



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 NORTH CENTRAL REGION HOUSING REHABILITATION PROJECTS

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced almost **\$600,000** in funding for the rehabilitation of 22 owner occupied homes throughout the North Central region. These home improvements will drastically enhance the living environments and quality of life for low-income and disabled North Central residents, as well as building the capacity for economic growth. This aggressive effort to improve living conditions for the region's most underserved residents comes as a part of the Governor's *Opportunity Returns* initiative, his comprehensive, pro-active plan for restoring economic opportunity to the North Central region.

“The fundamental goal of *Opportunity Returns* is to expand greater economic opportunity to the people of this region. If residents are struggling to meet their basic survival needs, the opportunity for economic advancement is only a dream. By refurbishing these homes, we’re helping meet the essential needs of these North Central residents so that they can pursue those dreams,” 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 North Central region fall under the third objective. They are designed to help provide safe and sanitary living conditions for low-to-moderate income residents.

The North Central region's housing improvements are as follows:

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	COST
City of Lewiston Fulton	Rehabilitate 11 owner occupied homes	\$289,500
Village of London Mills Fulton, Knox	Rehabilitate 11 owner occupied homes	\$301,250
Total: \$590,750		

“The Governor’s *Opportunity Returns* plan employs a regional approach towards economic development. The greatest strength of this approach is that it allows us to focus on the unique needs of individual communities, and target our assistance to specific projects that local leaders have identified as being critical to economic revitalization. These grants are a great example of this idea at work, and will allow vast improvements to be made where they are needed the most,” 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 North Central 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 December for the North Central region 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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