



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES \$1.65 MILLION IN *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* GRANTS FOR CENTRAL REGION HOUSING REHABILITATION PROJECTS

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced **\$1.65 million** in funding for the rehabilitation of 62 owner occupied homes throughout the Central region. These home improvements will drastically enhance the living environments and quality of life for low-income and disabled Central region residents, as well as building the capacity for economic growth. This aggressive effort to improve living conditions for the region's most underserved residents is part of the Governor's *Opportunity Returns* initiative, his comprehensive, pro-active plan for restoring economic opportunity to the Central region.

"Creating greater economic opportunity begins with strengthening the core foundation of our communities. By providing these *Opportunity Returns* grants, communities throughout the Central region will be able to make essential improvements to homes that need them the most, building economic capacity on a local level and enhancing the economic portfolio of the entire region," Governor Blagojevich said.

The funds for this initiative are part of the Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP), a federally-funded grant program that assists Illinois communities by providing grants to local governments to help them in financing economic development, public facilities and housing rehabilitation projects. The program is targeted to assist low-to-moderate income people by creating job opportunities and improving the quality of their living environment. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) administers the program.

Governor Blagojevich has developed the following objectives for the CDAP program:

- Strengthen community economic development through the creation of jobs, stimulation of private investment and strengthening the tax base
- Improvement of public infrastructure and elimination of conditions which are detrimental to health, safety and public welfare; and
- Conservation and expansion of the state's housing stock in order to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for persons of low-to-moderate income and the developmentally disabled.

(more)

These CDAP grants being provided to the Central region fall under the third objective. They are designed to help provide safe and sanitary living conditions for low-to-moderate income residents.

The Central region's housing improvements are as follows:

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	COST
City of Pana Christian	Rehabilitate 3 owner occupied homes	\$100,000
Village of Brighton Jersey, Macoupin	Rehabilitate 15 owner occupied homes	\$385,350
City of Bunker Hill Macoupin	Rehabilitate 19 owner occupied homes	\$485,350
City of Girard Macoupin	Rehabilitate 15 owner occupied homes	\$385,350
Village of Cowden Shelby	Rehabilitate 10 owner occupied homes	\$295,350
		Total: \$1,651,400

“The Governor believes that a grassroots approach to economic development is the only one that truly works, and the *Opportunity Returns* grants we’re providing to the Central region are a textbook example of that grassroots approach at work. These grants will fund critical improvements in more than 60 homes. Time and again, we’re seeing that community revitalization efforts such as these make business attraction, retention, and job creation much more viable,” DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

Governor Blagojevich’s *Opportunity Returns* regional economic development plan is the most aggressive, comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois’ history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn’t work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions – finding areas with common economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. Developed largely from the input of local business, labor and public sector leaders, *Opportunity Returns* contains tangible, specific actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to businesses. While the Central region’s plan is yet to be announced, the Governor’s office and DCEO is currently working closely with regional leaders to identify top local needs and priorities.

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