



Austin Promise Zone

Fact Sheet

Promise Zone Background / Benefits

In his 2013 State of the Union address, President Obama announced that he would designate 20 Promise Zones nationwide: urban, rural, and tribal communities where the Administration would partner with local leaders to create jobs, increase economic activity, improve educational opportunities, reduce violent crime, leverage private capital, and assist local leaders in navigating federal programs.

The Promise Zone award is a 10-year designation that communities apply for, and the direct benefits are: (1) Preferred access to competitive federal investments, (2) technical assistance from federal staff, (3) five full-time AmeriCorps VISTA members, and (4) potential tax incentives to businesses. The application calls for the creation of shared goals and decision-making between all entities collaborating under this initiative.

About the Austin Promise Zone (APZ) Application

The APZ application was submitted in November 2014 with Austin ISD as the lead applicant. Organizations contributing to the application included the City of Austin, Travis County, Housing Authority of the City of Austin, United Way for Greater Austin, Manor ISD, Community Advancement Network, University of Texas at Austin Division of Diversity & Community Engagement, Workforce Solutions—Capital Area Workforce Board, Children’s Optimal Health, The Austin Project, Child Inc, Lutheran Social Services of the South, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Austin Voices for Education & Youth, and all known place-based initiatives. These partners selected the proposed APZ geographical area via consensus to maximize Promise Zone benefits for the greatest possible number of Austin’s low-income residents.

APZ Partnership Structure:



Residents and community-based agencies



Implementation partners, neighborhood leaders & stakeholders from all sectors



APZ steering committee



Local leaders

Austin APZ Goals:

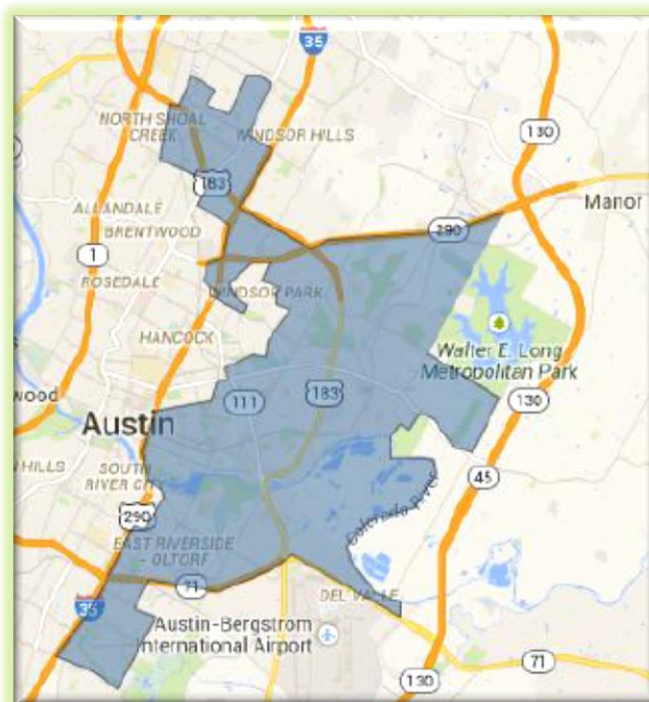
- 1) Job creation
- 2) Economic development
- 3) Improving educational opportunities
- 4) Reducing violent or serious crime
- 5) Health & wellness
- 6) Livable communities

APZ Plan / Strategies:

Develop one cohesive network for optimal coordination across all of Austin’s low-income zones. This network would:

- Support, coordinate and connect existing place-based and system-building initiatives
- Determine shared outcomes and develop processes and systems to track and share progress toward community-wide outcomes

Proposed APZ Geographical Area





Austin Promise Zone

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What are Promise Zones and what do they aim to achieve?

Promise Zones are high poverty communities where the federal government will partner with and invest in high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities to create jobs, increase economic activity, improve educational opportunities, leverage private investment, and reduce violent crime.

Which communities are currently designated Promise Zones?

San Antonio (Eastside Neighborhood), Philadelphia (West Philadelphia), Los Angeles (Neighborhoods of Pico Union, Westlake, Koreatown, Hollywood, and East Hollywood), Southeastern Kentucky (Kentucky Highlands), and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma were awarded with the Promise Zone distinction in 2014.

Is the Promise Zones Initiative the same as Promise Neighborhoods program run by the Department of Education?

No. Promise Neighborhoods is a discretionary grant program offered by the U.S. Department of Education that takes a comprehensive, cradle-to-career approach to ensuring that children have strong systems of support in their neighborhood with great schools at the center. Promise Zones is a new interagency initiative headquartered at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, through which the federal government will partner with and invest in high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities to create jobs, increase economic activity, improve educational opportunities, leverage private investment, and reduce violent crime.

In the 2015 round of applications, how many urban communities will HUD designate?

HUD will designate 20 total Promise Zones by the end of 2016. Five have been designated already, and a total of at least 8 (including 6 urban) will be designated in the second (current) round. Up to 7 will be designated in the third round.

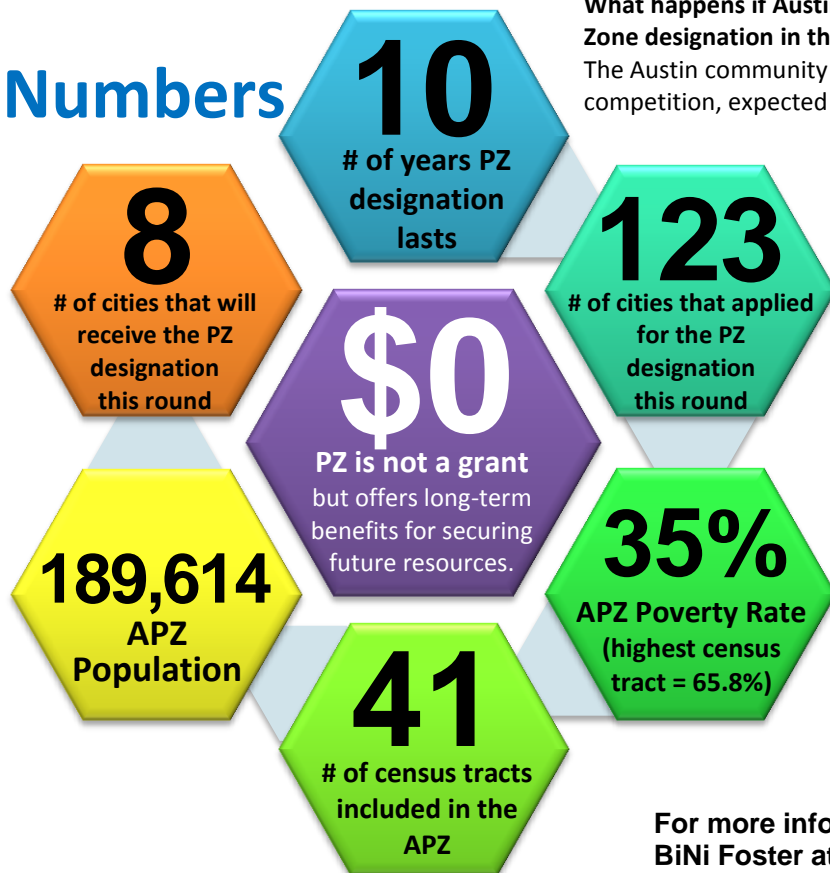
When will we know if Austin received the Promise Zone designation?

Designations are expected to be announced in Spring 2015.

What happens if Austin does not receive the Promise Zone designation in this round?

The Austin community can reapply in the next round of competition, expected to be run toward the end of 2015.

By the Numbers



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AISD Office of Innovation & Development

