prior performance year) equals \$946,000; reported for 9 clients of the ISBDC (based on FY 2018).
- (Oct. 1, '17 to Sept. 30, '18) Total 2018 Promise Zone capital investment (reported in January 2019 and includes portions of prior performance year) equals \$1,911,625; reported for 14 clients of the ISBDC (based on FY 2017).

\$712,638,212 in cumulative leveraged economic development and capital improvements

While tax credit awards received Promise Zone [PZ] designation priority points, other leveraged investments occurring within the PZ are included because of the alignment with goal areas, the impact on PZ residents, and/or because they were identified within the original PZ application. One significant funding source included Regional Cities. In December 2015, the Indiana State Legislature awarded Southwest Indiana a \$42 million Regional Cities Initiative grant to benefit the city of Evansville and three surrounding counties. Regional Cities is intended to leverage private funds to enhance quality of place that will attract and retain talent in the area and was highlighted in the PZ application as a leveraged investment. Since June 2016, a large number of related projects have been developed in the PZ.

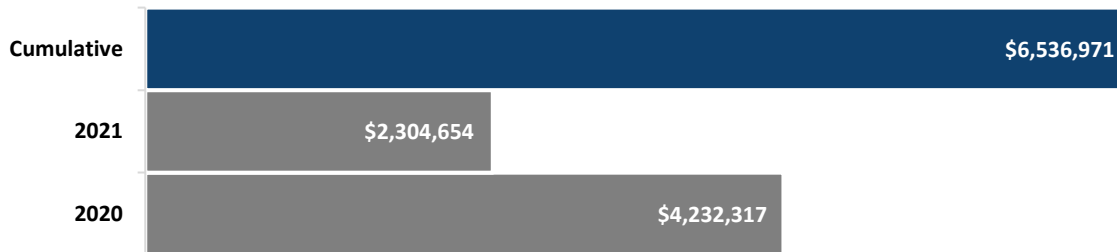


- (Oct. 1, '20 to Sept. 30, '21): **\$22,184,585**
 - \$6,228,030 in total development cost associated with affordable housing development resulting from low-income tax credit awards (\$579,423) combined with local investment for *Jacobsville Apartments Rehab* (\$6,228,030 total development cost; \$579,423 tax credit award received by *Gratus Development, LLC*).
 - \$15,956,555 in water and sewer upgrades (Jan. 2020 to Dec. 2020; reported annually in January).
- (Oct. 1, '19 to Sept. 30, '20): **\$116,000,491**
 - \$240,365 in façade improvements for properties within the Promise Zone from local city funds and leveraged investments. In 2019, the city of Evansville announced the availability of \$100,000 from local city funds for façade improvements for properties within the Promise Zone. The demand far exceeded the funds available, and the City determined those properties that were located within the *Jacobsville NRSA* would receive funding (from HUD CDBG NRSA set aside funds), allowing for nearly \$175,000 in total allocations. The pandemic stalled several of these projects and some may not proceed, while other projects within the *NRSA* came forward. Between October 2019 and September 2020, nine contracts encumbered \$100,365, with six additional projects

to begin in 2021. Contracts are maximized at \$25,000 and cannot exceed 50% of the project. The City's investment leveraged another \$140,000 in exterior improvements to buildings within the Promise Zone.

- \$26,000,000 in total development costs associated with The Forge on Main: 180 studio, 1 and 2 bedroom units, and 15,000 sq. ft of commercial space in Jacobsville (PZ census tract 20) are planned in two structures. The multi-family and retail mixed-use development broke ground in August 2020.
- \$20,639,187 in total development cost associated with affordable housing development resulting from low-income tax credit awards (\$2,210,525) combined with local investment for (a) Memorial Lofts received by Memorial Community Development Corporation (\$8,582,473 total development cost; \$825,000 tax credit award), (b) Erie Pointe received by Advantix Development Corporation (\$8,447,532 total development cost; \$825,000 tax credit award), and (c) Evansville Townhomes II received by Advantix Development Corporation (\$8,593,291 total development cost; \$669,083 tax credit award; Note: 25 of 60 units are located in or near the Promise Zone, so adjustments include \$3,609,182 (42% of total units) and \$560,525 tax credit award).
- \$69,120,939 in water and sewer upgrades (Jan. 2019 to Dec. 2019; reported annually in January).
- **(Oct. 1, '18 to Sept. 30, '19): \$254,773,917**
 - \$23,003,675 in total development costs associated with affordable housing development resulting from low-income tax credit awards (\$3,200,000) combined with local investment for Homes of Evansville II received by HOPE of Evansville (awarded in November 2018) and Evansville Townhomes received by Advantix Development Corporation (awarded in November 2018).
 - \$28.7 million in total development cost associated with the Post House: 144 apartments, office, parking, and retail in downtown Evansville. The development was initiated during the 2018-19 performance period and completed in 2020 (partially supported by Regional Cities).
 - \$39 million in total development costs associated with the Deaconess Clinic Downtown. The clinic and research facility were initiated during the 2018-19 performance period and completed in 2020. The clinic accommodates primary care, speciality care, and outpatient-based research. The facility received \$9 million from Regional Cities and approximately \$30 million from the private sector.
 - \$3 million in expansion for Signature School, which is a charter high school located in downtown Evansville (partially supported by Regional Cities).
 - \$24.8 million in total development costs associated with the new Deaconess Aquatic Center located in Garvin Park (Jacobsville neighborhood). Site clearing occurred in June 2019. The 70,000 square-foot swimming facility replaces the 43-year-old Lloyd Pool and will open in 2021.
 - \$136,270,242 in water and sewer upgrades (Jan. 2018 to Dec. 2018; reported annually in January).
- **(Oct. 1, '17 to Sept. 30, '18): \$142,426,215**
 - \$23 million Silver Birch of Evansville (119 unit assisted living facility) located in the Promise Zone (completed fall 2018; significant portion of the work conducted within performance period).
 - \$70 million Stone Center for Health Sciences completed in downtown Evansville (August 2018).
 - \$13,092,518 in total development cost associated with affordable housing development resulting from low-income tax credit awards (\$1,149,319) combined with local investment for Central Lofts (awarded in January 2017; project in development stages).
 - \$18 million in total development costs for the YMCA of Southwestern Indiana located in downtown Evansville (original building is being transformed into Central Lofts; partially supported by Regional Cities).
 - \$18,333,697 in water and sewer upgrades (Jan. 2017 to Dec. 2017; reported annually in January).
- **(Oct. 1, '16 to Sept. 30, '17): \$177,253,004**
 - \$69 million Double Tree Hotel opened in downtown Evansville (February 2017).
 - \$50 million Evansville Tropicana land-based casino located in downtown Evansville (opened in October 2017; significant portion of the work conducted within performance period).
 - \$16 million North Main Street enhancement project (completed November 2017; significant portion of the work conducted within performance period).
 - \$21,453,004 in total development cost associated with affordable housing development resulting from low-income tax credit awards (\$2,928,204) combined with local investment for Garfield Commons (awarded in January 2016; ground broken in April 2017), Garvin Flats, and St. Joseph School Redevelopment (January 2017 awarded; project in development stages).
 - \$20.8 million in water and sewer upgrades (up to Dec. 2016; reported annually in January).

