

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pensacola not selected for Housing and Urban Development designation as a Promise Zone

The City of Pensacola and its local partners (UWF, PSC, Escambia County School District and Escambia County) were not selected for Housing and Urban Development designation as a Promise Zone. The City was the lead agency in a partnership that had applied for the designation in an effort to bring additional resources to the community in order create jobs, leverage private investment, increase economic activity, expand educational opportunities, and reduce violent crime.

“Obviously I am disappointed that we were not selected,” said Mayor Hayward, “but I want to reiterate my support for initiatives to lift blighted and underprivileged neighborhoods in our community. I will continue to support the vision and mission of Achieve Escambia to ensure that every generation achieves success, to champion our Community Redevelopment Agency programs to promote revitalization on the Eastside, Westside and Urban Core Districts and to promote job growth and workforce readiness programs to secure opportunities like VT MA.”

The quality of the partnership’s Promise Zone application was recognized by being named a Finalist. The purpose of selecting Promise Zones Finalists is 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.

Promise Zone Finalists will have the opportunity to participate in HUD’s Community Needs Assessment (CNA) Initiative, modeled after Strong Cities and Strong Communities (SC2), that provides the forum to solve locally identified issues, locally driven community goals; focuses resources on issue resolution; and provides a venue for increased collaboration across HUD’s programs, with other federal agencies, and with local partners to deploy resources and expertise.

The City and its partner organizations will participate in the Community Needs Assessment in October 2016 and determine what can be done to advance the priority projects that were identified in the Promise Zone application. Prior to that City staff will join representatives from the partner agencies to conduct a debrief with HUD about the application and to learn more about potential alternative programs that may be of benefit to the community.