

**Illinois Enterprise Zone Program  
Application for New Designation  
Appendix A**

**QUALIFYING CRITERIA**

The proposed enterprise zone must meet three (3) or more of the following criteria (as provided in Section 4(1)(f) of the Act and the Departments implementing rules found at 14 Ill. Admin. Code § 520.210) in order to be recommendation to the Enterprise Zone Board for possible approval. The Department will then score these applications per Section 4.1(a) of the Act and rank each application which meets these threshold minimums:

- 1) **Unemployment**: All or part of the Local Labor Market Area (“LLMA”) has had an annual average unemployment rate of at least 120% of the State’s annual average unemployment rate for the most recent calendar year or the most recent fiscal year as reported by the Department of Employment Security.
- 2) **Employment Opportunities**: Designation will result in the development of substantial employment opportunities by creating or retaining a minimum aggregate of 1,000 full-time equivalent jobs due to an aggregate investment of \$100,000,000 or more, and will help alleviate the effects of poverty and unemployment within the LLMA. Applicants shall specify the time periods over which full-time equivalent jobs will be created or retained and aggregate investments will be made. Such time periods should not exceed fifteen (15) years from the expected date of designation. Applicants are encouraged to describe how the creation and retention of full-time equivalent jobs and new investment will help alleviate the effects of poverty and unemployment with the LLMA. Applicants are also encouraged to provide specific information regarding the creation and retention of jobs as well as the source(s) of the contemplated investment, which may enhance points attributed to this criterion.
- 3) **Poverty**: All or part of the LLMA has a poverty rate of at least 20% according to the latest data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 50% or more of children in the LLMA are eligible to participate in the federal free or reduced-price meals program according to reported statistics from the State Board of Education, or 20% or more of the households in the LLMA receive food stamps according to the latest data from the U.S. Census Bureau.
- 4) **Abandoned Coal Mine, Brownfield or Federal Disaster Area**: An abandoned coal mine or a brownfield (as defined in Section 58.2 of the Environmental Protection Act) is located in the proposed zone area, or all or a portion of the proposed enterprise zone was declared a federal disaster area in the three (3) years preceding the date of application. To be considered an abandoned coal mine, the coal mine must be listed on the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Abandoned Mine Locator. To document that a portion of the proposed zone was declared a federal disaster area in the three (3) years preceding the date of the application, the applicant must provide the major disaster declaration number, the area designated as adversely affected by the major disaster, and date of the declaration. Applicants are encouraged to use copies of the appropriate notices in the Federal Register of a major disaster declaration and related determinations. This does not include emergency declarations or fire management assistance declarations. A brownfield site must be listed in the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Site Remediation Program database. Applicants are encouraged to provide the 10-digit Illinois Environmental Protection Agency identification number ("LPC #") for the site.
- 5) **Large Scale Business Closings**: The LLMA contains a presence of large employers that have downsized over the years, the LLMA has experienced plant closures in the five (5) years prior to the date of application affecting more 50 workers, or the LLMA has experienced State or federal facility closures in the five (5) years prior to the date of application affecting more than 50 workers. Applicants are encouraged to use data from

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filings made pursuant to the Illinois Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act and the State Facilities Closure Act as evidence of job losses under this test.

- 6) **Vacant Structures**: Based on data from Multiple Listing information or other suitable sources, the LLMA contains a high floor vacancy rate of industrial or commercial properties, vacant or demolished commercial and industrial structures are prevalent in the LLMA, or industrial structures in the LLMA are not used because of age, deterioration, relocation of the former occupants, or cessation of operation.
- 7) **Tax Base Improvement Plan**: The applicant demonstrates a substantial plan for using the designation to improve the State and local government tax base, including income, sales, and property taxes.
- 8) **Public Infrastructure Improvement Plan**: Significant public infrastructure is present in the LLMA, as well as a plan for infrastructure development and improvement.
- 9) **Career Skills Programs**: High schools or community colleges located within the LLMA are engaged in ACT Work Keys, Manufacturing Skills Standard Certification, or industry-based credentials that prepare students for careers. The applicant must provide written documentation from more than one high school or community college within the LLMA that the institution is offering such a curriculum at some time during the current school year.
- 10) **Equalized Assessed Valuation**: The increase in equalized assessed valuation of industrial or commercial properties in the five (5) years prior to the date of application in the LLMA is equal to or less than 50% of the State average increase in equalized assessed valuation for industrial or commercial properties, as applicable, for the same period of time as reported by the Illinois Department of Revenue. If the change in equalized assessed valuation in the State of industrial or commercial properties in the five (5) years prior to the date of application is negative, however, then the applicant should instead demonstrate that the decrease in equalized assessed valuation of industrial or commercial properties in the five (5) years prior to the date of application in the LLMA is equal to or greater than 50% of the State average decrease in equalized assessed valuation for industrial or commercial properties, as applicable, for the same period of time as reported by the Department of Revenue. Applicants are encouraged to use data on equalized assessed valuation of industrial or commercial properties in the LLMA from the Illinois Department of Revenue or from the chief assessment official of the county or counties in which at least a portion of the LLMA is contained.