\$6,536,971 in cumulative local, state, and federal funds to support COVID-19 relief



● (Oct. 1, '20 to Sept. 30, '21): \$2,304,654

- \$215,000 in additional Economic Development Administration (EDA) Revolving Loan Fund COVID-19 response funding. Due to the pandemic and emergency relief from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed by Congress, the city of Evansville received additional funding to prepare for and respond to the impacts of the virus. EDA \$550,000 (\$215,000 allocated to PZ businesses in 2021).
- As the administrators of an existing Economic Development Administration (EDA) Revolving Loan Fund, the City was offered an additional \$500,000 to provide for loans in response to COVID-19. This award received final approval at the end of August 2020, and no loans were made from it prior to the September 30, 2020 year-end reporting date. By October 1, 2021, \$420,000 of the loan's capital base had been lent to area businesses, with \$215,000 going to businesses within the Promise Zone. As noted below, the \$550,000 amount was originally included in the 2020 annual report. Since loans did not happen until the 2021 annual report, this amount was adjusted, and only those funds supporting PZ businesses in 2021 were included in the 2021 annual report.
- \$2,089,654 in funding awarded from the Greater Evansville COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund to organizations serving the Promise Zone. The Crisis Response Fund was initiated by the nonprofit funding community, businesses, and individuals to respond to community needs during the pandemic. Each month, COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund grantees indicate whether their funded programs serve residents of the Promise Zone. From October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021 (i.e., funding rounds 10 through 19), a total of 47 grantees served the Promise Zone. This represents 46% of awarded grantees during this time period. Award amounts for these grantees varied, ranging from \$1,450 to \$214,500. While funded programming was not necessarily limited to the Promise Zone, each of these grantees indicated that the Promise Zone was served. Programs serving the Promise Zone were split across the following: Relief efforts (34%), such as meeting basic needs and providing gap support to ALICE (asset-limited, income-constrained, employed) households; Recovery efforts (36%), such as technology enhancements and mental/relational health initiatives; and Restoration efforts (30%), such as fostering collaboration across agencies, advancing diversity and inclusion, and surfacing and scaling model programs.

● (Oct. 1, '19 to Sept. 30, '20): \$4,232,317

- \$3,323,875 in City COVID-19 response funding. Due to the pandemic and emergency relief from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed by Congress, the city of Evansville received additional funding to prepare for and respond to the impacts of the virus. Funds received included: ESG I \$790,000; CDBG \$1,592,787; ESG II \$941,088; and EDA \$550,000.
- The ESG and CDBG funds went to support many of the same projects identified under traditional allocations as their needs to serve their constituents in a crisis increased. Agencies were asked to identify how they were directly using the funds to respond to the crisis. Specific allocations that DMD requested included: a) \$300,000 to HOPE to assist renters with paying their housing costs to avoid eviction; and b) \$200,000 to businesses to provide for a safer environment for customers and staff. Primary users of these NRSA-CV funds were restaurants in Jacobsville and the Haynie's Corner Arts District who used funds to expand their outdoor seating capacity to allow for social distancing.
- As the administrators of an existing Economic Development Administration (EDA) Revolving Loan Fund, the City was offered an additional \$500,000 to provide loans in response to COVID-19, along with \$50,000 to administer the fund. This award received final approval at the end of August 2020, and no loans were made from it prior to the September 30 year-end reporting date. Prior to the EDA funds becoming available, the City announced the Restart Evansville Post Pandemic (REPP) loan program, from which 12 loans for \$5,000 each (\$60,000) with 0%

interest were made for a term of 5 years to assist businesses shut down during the pandemic to get back up and running. Five of these businesses are located in the Promise Zone. Note: The \$550,000 amount was originally included in the 2020 annual report. Since loans did not happen until the 2021 annual report, this amount was adjusted and only those funds supporting PZ businesses in 2021 were included in the 2021 annual report.

- \$908,442 in funding awarded from the Greater Evansville COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund to organizations serving the Promise Zone. The Crisis Response Fund was initiated by the nonprofit funding community, businesses, and individuals to respond to community needs during the pandemic. Each month, COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund grantees indicate whether their funded programs serve residents of the Promise Zone. From April 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020, a total of 40 grantees served the Promise Zone. This represents 51% of awarded grantees. Award amounts for these grantees varied, ranging from \$3,000 to \$156,000. While funded programming was not necessarily limited to the Promise Zone, each of these grantees indicated that the Promise Zone was served. The most common services involved provision of food and supplies, though it should be noted that programs around housing, education, transportation, and health were also funded. In some cases, funding was also available to support operational expenses for organizations serving the Promise Zone.



Increased public-private partnerships

- Two significant redevelopment projects in the Promise Zone have made significant progress during this performance period. Projects are connected with Opportunity Zones and Regional City Awards.
 - *5th & Main Tower: In the 2019 Annual Report, a new development project was planned to occur in downtown Evansville (PZ census tract 18). The new development was to rehab an existing building into 68 apartments, office, retail, and underground parking. During the last reporting period, it was announced that the infrastructure was not sufficient for reuse. During the current reporting period, demolition of the building and surrounding buildings is in progress to make way for a new development spanning the full block. The development is expected to align with a new park planned for Main Street.*
 - *The Forge on Main: 180 studio, 1 and 2 bedroom units and 15,000 sq. ft of commercial space in Jacobsville (PZ census tract 20) are planned in two structures. The multi-family and retail mixed-use development broke ground in August 2020 and progress made in development during the current reporting period. The use of housing vouchers have been approved for the development and some occupancy is expected this year.*
- To address food access, Promise Zone partners, including but not limited to New Hope Baptist Church Bridge Builders, Missing Pieces Community Development Corporation, and the City of Evansville, continue to operate the PZ Express. Many Promise Zone neighborhoods do not have a grocery store within walking distance. The PZ Express transports shoppers to and from the grocery store. For the current reporting period, a total of 230 rides were provided by the PZ Express, averaging 19 riders per month.



