



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES \$400,000 *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* GRANT FOR VITAL SANITATION PROJECT IN PEMBROKE TOWNSHIP

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced **\$400,000** in funding for construction of a new sanitation and water drainage system for Pembroke Township in Kankakee County. This crucial initiative will improve the health and quality of life of local residents, as well as provide the necessary infrastructure for economic growth. This aggressive effort to improve the quality of infrastructure and public facilities will be a major theme of the Governor's *Opportunity Returns* initiative for the Northeast region, his comprehensive, pro-active plan for restoring economic opportunity to the area, which he will announce in the coming months.

"It is unacceptable that in 2004, Pembroke Township continues to have inadequate sewage capabilities," said Governor Blagojevich. "This construction project is vital – vital to the health of Pembroke families, and vital to the area's hopes of attracting new businesses and new jobs. This long overdue construction project will make the community safer and more vibrant."

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 administers the program.

The inadequate sewer system in Pembroke threatens to become a health risk, especially for local children. 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 goal of the Governor's *Opportunity Returns* initiative is for us to have our ear to the ground, to respond to the specific needs of local communities," said Jack Lavin, Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. "For Pembroke Township, there is clearly no greater need than the completion of this sewage upgrade. It will have an incalculable effect on the area's quality of life."

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Earlier this year, as a part of Governor Blagojevich's TEAM Illinois initiative, DCEO approved a **\$100,000** emergency CDAP infrastructure grant for Pembroke Township. The funding allowed critical repairs to be made to the Pembroke's main sewer lines and waste water treatment facility. TEAM Illinois is a statewide initiative designed to spark a revitalization in four historically underserved, economically depressed communities: Pembroke, Savanna, East Aurora, and Alexander County. The initiative relies on the collaboration of many state agencies to pool their resources and offer critical services and support to each of these communities on an ongoing basis.

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 is a product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. *Opportunity Returns* contains tangible actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to business.

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