



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES MORE THAN \$1.5 MILLION IN OPPORTUNITY RETURNS FUNDING FOR IMPORTANT SOUTHWEST REGION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced nearly **\$1.5 million** in funding for new sanitation and water drainage improvement projects in the Southwest region. These key initiatives will improve the health and quality of life of Southwest region residents, as well as provide necessary infrastructure for economic growth. This aggressive effort to improve the quality of infrastructure and public facilities is a major theme of the Governor's *Opportunity Returns* initiative for the Southwest region, his comprehensive, pro-active plan for restoring economic opportunity to the area that he announced last year.

"The Southwest region is an outstanding place to live and to do business," said Governor Blagojevich. "These projects will make the region even more attractive for businesses who are looking to expand or relocate. With projects like these, we're going to keep building the Southwest region's economy one community at a time, one company and one job at a time."

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 assist 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 administers the program.

These CDAP initiatives address a crucial need for the region. Communities with established infrastructure are under constant pressure to upgrade and rehabilitate their systems to keep up with changing Environmental Protection Agency regulations, changing populations and changing needs. As more rural water wells are becoming undrinkable, rural water providers assume even greater importance.

Adequate sewer and water service is also vital to community and economic development. Without basic infrastructure, communities cannot compete for company relocation and expansion, but with a healthy infrastructure in place, communities can create jobs and prosper.

The Southwest region's public facilities improvements are as follows:
(more)

LOCATION	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	COST
Mulberry Grove, Village of Bond	Public Facilities	Water line replacement	128,600
Beckemeyer, Village of Clinton	Public Facilities	Replace sanitary sewer lines	350,000
Huey, Village of Clinton	Public Facilities	Construct sanitary sewer system and treatment plant	350,000
Meridian Township Clinton	Public Facilities	Replace cement asbestos water line Clinton County East Public Water District	350,000
Covington Township Washington	Public Facilities	Construct rural water mains Washington County Water Company	350,000

Total: \$1,528,600

“*Opportunity Returns* has one simple goal: creating and retaining jobs,” said Jack Lavin, Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. “The Governor is doing everything possible to invest our resources in projects that will make a tangible difference for people in the Southwest region, and these CDAP grants do just that.”

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 Southwest region is a product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. The more than 50 specific projects that the Governor announced last December for Southwestern Illinois are designed to be flexible and effective. This plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from.

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