Strengthened communication and awareness of goals and objectives

- Due to the pandemic, a virtual Promise Zone convening was once again held in June 2021. Federal partners provided information on available federal resources and strategies for accessing them. As part of the National Coalition of Promise Zones, Evansville Promise attended and supported the convening.
- The Evansville Promise Zone director is participating on the National Coalition of Promise Zones. Efforts are being made to strengthen awareness of the Promise Zone's value and importance in supporting communities.
- Consistent with the prior year, each workgroup is working towards an annual action plan aligned with core workgroup goal areas. Some workgroups are using subcommittees to focus more specifically on tasks.
- Evaluation briefs specific to each goal area were developed by the Promise Zone data and evaluation partner. The briefs outline each goal area performance measure, the desired target, and current progress.
- The Promise Zone launched a new application (PZ app) in December 2019. The new app allows residents and partners to share and connect to community resources. The tool also assists in messaging key events. The PZ app was refreshed during the current reporting period to include COVID-19 resources and updated partner information. From November 2019 through October 2021, there have been a total of 7,086 contacts with the PZ app. In addition, 676 users signed up for custom push notifications.
- Promise Zone VISTAs are attending neighborhood association meetings to better understand the needs of neighbors and engage with the community. VISTAs are also attending each goal work group.



Increased capacity and infrastructure to support goals and objectives

- A new structure was implemented during the current reporting period to support Promise Zone goals and objectives. The prior governance committee was changed to a monthly meeting primarily consisting of Promise Zone workgroup chairs. Prior members of the governance committee are also invited to participate. In addition, goal area workgroups continue to meet.
- The City of Evansville Department of Metropolitan Development continues to employ a liaison between the Promise Zone and the city of Evansville. The liaison works closely with the Promise Zone director and workgroups, while coordinating city resources.
- The number of implementation partners (with signed MOUs) remains at 27.
- Three new VISTAs were added in June 2021. VISTAs are serving as neighborhood support specialists and are primarily responsible for assisting the Promise Zone in achieving goals.

- An evaluation framework continues to be implemented. The third round of the Evansville Promise Community Survey is currently being administered. Results will be shared with partners in January 2022 to inform progress toward goals.



Community engagement

- Given challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, most meetings have continued to occur virtually. Social media has been used effectively to communicate with residents and partners. Push notifications are also sent out through the Promise Zone app.
- As noted above, three new VISTAs were added in June 2021. VISTAs are serving as neighborhood support specialists and are primarily responsible for assisting the Promise Zone in achieving goals. VISTAs are attending neighborhood association meetings and are working to connect needs with Promise Zone initiatives.



Upcoming Priorities

Over the next year, the Evansville Promise Zone seeks to continue working towards goals of increasing jobs, increasing economic development activity, improving educational opportunities, reducing violent crime, promoting health and access to healthcare, and increasing access to affordable housing. In addition, several key areas reflect major priorities for this next year. Importantly, priorities are largely consistent with previous years, but build on the progress that has been made.

- (1) Strengthen communication among workgroups.** Due to the pandemic, most workgroup meetings moved to virtual platforms. As workgroups are now moving to more in-person meetings, our partnership will work to strengthen communication among members and ensure a more consistent meeting schedule and location is communicated across partners. A Promise Zone Google folder has already been created to capture meeting materials for each workgroup and will serve as a hub of information sharing across the workgroups.
- (2) Implement annual action plan.** Each workgroup has developed an annual action plan for the year and will work to address priorities as outlined within the plan. Selected examples of key strategies specific to workgroups include job fairs, financial literacy education, supporting the PZ Express, administration of the revolving loan fund, blight elimination, increasing affordable housing, increasing quality and participation in afterschool programs, expanding enrollment in 21st Century Scholars, addressing food insecurity, and healthcare enrollment. In doing so, our partners recognize the significant

challenges of implementing strategies during the pandemic. Therefore, collaboration among workgroup members will continue to focus on navigating these challenges while also pivoting to address emerging community needs.

(3) Continue efforts to expand public-private partnerships. The Evansville Promise Zone continues to demonstrate examples of successful public-private partnerships. As in the prior year, subsequent work will continue to focus on better identifying and strengthening connections with existing efforts. Additionally, efforts will focus on expanding these partnerships throughout the zone to address community needs (e.g., the loss of a grocery store on North Main Street has resulted in a food desert in the area). Finally, several Promise Zone census tracts qualify for Opportunity Zone investment. While projects are connected with Opportunity Zones as viable, partners will continue to identify investors to support these efforts.

(4) Strengthen tracking of leveraged investments. The Evansville Promise Zone continues to lack a formal process for capturing leveraged investments. As a result, it continues to be highly likely that investments within the zone are being underreported. A formal process for tracking the investments of key partners continues to be warranted. This process would include a clear definition of what investments qualify for reporting and ongoing tracking throughout the year. The challenges in tracking investments has primarily been the result of limited operational capacity. However, the recent addition of VISTAs has assisted in strengthening this capacity. For this next performance period, VISTAs will assist in developing a process to track investments and implementing this process for ongoing reporting.

(5) Identify and secure funding for Promise Zone infrastructure, growth, initiatives, and sustainability. Since June 2016, Evansville Promise Zone partners have experienced some success in obtaining grant funding and allocations to support selected aspects of Promise Zone infrastructure and initiatives. The city of Evansville has also provided key infrastructure and operational support. As noted above, the addition of VISTAs will serve to strengthen capacity in subsequent years. However, continued efforts are needed to identify and secure funding to increase overall capacity and support of priorities. Additionally, during each of the past two performance periods, only two federal grants were received to support initiatives (total of four federal grants). Continued efforts to bring more federal support to the zone will be pursued, while working to navigate challenges associated with the decline in federal entities offering preference points. Finally, our partnership will continue to leverage our Promise Zone designation with census tracts identified as Opportunity Zones.

(6) Continue efforts on strengthening broadband internet. Strengthening broadband internet within the Promise Zone was originally identified as an objective under the job development goal area. The pandemic continues to reinforce the importance of this vital infrastructure as residents have had to adjust to different ways of learning and working (e.g., virtual learning, meetings). Therefore, partners will continue to work to strengthen resident access to broadband internet. While still a focus under job development, this work will involve collaboration across workgroups and partners to fully address. During the current reporting period, the City of Evansville received a broadband connectivity grant through the Indiana Office of Rural Affairs. This is an important step to developing the necessary infrastructure throughout the zone.

