



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES \$50,000 OPPORTUNITY RETURNS GRANT TO FUND EMERGENCY REPAIRS TO SANITARY SYSTEM IN HEYWORTH AND AVERT POTENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced **\$50,000** in emergency funding for the town of Heyworth that will allow critical repairs to its sanitary system infrastructure to be made and quash the threat of a potential public health hazard that has become more serious by the day. The aggressive effort to improve the quality of infrastructure and public facilities is a major theme of the Governor's *Opportunity Returns* initiative for the North Central region, his comprehensive, pro-active plan for restoring economic opportunity to the area, which he announced last December.

"The most important job that I have as Governor is to provide for and protect the public safety and well-being of Illinois citizens. Crucial infrastructure improvements such as those needed in Heyworth are not a privilege, but a right. By having our ears to the ground and working at the community level, we can ensure that we will be ready at a moment's notice to identify and deliver the critical resources that are needed to provide for the public good," said Governor Rod Blagojevich.

The **\$50,000** emergency CDAP grant will allow construction to begin almost immediately on repairs to the lift stations that manage public sewage and whose functionality is vital to the public health. The current infrastructure is extremely antiquated and has resulted in frequent electrical failures that could prevent the sewage from being transported to its proper destination. As such, the failing infrastructure poses the imminent threat of the lift stations failing entirely, resulting in a variety of hazardous outcomes including the contamination of the local creek.

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. While the grants are typically only approved and awarded annually, emergency CDAP grants can be issued at any time when a community's public health or safety is in peril, as is the case in Heyworth. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity administers the program.

The total project cost of the sanitary system repairs in Heyworth is estimated to be \$190,000. Heyworth's local government has committed to providing the remaining needed funding.

“If a community’s basic public health and safety needs are jeopardized, business and commerce will inevitably suffer negative repercussions. While the overall well-being of the individual citizens, and the Heyworth community as a whole, is the only issue that matters right now, these infrastructure improvements will strengthen the town’s foundation, ensuring that the economic well-being of the community will not also be threatened,” 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. This grassroots effort for the North Central region is a product of significant outreach over several months throughout each region, with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. The more than 40 specific projects that the Governor announced in December for the North Central region are designed to be flexible and effective. Each plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from.

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