

One Voice 2010 Priority Projects

MyEntre.Net Rural Entrepreneurship Program - MyEntre.Net is a program that surrounds rural entrepreneurs with resources (business counseling, access to economic development professionals, advice from retired entrepreneurs, connection to relevant state offices, etc.) such that their business can thrive and expand. MyEntre.Net staff and their programs contact each entrepreneur at least six times during a year through webinars, training sessions offered in their communities, regional meetings and an on-line discussion forum. Consequently, small business owners can communicate with other small business owners, the staff of the Economic Development Council and the Small Business Development Center, staff of state offices, engaged faculty at universities throughout the state and other economic development officials. These individuals, offices and agencies provide advice and link small business owners with the specific resources that will help them grow their business. MyEntre.Net has existed in Iowa for four years. The University of Northern Iowa has created a detailed manual describing the process for replication. In Illinois, MyEntre.Net will be housed at the Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development at Illinois State University. This is a joint project between ISU and the EDC.

Request: \$500,000

City of Bloomington/Village of Downs Water Project - The Village of Downs and the City of Bloomington are working jointly on a water supply expansion project to promote growth in an underserved area. The project funds will be for the extension of the 16" diameter water main from the City of Bloomington Drinking Water Supply system to "Downs Crossing," located at the southwest corner of the intersection of State Route 150 and Towanda-Barnes Road (County Highway 36). This drinking water supply extension is needed to create jobs at "Downs Crossing." This project is also another step in the strengthening of the regional infrastructure of an envisioned regional water supply which will serve future generations. The Village's current water supply cannot meet the demand of the development. Any additional development will require a community water supply to meet the demands and regulations for the number of water services and people at the property. A commitment has been made by local developers to construct a combination health care and assisted living facility. The health care facility will create 28 FTE jobs. The cost of the water main extension is estimated, through an opinion of probable cost developed by the Village's engineer, to be \$2,100,000. The Village of Downs, through a rural development program of the USDA, was awarded a 0% loan in conjunction with the Corn Electric Cooperative for \$360,000. These funds could be utilized for the design of the water main. The Village and City are seeking funding assistance to be applied towards the construction of this water main.

Request: \$500,000

Community Food Composting Program - Illinois State University plans to develop a community-scale program for composting of food waste generated by the community institutions and businesses. Through traditional wind row operations, the ISU farm composts livestock manure, yard waste from the Town of Normal and the University's food and landscaping waste. During the academic year, the University composts approximately 4,200 lbs of food waste per week. There is considerable interest from other large entities within the community to compost their food waste as well. However, the current system at University Farm requires that food waste at each location be pulped first. The installation of pulping equipment can be costly and has additional space requirements. On-site composting for other organizations is not possible because of space restrictions. A more feasible solution is the establishment of a commercial-scale composting system run by Illinois State University. If just five of the larger institutions and businesses in the community were able to compost their food

waste, an estimated 2 tons of food waste per day or 508 tons per year could be diverted from the landfill. In addition to the need for processing capacity, collection and delivery of food waste could present an additional opportunity for economic growth. The entities involved would have to establish a separate organic waste stream that would be transported to Illinois State University for processing. This would provide a local waste hauler/recycler an opportunity for a new revenue stream and additional job creation.

Request: \$500,000

Heyworth U.S. Highway 136 Improvement Project – The Village of Heyworth seeks funding to make improvements to U.S. Highway 136 through safety modifications in order to facilitate the development of commercial and residential properties in the area. The highway bisects the Village into two parts, and its intersection with U.S. 51 provides a “front door” into Heyworth. A residential and commercial subdivision has shown great potential for growth (most recently with the addition of a health clinic and a convenience store), but it needs a catalyst to incite appreciable development. The Village is investing significant funds into highway upgrades to facilitate continued development, but lacks additional funding for other project elements. These elements are necessary to transform the corridor into one which attracts economic development.

Request: \$150,000