(7) Build awareness and continue to engage more residents in Promise Zone initiatives. The Promise Zone app and social media (Twitter, Facebook) efforts have been successful at reaching some residents. The most recent Promise Zone Community Survey (2019) also highlighted an increase in awareness and understanding of the Promise Zone. In addition, a diverse group of community partners are engaged across six workgroups. Despite these efforts, strengthened resident engagement is warranted. Therefore, continued efforts will be focused on communication and resident engagement to ensure the voices of people living in the zone drive the work. This also includes increased awareness of Evansville Promise for local nonprofits and other organizations within the community. The limited ability to implement in-person strategies resulting from the pandemic will continue to be a challenge. Workgroups will work to address this barrier.

Overview of Promise Zone Goals and Progress

The following sections highlight milestones and accomplishments for the current reporting period. Highlights are based on a review of data provided in quarterly reports submitted throughout the year, progress reports submitted by workgroup chairs, and feedback from Promise Zone leadership and partners. Selected indicators from the evaluation framework are also integrated. Indicators represent a combination of categories A, B, C, and D from the original designation agreement, which includes various primary and secondary data sources. In October 2021, the third administration of the Promise Zone Community Survey was initiated. The survey is administered every other year to monitor changes and trends. Selected data from this survey are also presented for the 2019 administration where progress is being made.

Subsequent sections include progress toward community engagement efforts and address the following goal areas:

- ① Increase Jobs
- ② Increase Economic Activity
- ③ Improve Educational Opportunities
- ④ Reduce Violent Crime
- ⑤ Promote Health and Access to Healthcare
- ⑥ Increase Access to Affordable Housing



Increase Jobs

Promise Zone Goal: To increase meaningful and fair wage job opportunities for families who reside in the Promise Zone through workforce development, family asset building, and access to better transportation options.

Key Implementation Partners: Grow Southwest Indiana Workforce Board, Old National Bank, Fifth Third Bank, HOPE of Evansville, Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (includes the Growth Alliance of Greater Evansville, Chamber of Commerce, and the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana), Metropolitan Planning Organization, New Hope Baptist Church, Memorial Community Development Corporation, and United Way of Southwestern Indiana

Milestones and Accomplishments:

- The workgroup meets monthly and is chaired by the director of Grow Southwest Indiana Workforce, which promotes alignment with other initiatives.
- Increased access to job skills education and training:
 - *WorkOne hosted three job fairs for area residents and five individual employer hiring events (June 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021). Participation in job fairs ranged from 2 to 22 residents, with an average of 9 residents attending each job fair. Participation in individual hiring events ranged from 1 to 9 individuals, with an average of 4 people attending each event. Given the challenges with COVID-19, partners remain committed to identifying solutions to ensure opportunities are provided to residents (e.g., virtual job fairs, drive-through job fairs).*
 - *A total of 500 Promise Zone residents were expected to receive job skills education and training by 2021. This target was exceeded during the 2020 performance period and continued to grow in 2021, with a total of 820 residents receiving these services over the last four years. During the most recent reporting period, 306 Promise Zone residents were provided with job skills education and training through WorkOne Southwest (based on an unduplicated count of individuals identified as receiving Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment [RESEA] or Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act [WIOA] services). In addition, across various education and training opportunities through WorkOne, a total of 508 contacts were made with Promise Zone residents during this reporting period (based on a duplicated count of individuals identified as receiving RESEA or WIOA services, job fairs, adult education, Youth Build, etc.).*
 - *The percent of residents (who are currently employed part-time or full-time) reporting that their current job met their financial needs has stayed consistent (46% in 2017 and 46% in 2019; Promise Zone Community Survey 2019 [2021 survey is currently being administered]).*

- During the last reporting period, the Evansville Municipal Planning Organization has completed an online map of bus and transit routes (Transportation Guide) within the Promise Zone and city. Maps allow the user to identify stops closest to them and their destination, while also showing the current location of the bus on that route. A printable brochure provides helpful information on a variety of transportation modalities, including the bus system, bike paths, on-demand and medical transportation. The guide is also web and mobile friendly. The guide has been disseminated throughout the city and Promise Zone.
- Increased financial security of Promise Zone residents:
 - *A Fair Shot Financial Empowerment Program continues to be implemented to help residents build their knowledge and finances and improve their credit. A total of 72 participants attended the program, and 36 participants graduated (attended both class 1 and 2). Further, a total of 35 clients through OPE of Evansville actively engaged in housing counseling (either before or after attending Fair Shot).*
 - *A total of 34 individuals completed a 6-month money management seminar through Habitat for Humanity. Participants attended a class each month and met with a budget partner to apply the lesson to their circumstance. When they graduated, each had an emergency savings account established, a budget in place, and most arranged for their house payment to be paid by auto-draft in order to build their credit score with on-time mortgage payments.*
 - *There was a 13% increase in the percent of residents reporting using a written personal budget or spending plan based on the Promise Zone Community Survey (46% in 2017; 52% in 2019 [2021 survey is currently being administered]). Although promising, other survey items specific to financial security (having a savings account during the last 6 months, having an emergency fund in place) decreased during the time period.*
- Increased access to transportation supporting resident employment:
 - *The Bridge Builders program through New Hope Baptist Church provided transportation to 204 residents, assisting them with accessing employment.*

Top Priorities for the Next Year:



- ❖ Continue to implement primary activities associated with increasing access to job skills education and training, financial literacy, transit-oriented infrastructure, and broadband internet.
- ❖ The Fair Shot Financial Literacy Program will continue to be provided in targeted Promise Zone neighborhoods and expanded through partnership with the University of Southern Indiana and area churches. The program provides education in budgeting and homeownership. In partnership with the United Way, fair credit clinics are also planned.



Increase Economic Activity

Promise Zone Goal: To improve the local economy through long-term growth and to upgrade the standard of living for all citizens within the Promise Zone.

