



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 14, 2004

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES \$750,000 *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* GRANT FOR CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS IN AMBOY

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced that **\$750,000** in funding has been awarded to the City of Amboy in Lee County to make critical water system improvements which will enable the city to keep a major business in town and retain **134 jobs**. 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 Northwest region, his comprehensive, pro-active plan for restoring economic opportunity to the area.

"Quality infrastructure, including reliable water and sanitation, is the foundation on which vibrant communities are built and is vital to attracting and retaining business. Through this *Opportunity Returns* grant, we're ensuring that an important company with deep ties in Amboy will have the tools it needs to continue being successful, and that the local economy will have greater capacity to prosper today and tomorrow," Governor Blagojevich said.

The city will use this grant to finance water system improvements to ensure adequate water supply, which includes construction of a million gallon water storage tank, a 10-inch water main, and a 500-gpm water treatment system, for the benefit of Sensient Technologies Corporation. The company currently employs 134 at the Amboy location. As the result of the project, Sensient Technologies Corporation has agreed to retain all existing employees.

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 (DCEO) administers the program.

Adequate sewer and water service is 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.

"*Opportunity Returns* recognizes that local governments understand the needs of their area the best and is building partnerships with those governments to accomplish key objectives. Through our partnership with

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Amboy, we're able take a pro-active approach to challenges facing communities and respond with the resources that are needed to prevent businesses from uprooting and relocating. This is a great investment in the economic vitality of Amboy," DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

The *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 Northwest region was the product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. The more than 30 projects that the Governor announced last October for Northwestern 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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