



## *HUD NEWS*

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Ben Carson, Secretary  
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**FOR RELEASE**

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### **HUD SECRETARY BEN CARSON VISITS OPPORTUNITY ZONE NEIGHBORHOODS IN FORT MYERS**

**FORT MYERS, F.L.** – U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson today visited Opportunity Zone neighborhoods in Fort Myers, Florida to view the progress made as a result of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which created Opportunity Zones to stimulate long-term investments in low-income communities.



*Secretary Ben Carson speaks at HOPE VI Community in a Fort Myers Opportunity Zone.  
View additional pictures via Secretary Carson's Twitter page [here](#).*

“Under President Trump’s leadership, the Opportunity Zone initiative elevates our Nation’s once forgotten communities from economic distress to flourishing areas with new hope and promise,” said Secretary Carson. “Today, I am encouraged by the force of positive change happening here in Fort Myers as a result of the Opportunity Zones initiative. I thank Mayor Henderson and the local leadership for their determined partnership in ensuring economic growth and opportunity for all.”

“We wouldn’t be where we are today without HUD’s investment in the City of Fort Myers,” said City of Fort Myers Mayor Randy Henderson. “Secretary Carson has championed attainable housing and public private partnerships that make it possible to attract investors, particularly in our Opportunity Zones. As the industrial and commercial hub of Southwest Florida, these are important programs for our city.”

As Chairman of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council (Council), Secretary Carson [delivered a report](#) last month to President Donald J. Trump outlining Opportunity Zone best practices and examples of revitalization occurring across the Nation. On December 12, 2018, President Trump established the Council to support the Administration's pledge to encourage public and private investment in urban and economically distressed areas, including Opportunity Zones. Since the Council's one-year report was issued in December of 2019, the Council has taken approximately 80 additional action items-for a total of more than 270-to promote the mission of Opportunity Zones.

## Background

President Trump signed the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, creating Opportunity Zones to stimulate long-term investments in low-income communities. Opportunity Zones offer capital gains tax relief to those who invest in these distressed areas. This initiative is anticipated to spur \$100 billion in private capital investment in Opportunity Zones. Incentivizing investment in low-income communities fosters economic revitalization, job creation, and promotes sustainable economic growth across the nation, especially in communities HUD serves. [Read more about Opportunity Zones.](#)

Opportunity Zones are a powerful vehicle for bringing economic growth and job creation to the American communities that need it the most. On average, the median family income in an Opportunity Zone is 37 percent below its respective state median. Overall, more than 8,700 communities in all 50 States, Washington D.C., and five U.S. territories have been designated as Opportunity Zones. Nearly 35 million Americans live in communities designated as Opportunity Zones.

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*HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.  
More information about HUD and its programs is available at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) and <https://espanol.hud.gov>.*

*For information about [Opportunity Zones](#) visit: <https://opportunityzones.hud.gov/>*

*You can also connect with HUD on [social media](#) and follow Secretary Carson on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) or sign up for news alerts on [HUD's Email List](#).  
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