



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 24, 2004

CONTACTS:

Cheryle Jackson	312/814.3158 (office)
Abby Ottenhoff	312/814.3158 (office)
Rebecca Rausch	217/782.7355 (office)
Andrew Ross	312/814.7168 (Opp. Returns)

GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES ALMOST \$4.4 MILLION IN OPPORTUNITY RETURNS FUNDING FOR CRUCIAL SOUTHERN REGION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced almost **\$4.4 million** in funding for new sanitation and water drainage improvement projects in the Southern region. These key initiatives will improve the health and quality of life of Southern region residents, as well as provide the 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 Southern region, his comprehensive, pro-active plan for restoring economic opportunity to the area that he announced last year.

“The Southern region has tremendous resources to offer companies that are looking to expand or relocate,” said Governor Blagojevich. “Upgrading the region’s infrastructure will mean more business growth and new jobs and that is what *Opportunity Returns* is all about. This is another great example of how, working together, we will help Southern Illinois reach its economic potential.”

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 Southern region’s public facilities improvements are as follows:

(more)

LOCATION	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	COST
Alexander County Alexander	Design Engineering	Design sewer system for Future City, Urbandale, Klondike	141,800
Benton, City of Franklin	Public Facilities	Replace water mains, hydrants, and valves	248,051
Zeigler, City of Franklin	Public Facilities	Replace water main	242,000
Gallatin County Gallatin	Public Facilities	Construct water main in rural Gallatin County Saline Valley Conservancy District	350,000
Bradley Township Jackson	Public Facilities	Construct water mains in rural area Washington County Water Company	350,000
Dowell, Village of Jackson	Public Facilities	Renovate existing water distribution system	350,000
Mount Vernon, City of Jefferson	Public Facilities	Replace and upsize sections of sanitary sewer	350,000
Murphysboro, City of Jackson	Design Engineering	Design wastewater treatment facility improvements	165,000
Brookport, City of Massac	Public Facilities	Replace water lines	350,000
Cutler, Village of Perry	Public Facilities	Replace deteriorated water lines	232,000
DuQuoin, City of Perry	Public Facilities	Construct new wastewater treatment plant	400,000
Tamaroa, Village of Perry	Design Engineering	Design drainage system	78,820
Pulaski County Pulaski	Public Facilities	Construct sewer system in unincorporated Perks	350,000
Massilon Township Wayne	Public Facilities	Rural water construction Jasper Water Works Rural Water System	350,000
Springerton, Village of White	Public Facilities	Construct sewer system	400,000

Total: \$4,357,671

“For too long, the state was taking a top-down approach to economic development,” said Jack Lavin, Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. “The Governor’s local, hands-on approach allows us to hear what business and community leaders in the Southern region really need, and respond to those needs. These CDAP grants are the perfect example of expending our resources in ways that will make a tangible difference.”

(more)

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 Southern region is a product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. The more than 40 specific projects that the Governor announced last November for Southern 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.

#####