Key Implementation Partners: Evansville Water and Sewer Utility, Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (includes the Growth Alliance of Greater Evansville, Chamber of Commerce, and the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana), Junior Achievement of Southwest Indiana, Downtown Evansville – Economic Improvement District, Downtown Evansville – Development Corporation, North Side Business Association, and Evansville Trails Coalition

Milestones and Accomplishments:

- Two selected redevelopment projects in the Promise Zone have made significant progress during this performance period. Projects are connected with Opportunity Zones and Regional City Awards.
 - *5th & Main Tower: In the 2019 Annual Report, a new development project was planned to occur in downtown Evansville (PZ census tract 18). The new development was to rehab an existing building into 68 apartments, office, retail, and underground parking. During the last reporting period, it was announced that the infrastructure was not sufficient for reuse. During the current reporting period, demolition of the building and surrounding buildings is in progress to make way for a new development spanning the full block. The development is expected to align with a new park planned for Main Street.*
 - *The Forge on Main: 180 studio, 1 and 2 bedroom units, and 15,000 sq. ft of commercial space in Jacobsville (PZ census tract 20) are planned in two structures. The multi-family and retail mixed-use development broke ground in August 2020, and progress was made in development during the current reporting period. The use of housing vouchers has been approved for the development. Phase I of the project is now complete, and some units are ready for occupancy.*
- A new co-work space opened on North Main Street. The Foundary on Main offers an environment for individuals who work remotely and for small companies in need of office space.
- Upgraded and expanded infrastructure capacity to guide increased economic activity:
 - *Upgraded bike stations are located within the Promise Zone, including locations at the Evansville Convention and Visitors Bureau (Pagoda), the Downtown YMCA, Haynie's Corner area, and Tepe Park. Currently, the Upgrade Bikeshare program has 523 members. Since the Promise Zone designation in 2016, a total of 7.77 miles in biking and walking trails have been added in or connected to the Promise Zone, and 3.1 miles (Walnut Street Corridor) were started in 2020 with portions*

completed in 2021. The Walnut Street Corridor is approximately 3.1 miles and is identified as a "road diet project," reducing the number of vehicular traffic lanes from four to three. The project to improve Walnut Street involves rehabilitation of the pavement, curbs and gutters, and south sidewalk. In addition, the north sidewalk is being replaced with a multi-use trail from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to Vann Avenue. Construction began in 2020, and portions of the trail were completed in 2021.

- *Walnut Street Corridor (3.1 miles; in development; portions extend beyond the PZ).*
 - *Story Trail-Garvin (.07 miles, 2020).*
 - *Vine Street Trail (.7 miles, 2020).*
 - *Bob Jones Way (.2 miles, 2018).*
 - *High Rail Trail (2.5 miles, 2018).*
 - *North Main Street multi-use trail (1 mile, 2018).*
 - *Virginia Street multi-use trail (.6 miles, 2018).*
 - *Evansville African American Heritage Trail (1 mile, 2019).*
 - *Mid Levee Corridor (1.7 miles, 2019).*
- There was a 5% increase in residents who indicated infrastructure meets their lifestyle needs from 2017 to 2019 (Promise Zone Community Survey, 2019 [2021 survey is currently being administered]).
 - \$15,956,555 in water and sewer upgrades (January 2020 to December 2020; reported annually in January). This represents 63% of encumbered funds associated with overall planned water/sewer upgrades in the Promise Zone (as of January 2021).
 - 77% of the 25 commercial properties removed within the Promise Zone in 2016 and 2017 were transformed for an economic purpose (e.g., new or existing business, maintained green space) after approximately three years.
 - A total of 5 new businesses receiving support from the Southwest Indiana Small Business Development Center were added in the Promise Zone in 2020 (January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020), which represents a total of 41 new businesses since the original designation (Note: Indicator is a proxy for business starts and may not reflect all new business within the Promise Zone. Also, the definition of new business starts changed during the 2018-19 performance period).
 - Over 4.6 million in capital investments have been provided to businesses located in the Promise Zone. This consisted of 35 clients of the Southwest Indiana Small Business Development Center.
 - The number of certified minority, women, and veteran owned businesses in the zone has increased by eight compared to baseline (18 certified minority, women, and veteran owned businesses as of 2021).
 - The Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD), in cooperation with the Economic Development Administration, is providing a Revolving Loan program, which provides loans to existing businesses looking to expand, new business startups, and others. It is focusing on the city's Promise Zone and redevelopment designated areas that have a greater need for jobs and new economic activity. In addition, the city has a loan fund that can be accessed for smaller loans that may not meet EDA guidelines. A

micro-loan program is supported by the University of Evansville in collaboration with Old National Bank. All three funds are supported by the Indiana Small Business and Development Center as the entry point for applications and continued business development advisors.

- The Southwest Indiana Small Business Development Center hosted two virtual educational seminars providing education and access information for the Restaurant Revitalization Fund and the Economic Impact Disaster Loan.
- The Promise Zone collaborated with the City of Evansville's Procurement Office to create a survey to gauge interaction with small businesses and support action planning to improve engagement with businesses.
- Common Grounds in-person network meetings resumed. Common Grounds is a weekly networking event featuring community stories. They feature the work of small businesses, entrepreneurs, and community initiatives.

Top Priorities for the Next Year:



- ❖ Continue to implement primary activities associated with expanding and upgrading neighborhood infrastructure, supporting new and existing businesses, and place-making opportunities.
- ❖ Continue to engage individuals interested in new business opportunities through the existing revolving loan program supported through the Indiana Small Business and Development Center.
- ❖ Conduct virtual workshops on the small business education program and collaborate with ISBDC on in-person seminars.
- ❖ Inform, educate, and conduct outreach to small businesses on the value of businesses being certified as minority, women, and veteran owned.
- ❖ Create and execute a Promise Zone marketing strategy.
- ❖ Strengthen tracking of current direct and leveraged investments within the Promise Zone to better capture the overall impact of the designation.
- ❖ Continue to identify, educate, and support projects connected with Opportunity and HUB Zones.
- ❖ Work with local companies to encourage location within the Promise Zone.
- ❖ Establish/strengthen relationships with federal partners to strengthen understanding of opportunities.
- ❖ Complete Business Resource Guide.



Improve Educational Opportunities

Promise Zone Goal: Increase educational opportunities through a coordinated community school strategy that includes high quality early childhood experiences, community and school partnerships, systems that support learning, and connecting youth with resources to support postsecondary education.

