

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA – EMPOWERMENT ZONE ROUND III Application Summary

A strong vision and an active and enthusiastic citizenry are key elements of Jacksonville's designation as a new Empowerment Zone. The vision of the highly distressed designated area is based on creating economic opportunity and the implementation of strategies that will ensure that citizens have the means to reach self-sufficiency and that the area is one of sustainable growth and development. Jacksonville clearly demonstrated citizen involvement and full participation in the development of the strategic plan.

The designated area has 18 census tracts with poverty rates ranging from 30% to 77.5%. 41% of the persons living in the nominated area are at the poverty rate compared to 12.8% countywide. 15 of the tracts in the area are in the Urban Core, which has experienced a substantial loss of population in the last 10 years. The unemployment rate is 13.6% for the designated area compared to the overall county average of 5.6%.

1990 per capita income for residents of the nominated area was \$7,002 compared to \$13,857 countywide. Also, more than 51% of the population age 25 or older does not have a high school diploma. Only 38% of available housing is owner-occupied with housing values ranging from \$18,800 to \$62,000 with 31% less than \$59,000.

The marketing of the tax incentives to businesses is critical to the successful use of these incentives. To this end, the Jacksonville EZ has already appointed the Jacksonville Economic Development Commission as the lead entity responsible for new business efforts, continued community involvement, and implementation of the tax incentive marketing strategies. These strategies include actions to better ensure that the new Empowerment Zone area has a competitive technological edge.

Jacksonville plans to create an accounting system that will report the use of the incentives and produce quantifiable results.