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White House Hopes to Boost P3s in Promise Zones.

The Obama Administration this week announced eight additional Promise Zones across the country. Promise Zones are high-poverty communities where the federal government partners with local leaders to increase economic activity, leverage private investment, improve educational opportunities, reduce violent crime, enhance public health and address other priorities identified by the community, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Through the Promise Zone designation, these communities will work directly with federal, state and local agencies to give local leaders proven tools to improve the quality of life in some of the country's most vulnerable areas.

The new Promise Zone communities are:

- Camden, New Jersey
- Hartford, Connecticut
- Indianapolis, Indiana
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Sacramento, California
- St. Louis/St. Louis County, Missouri
- Pine Ridge Indian Reservation of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, South Dakota
- South Carolina Low Country

"The Promise Zone effort is proof positive that partnerships are the key to community economic development," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "Families and children in rural and tribal communities are full of potential to compete and succeed in the 21st Century. When we invest our resources and establish long-lasting public-private alliances to strengthen educational opportunities, deliver health care, build infrastructure and create jobs, we are investing in our country's future."

The newly designated zones join five others that were named in January 2014 — San Antonio; Los Angeles; Philadelphia; Southeastern Kentucky Highlands and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

All Promise Zones will receive priority access to federal investments that further their strategic plans, federal staff on the ground to help them implement their goals, and five full-time AmeriCorps VISTA members to recruit and manage volunteers and strengthen the capacity of the Promise Zone initiatives.

A competition to select a third round of Promise Zones will commence later this year. HUD will publish this summer a notice in the Federal Register requesting public comment on the proposed selection process, criteria, and submissions for the final round of the Promise Zones initiative.

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