Key Implementation Partners: Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC), Building Blocks, Ivy Tech Community College Southwest, School Community Council Afterschool Coalition, and Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library

Milestones and Accomplishments:

- The education workgroup continues to meet monthly. An afterschool coalition also meets monthly to coordinate high quality service delivery and strengthen collaboration among partners.
- Efforts to improve quality of early childhood experiences for children within the Promise Zone have shown progress. Data for 2021 are still pending, but prior year data highlight accomplishments. Specifically, there has been a 28% increase in the number of early childhood centers with a 3 or higher rating on Paths to Quality since baseline (for those participating in the rating system). In 2020, 68% (23/34) of participating early learning locations had a rating of 3 or higher, compared to 53% (30/34) at baseline. The number of locations participating increased from 30 to 34 locations.
- Progress is being made toward increasing social emotional adjustment and engagement in learning for students enrolled in schools located in the Promise Zone.
 - *As of the 2019-2020 school year, there has been a 26% decrease in the percent of students suspended out of school compared to baseline (2015-16).*
 - *Students receiving social work services (2020-2021) through Youth First decreased individual behavioral concerns by 24% as reported by students and by 15% as reported by teachers.*
- A total of 452 youth participated for 30 or more days in high quality afterschool programs within EVSC schools located within the Promise Zone, representing 18% of all enrolled students. Other community partners (e.g., Dream Center, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA) are actively participating monthly in the Evansville Afterschool Program Coalition and continue to provide programming within the zone.
- Community partners continue to identify strategies to sign youth up for 21st Century Scholars in direct partnership with EVSC. Since baseline, there has been a 29% increase in the percent of 8th graders enrolled in Promise Zone schools or feeder middle schools who are enrolled in the 21st Century Scholars program. The program provides free in-state tuition assistance to at-risk youth. In prior years, a quarter of students enrolled in the program during high school were reported as being on-track in meeting all of the

requirements of the program. Intentional efforts to improve these percentages are underway; some improvement has been noted, with 62% of 12th grade students in 2020-21 meeting all requirements compared to 59% at baseline.

- In September 2020, the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation received a \$2,489,432 Full-Service Community School grant from the US Department of Education. The grant allows four schools to establish full-service community schools providing a pipeline of evidence-based strategies from early childhood through high school. Three schools (Caze, Fairlawn, and McGary) are located directly in the Promise Zone, and one high school (Harrison High School) serves students residing in the zone. Several partners in the initiative are members of the education workgroup and collaborated to align strategies with Promise Zone education goals.
- The YMCA of Southwestern Indiana has received a 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) renewability award of \$400,000 over four years to support Delaware Elementary. Funding will allow for the continued operation of 21st CCLC programming at the school.

Top Priorities for the Next Year:



- ❖ Continue to implement primary activities associated with expanding high quality early childhood programming, PBIS implementation, expanding involvement in afterschool and summer programs, and enrolling students in 21st Century Scholars.
- ❖ Increase data and information on early childhood options to gain insight into their capacity, as well as the different options available to residents.
- ❖ Increase training for non-educators in the afterschool and early childhood programs on secondary trauma and social emotional development to match current training at EVSC.
- ❖ Provide training to afterschool program providers in the Indiana Quality Self-Assessment to improve quality of programming offered to youth.
- ❖ Provide training to community partners in 21st Century Scholars enrollment and partnership opportunities to increase enrollment.



Reduce Violent Crime

Promise Zone Goal: Work with neighborhood residents and stakeholders to generate and strengthen initiatives that aim to prevent serious and violent crime and reduce the number of physical locations in Promise Zone neighborhoods suitable for criminal activity.

Key Implementation Partners: Evansville Police Department, United Neighborhoods of Evansville, and Youth First, Inc.

Milestones and Accomplishments:

- As of the end of the 2020 calendar year, there continues to be a reduction in crime within the Promise Zone. However, caution should be used when interpreting this result due to the potential impact of COVID-19 (e.g., stay at home order). Specifically, compared to baseline, there has been a 25% overall decrease in part I and II crimes in 2020. When 2019 data are examined, there was a 3.6% decrease in part I and II crimes.
- A total of 295 blighted properties within the Promise Zone, which are often magnets for crime, have been removed since receiving the designation. Approximately 7% (21) of these properties were removed during the current reporting period.
- A total of 40 youth participated in Evansville Police Department programming, such as Choose Not to Lose Camp, Bigs with Badges, and Cops Connecting with Kids in the most recent evaluation performance period (January 2020 to December 2020).
- Promise Zone partners worked to support residents of Woodland Park apartments who are dealing with challenging housing conditions. Partners are assisting with housing vouchers and helping residents find safe and supportive housing through case management. Efforts are underway to assist the neighborhood in establishing a neighborhood association to support advocacy efforts.

Top Priorities for the Next Year:



- ❖ Continue to implement primary activities associated with community policing, crime prevention through environmental design, marketing and outreach, and youth programming.
- ❖ Continue working in partnership with the Evansville Police Department, neighborhood associations, and residents to strengthen community policing.
- ❖ Engage in a comprehensive housing initiative with a focus on a high priority neighborhood within the Promise Zone (Woodlawn Park Apartments). This will involve working collaboratively with partners in the neighborhood and those with expertise within the areas most affecting the neighborhood and people.



Promote Health and Access to Healthcare

Promise Zone Goal: Improve access to mental, physical, and dental health care and promote an environment supporting overall health and well-being of Promise Zone residents.

Key Implementation Partners: Vanderburgh County Health Department, ECHO Community Health Care, Welborn Baptist Foundation, St. Vincent Health, Youth First, Inc., and United Way of Southwestern Indiana

Milestones and Accomplishments:

- Health workgroup has maintained two subcommittees to advance workgroup goals. The opioid subcommittee is working to address the opioid epidemic in the area, while the food access committee is actively working to analyze data on food access and identify innovative strategies to address resident needs.
- The food work group (a subgroup of the health work group), in collaboration with the Healthy Communities Partnership, began work on goal two and four action items from the Local Foods Local Places (LFLP) action plan. The LFLP action plan was developed over several weeks in 2020 by a diverse community group with guidance from the EPA and USDA. A one-year work plan with quarterly goals for the food work group was identified. Due to the pandemic, all food work group meetings were held virtually throughout 2020 and 2021.
 - *The original work plan focused on the following initiatives during year 2021: supporting urban gardening and assuring food is not wasted, exploring a mobile food pantry/purchasing system option, supporting and expanding a bulk-wholesale food buying option program called Nourish, and exploring a shared kitchen concept to manage excess produce.*
 - *Ongoing support was provided for pop-up produce stands that support the WIC farmer's market voucher system, community garden sites, farmer's markets, and SNAP use, along with maintaining double bucks and Produce a Healthy Heart food and nutrition program to patients with high blood pressure.*
 - *Some modifications to the workplan occurred due to restrictions related to COVID-19, but the work group was still able to work toward the following initiatives:*
 - Collaborated with Feed Evansville, who provided food boxes during COVID-19 and gathered needed pantry information when changing this relief model to greater pantry reliance,
 - Surveyed growers by phone and Zoom about production and collaboration capabilities,
 - Virtual meetings held about a shared kitchen as a place to manage gleaned produce,

