



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 \$4.1 MILLION IN OPPORTUNITY RETURNS GRANTS FOR SOUTHERN REGION HOUSING REHABILITATION PROJECTS

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced more than **\$4.1 million** in funding for the rehabilitation of 160 owner occupied homes throughout the Southern region. These home improvements will drastically enhance the living environments and quality of life for low-income and disabled Southern 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 Southern region.

“Opportunity Returns is a grassroots initiative that is designed to spark economic development at the community level. These *Opportunity Returns* grants will strengthen the foundation of communities throughout the Southern region, making business attraction and development more viable and helping the region collectively realize its vast economic potential,” 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 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
- 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.

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

The Southern region's housing improvements are as follows:

| LOCATION | DESCRIPTION | COST |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Benton, City of Franklin | Rehabilitate 13 owner occupied homes | \$383,150 |
| Christopher, City of Franklin | Rehabilitate 21 owner occupied homes | \$414,600 |
| Ewing, Village of Franklin | Rehabilitate 13 owner occupied homes | \$371,500 |
| Royalton, Village of Franklin | Rehabilitate 14 owner occupied homes | \$369,850 |
| West Frankfort, City of Franklin | Rehabilitate 9 owner occupied homes | \$290,200 |
| Zeigler, City of Franklin | Rehabilitate 12 owner occupied homes | \$354,000 |
| Carbondale, City of Jackson | Rehabilitate 11 owner occupied homes | \$385,350 |
| Mount Vernon, City of Jefferson | Rehabilitate 11 owner occupied homes | \$336,400 |
| Carterville, City of Williamson | Rehabilitate 4 owner occupied homes | \$55,800 |
| Herrin, City of Williamson | Rehabilitate 22 owner occupied homes | \$474,700 |
| Hurst, City of Williamson | Rehabilitate 15 owner occupied homes | \$369,350 |
| Marion, City of Williamson | Rehabilitate 15 owner occupied homes | \$335,400 |
| | | Total: \$4,140,300 |

“Restoring economic opportunity at the local level involves strengthening education and workforce preparedness, improving local infrastructure, attracting investment, and supporting the needs of small business. But it begins on a more basic level. By improving 160 homes throughout the Southern region, we are strengthening the very core of these communities, giving any strategic economic development effort a better chance to succeed and these communities a better chance to thrive,” DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

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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 throughout each region, with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. The more than 40 specific projects that the Governor announced in November in Southern Illinois are designed to be flexible and effective. Each plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from.

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