



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES ALMOST \$600,000 IN *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* GRANTS FOR SOUTHWEST REGION HOUSING REHABILITATION PROJECTS

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced almost **\$600,000** in funding for the rehabilitation of 25 owner occupied homes throughout the Southwest region. These home improvements will drastically enhance the living environments and quality of life for low-income and disabled Southwest 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 Southwest region.

"These *Opportunity Returns* grants will help build stronger, more vibrant communities that will be in better position to attract investment and support business growth and retention. This grant program is a great example of the bottom-up approach we're taking towards economic development. Community by community, we're expanding economic opportunity to more people in the Southwest 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

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- 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.

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

The Southwestern region’s housing improvements are as follows:

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	COST
City of Greenville Bond	Rehabilitate 4 owner occupied homes	\$100,000
City of Trenton Clinton	Rehabilitate 6 owner occupied homes	\$100,000
Village of Brighton Jersey, Macoupin	Rehabilitate 15 owner occupied homes	\$385,350
		Total: \$585,350

“These *Opportunity Returns* grants are a great example of how innovative partnerships between state and local government can accomplish key objectives that make an immediate and tangible impact in individual communities. In these three Southwest communities, almost \$600,000 will be invested directly into improving the local housing stock. These are investments that will improve the foundation of these communities and position them for economic growth in the near future,” 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 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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