- Food Commission approved by Evansville City Council,
 - Gleaning policy approved,
 - Pantry survey conducted, and
 - Mobile food/pantry/purchasing truck acquired and nearly all funding gathered.
- A grant submitted to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through Urban Seeds was not funded, so it has since been resubmitted to Vanderburgh County Community Foundation for consideration. In addition, a USDA regional food system grant was submitted to support a food supply value chain coordinator.
- Primary outcomes associated with the workgroup are focused on increasing access to health care and creating an overall environment supporting wellness, including access to fruits and vegetables and prevention programs. Progress measures are aligned to the Promise Zone Community Survey (2019 [2021 survey is currently being administered]). Despite initial efforts, the most recent survey results continue to highlight a need.
- *21% of residents reported not having health insurance, 71% reported visiting a doctor for a routine check-up, and 12% reported not being able to attend an appointment because of lack of transportation.*
 - *29% reported that their general health is fair or poor, and 33% reported wanting to purchase fruits and vegetables but being unable.*
- To address food access, Promise Zone partners, including but not limited to, New Hope Baptist Church Bridge Builders, Missing Pieces Community Development Corporation, and the city of Evansville, launched the PZ Express in 2019. Many Promise Zone neighborhoods do not have a grocery store within walking distance. As of 2021, only one grocery store remains in the Promise Zone. The PZ Express transports shoppers to and from the grocery store. For the current reporting period, a total of 230 rides were provided by the PZ Express, averaging 19 riders per month.
- Urban Seeds continues to implement the Nourish Community Food Buying Club. The project allows families to order nutritious foods (fresh vegetables, meat, dairy, etc.) and pick them up on a regular basis in an effort to increase access, provide nutrition education, and build understanding of trauma-informed nutrition practices.
- The opioid subgroup has been established to address opioid abuse. The workgroup has successfully recruited committee members and is in the process of developing plans and pursuing funding (i.e., Trailblazer Planning Grant) to support key work group initiatives for early 2022.

Top Priorities for the Next Year:



- ❖ Continue to implement primary activities associated with connecting residents with healthcare and promoting a healthy environment.
- ❖ Based on the technical assistance received and initial planning efforts, continue to implement the comprehensive plan to address food insecurity and nutrition within the Promise Zone and nearby community.
- ❖ Urban Seeds and Evansville Healthy Communities Partners (HCP) will continue to partner to provide a bulk buying club for residents of the Promise Zone in order to create a supply of affordable groceries.
- ❖ Continue efforts to identify an opportunity for a grocery store within the Jacobsville neighborhood. The prior store has been closed over a year, which has created a food desert in the area.
- ❖ Aim to develop a multidisciplinary and inter-organizational series on collaborative education on best practices in combating the opioid epidemic with a goal to improve multidisciplinary care and inter-organizational collaboration in the Promise Zone.



Increase Access to Quality Affordable Housing

Promise Zone Goal: To collectively elevate quality neighborhoods and housing in the proposed Promise Zone.

Key Implementation Partners: Housing Organizations United Serving Evansville (HOUSE)

Milestones and Accomplishments:

- Housing Organizations United Serving Evansville (HOUSE) continues to serve as the housing workgroup. HOUSE is an area collaboration of housing service organizations and partners working to achieve both their own set of goals and the Promise Zone's goals related to housing.
- A total of \$579,423 in low-income tax credit awards were received in 2021 by Gratus Development, LLC, to rehabilitate 36 units of affordable housing in the Jacobsville neighborhood (Jacobsville I Apartments Rehab). The tax credits leveraged \$6,228,030 in total development costs for the project.
- Blight elimination efforts and use of the Land Bank in Promise Zone neighborhoods have continued.
 - *Of the 655 blighted properties originally identified for elimination within the Promise Zone (2016), 108 have been removed (6 during this reporting period). This represents 16.5% of all properties originally identified for removal.*
 - *Since the Promise Zone designation, other blighted properties within the Promise Zone have also been identified for demolition. When all properties identified for demolition are considered, a total of 295 blighted properties have been removed since receiving the designation (21 during the current reporting period).*
- A total of 395 mixed-use residential housing units (single family, two family, and multi-family housing units, including affordable and market rate units) have been built or are in the process of being built since the original Promise Zone designation (Note: Data for this performance measure are based on building permits from the most recent calendar year [2020]). Housing units have been completed by nonprofit partners (Habitat for Humanity, Memorial Community Development Corporation, HOPE of Evansville, Evansville Brownfields Corporation, Evansville Land Bank, Community Action Program of Evansville) and various private partners (individuals, development companies). Collectively, the number of units to date represents accomplishment of the 2021 goal of 250 units.
- There has been a 29% increase in the number of permanent supportive housing units available within the Promise Zone compared to baseline (2018 through 2021=180; baseline=140; data for this performance measure are based on available units from calendar year 2020).

- Four new tax credit projects were submitted during the current performance period (Advantix Development [Evansville Townhomes III], Gratus Development [Jacobsville II Apartments], MVAH Holdings [The James], Partnership for Affordable Housing [Baker Flats]) for housing projects primarily within the Promise Zone. Projects intend to support 202 housing units.
- With the assistance of volunteers, Community One rehabbed and sold two houses in the Tepe Park neighborhood. This work serves to restore blighted properties assisting in neighborhood revitalization.
- HOUSE created a brochure on tenant rights/responsibilities.
- Through Hope of Evansville, 250 people received affordable housing services and developed a sustainable household budget.
- The Community Action Program of Evansville (CAPE) has provided a number of key housing supports for residents within the Promise Zone. Selected examples include: Hardest Hit Funds Assistance Program (assisting homeowners who are either delinquent or in jeopardy of becoming delinquent with their mortgages with financial assistance up to \$30,000); COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program (assisting current renters who are either delinquent or in jeopardy of becoming delinquent with their rent payments with financial assistance to include actual late payments and future payments up to six months); Owner-Occupied Rehab Program (assisting homeowners with repairs and accessibility equipment installation to help improve current living conditions and safety); Windows Replacement Program (assisting homeowners with window replacements to help improve current living conditions and energy efficiency); Weatherization Assistance Program (assisting homeowners and renters with improving energy efficiency for comfort and decreased energy consumption); Homeownership Pre-Purchase Education courses (preparing customers for future homeownership); and Individual Development Account (assisting customers with matching savings accounts to obtain secondary education, purchase a home, or start a small business).

Top Priorities for the Next Year:



- ❖ Develop a report on the state of affordable housing by participating in a 12-week sprint session through the Talent 2025 initiative (convened and facilitated by the United Way of Southwestern Indiana).
- ❖ A housing report will also be written by HOUSE Co-Chairs Dr. Matt Hanka and Dr. Ruth Metzger in early 2022. The key insights and findings from this report will inform and position our community to dive deeper into important cross-cutting affordable housing issues through a housing summit hosted by HOUSE in the summer of 2022. An overall goal of this work is to support a comprehensive housing strategy for Evansville.
- ❖ Continue to work towards the strategic goals identified in HOUSE's 2019 strategic plan:
 - *Increase and diversify the Evansville housing stock.*

- *Rehab, rebuild, or remove existing deteriorated Evansville housing stock.*
- *Advocate and educate for (on behalf of) residents facing the housing crisis (at every level of influence).*
- *Provide financial and housing-related education for residents.*
- *Commit to being a catalytic participant in community development efforts.*
- *Policy action goals: advocate for transitioning Evansville's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) to an independent nonprofit with the ability to attract additional donors; assess Evansville's ability under Indiana Law to eliminate the 1-year redemption period on properties sold at county tax sale; advocate with county council and commissioners to adopt state legislation enacted in 2017 that allows a 5-year, 50% property tax reduction on new houses built on lots purchased from the Evansville Land Bank; and research Community Land Trusts, educate HOUSE members and community, and decide whether to support formation of CLT in Evansville.*
- *HOUSE administrative goals: utilize the brochure on tenant rights/responsibilities and investigate how to adapt best practices to Evansville; seek out a way to provide full-time staff to HOUSE; and explore, identify, and apply for new housing-related federal grants.*



Increase Community Engagement

Key Implementation Partners: United Neighborhoods of Evansville, along with all implementation partners

Milestones and Accomplishments:

- Due to the pandemic, a virtual Promise Zone convening was once again held in June 2021. Federal partners provided information on available federal resources and strategies for accessing them. As part of the National Coalition of Promise Zones, Evansville Promise attended and supported the convening.
- Evaluation briefs specific to each goal area were developed by the Promise Zone data and evaluation partner. The briefs outline each goal area performance measure, the desired target, and current progress. Briefs will be updated as data are available.
- The Promise Zone launched a new application (app) in December 2019. The new app allows residents and partners to share and connect to community resources. The tool also assists in messaging key events. The app was refreshed during the current reporting period to include COVID-19 resources and updated partner information. From November 2019 through October 2021, there have been a total of 7,086 contacts with the app. In addition, 676 users signed up for custom push notifications.
- Three new VISTAs were added in June 2021. VISTAs are serving as neighborhood support specialists and are primarily responsible for assisting the Promise Zone in achieving goals. VISTAs are attending neighborhood association meetings and are working to connect needs with Promise Zone initiatives.

Top Priorities for the Next Year:



- ❖ Provide workgroups with impact briefs based on available data from the time period.
- ❖ Engage more residents in the programs and services offered within the Promise Zone (e.g., PZ Express, Fair Shot) while navigating the challenges resulting from the pandemic.
- ❖ Continue implementing a communication and marketing based on the new Promise Zone app.
- ❖ Reestablish the Promise Zone newsletter.
- ❖ Continue to effectively utilize social media (Twitter, Facebook Live).
- ❖ Using data from the 2021 Promise Zone Community Survey (which is underway), develop strategies to improve community engagement.

SECTION II-ANNUAL REPORT: Promise Zone Work Plan for the New Federal Fiscal Year

Note: Work plan is included within the requested Excel attachments.

SECTION III-ANNUAL REPORT: Annual Update on Promise Zone Plan and Operations

Promise Zone: Evansville, Indiana

Promise Zone Director: Silas Matchem

Community Liaison: Andrea Ekiyor

Date: November 12, 2021

Proposed Amendments to the Promise Zone Plan

1) Changes to the geographic boundaries of the Promise Zone.

→ No proposed changes.

2) Changes to the Promise Zone Lead Organization or roles it has committed to play in the MOU and/or the Promise Zone Application.

→ No proposed changes.

3) Removal of an organization or organizations listed as Implementing Partner Organizations in the MOU, and/or changes to their roles and responsibilities as listed in the MOU and the Promise Zone Application. Please provide a copy of your most recent MOU and Partnership Structure Chart if it has been changed in the last year.

→ The Growth Alliance of Greater Evansville, Chamber of Commerce, and the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana have merged into one overall entity (Evansville Regional Economic Partnership). At this time, we still consider the three entities implementation partners and operating under the current MOU. No changes have been made to roles and responsibilities.

4) Changes to the goals set forth in the Promise Zone Application (not changes to subgoals/objectives/strategies/activities).

→ No proposed changes.

5) Placement of limitations upon the UGLG(s)' support for the strategy committed in the Promise Zone Application by the UGLG.

→ None.

Update on Promise Zone Operations

- 1. Please describe any significant changes to the Promise Zone partnership and how those changes will affect the implementation of the Promise Zone Plan. Significant changes to the Promise Zone partnership would include: the departure of a major partner, or the addition of a new major partner that has committed to fulfill specific responsibilities under the Promise Zone Plan.**
 - No significant changes.

- 2. Has the Lead Organization's staff or organizational structure changes? If so, how will this change affect the organization's work on the Promise Zone?**
 - As noted previously, the formal governance structure has been adjusted and replaced by a workgroup chair meeting that meets monthly. Partners from the original governance committee are also invited to participate in the monthly meetings. The monthly meeting of chairs is intended to promote greater alignment among workgroups and opportunities for collaboration.

- 3. What, if any, changes have been made to the Promise Zone Partners' MOU? What is the expected impact of those changes?**
 - No changes have been made to the MOU.

- 4. Looking forward, what, if any changes are anticipated in the Promise Zone's Lead Organization, the UGLG, and key implementing and supporting partners between now and the end of the next year? How are these changes projected to affect the Promise Zone's operations?**
 - No changes are anticipated. The Evansville Promise Zone intends to continue to add implementation partners as deemed beneficial to the goals and objectives of the initiative.