

Southland Economic Transformation Fund 2020 Grantees

#	Brief Title	Executive Summary	Lead Organizations	Award
1	Abandonment program	The South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority (SSLBDA) and partners are establishing a revolving fund (to be managed by the Southland Development Authority & SSLBDA) to provide capital to expand and scale up the current SSLBDA abandonment program in which the SSLBDA (in partnership with their municipal members) acquires vacant and abandoned residential and commercial properties through court action in order to return the properties back to productive use. This program is designed to acquire abandoned residential, commercial and industrial properties. The fund will be used by the SSLBDA to access capital to pay for abandonment related costs, such as legal, title, marketing, cleanouts etc. and would be repaid upon sale of the property.	South Suburban Land Bank & Development Authority	\$50,000
2	Diversifying Ownership	The project aims to expand Black and Latino ownership of high growth businesses by preparing them to acquire growing companies. It is an enhancement of the Southland Development Authority (SDA) Southland Equitable Recovery Stimulus Program (currently operating) that assists entrepreneurs battling the COVID-19 pandemic with specialized advisory resources to survive and recover. In this context, and within the existing infrastructure of the SDA Stimulus Program, as the Stimulus Program identifies and works with Southland businesses and entrepreneurs on recovery efforts, this project will use specific criteria to identify companies for sale, and high capacity entrepreneurs of color, and facilitate strategic company acquisitions and phased ownership transfers. The work of this project will include deal sourcing, legal and financial structuring, market analysis and new business development. Additionally, the project team will leverage the Stimulus Program to provide on-going mentoring to emerging entrepreneurs.	Intuition Enterprise Chicago TREND RW Ventures	\$51,562

3	Employer-assisted Housing	<p>Through NHS' close association with the mayors, managers and business sectors of individual municipalities, we propose to develop an innovative new approach to employer assisting housing (EAH) that will prioritize the Southland's residential and commercial growth. In accordance with the South Suburban Economic Growth Initiative's own "Phase 1 Report," this newly developed approach will build municipal viability and desirability by increasing access to live-where-you-work housing solutions. By working directly with anchor institutions such as Chambers of Commerce, Mayor's Offices, or City Managers rather than the more traditional approach of unilaterally engaging an individual business, we hope to support these efforts with stronger leverage that in turn brings strong incentives for business and homeowner growth. After further development, a proof of concept will be developed and rolled out to determine the effectiveness of this model vis-à-vis a future second year that would see wide-scale program implementation.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago</p>	\$60,000
4	Food Processing	<p>The Chicago Southland Food Processing Innovation Center (CSFPIC) project aims to establish a co-processing space that will support minority owned food and beverage business owners by expanding Poppin Plates existing culinary incubator program. The proposed CSFPIC site will be an expansion of existing Poppin Plates facility in Park Forest, IL. The project is requesting \$49,500 to develop a pilot to support two minority owned businesses from R&D, through processing, packaging and bring to market through assistance from The Illinois Small Business Development Center and Poppin Plates Culinary Incubator, an established food business wishing to expand and grow its existing incubator program by educating emerging food processing minority entrepreneurs. Jeremi Food and Beverage has been identified as one the two minority owned businesses participating in the pilot. Jeremi Food and Beverage wishes to establish and bring to market, a beverage processing business. CSFPIC has the potential of</p>	<p>Poppin' Plates Illinois SBDC at SSEGI Jeremi Food & Beverage</p>	\$49,500

		assisting over 40 businesses and creating hundreds of jobs in the Southland.		
5	Housing Counseling	With SET funding, Respond Now proposes to increase our outreach and intake efforts for our foreclosure prevention and pre-purchase work. Recent data from the Institute of Housing Studies (IHS) shows that the Chicago Heights/Park Forest area has a high number of households that are vulnerable to foreclosure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our vision is to keep families in their homes while educating and assisting them in the Loss Mitigation process. Also, our counselors will help clients create a budget that is sustainable. This will promote homeowners with good practices that will result in solid money management. Additionally, we want to be well situated for any potential increase in pre-purchase counseling, given the nature of the market and the low-interest rates that are available to potential homeowners.	Respond Now	\$40,000
6	Housing counseling and outreach	Spanish Coalition for Housing will partner with anchor institutions to develop satellite offices with major community anchor institutions to include Moraine Valley Community College in Blue Island, Prairie State College, and the South Suburban College in South Holland. In addition, SCH will also partner with the Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation to incorporate workforce development to add to the services SCH will be providing which include pre-purchase counseling, post-purchase counseling, financial education and coaching, foreclosure prevention, and utility and rental/mortgage assistance. SCH will also partner with Neighborhood Housing Services to synergize our regional efforts and meet the growing demand of sustainable housing and homeownership. Specifically SCH collaboration with NHS will include jointly hosting/ participating in regional outreach events to promote connect our organizations' housing services and programs. In addition, SCH will augment outreach efforts through its bilingual (Spanish and English) marketing communications and housing counseling platform to provide	Spanish Coalition for Housing	\$50,000

		heighten accessibility to sustainable homeownership opportunities in the Southland.		
7	Intern Match	<p>InternMatch.com is an innovative tool developed by OAI to improve youth (16-24 years old) employment while helping the region’s employers meet their workforce pipeline needs at scale. Through funding from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), OAI and partners developed InternMatch.com in 2020, a prototype online internship matching system focused specifically on the manufacturing and logistics industries to offer jobseekers and employers the ability to efficiently find each other. The site development phase is complete and OAI now seeks support to pilot the site, make improvements, and bring the tool to scale within the South Suburban region.</p>	OAI, Inc.	\$45,200
8	Manufacturer Productivity	<p>Productivity is an essential foundation for inclusive growth. Yet, the pandemic has significantly shifted challenges and priorities for manufacturers. By working closely with SDA for coordinated outreach, this proposal will extend outreach to the region’s manufacturers, coordinate connections based on firm needs and partnering resources, and still deliver on the productivity improvement model as originally proposed. This proposal’s vision is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct extensive outreach to the approximately 875 manufacturers in the geographic area in close collaboration with SDA. This outreach will lead to facilitating and coordinating connections in response to urgent and important needs identified by the firm through a quick assessment. - Demonstrate methods that rapidly accelerate productivity and innovation for Southland small and mid-sized manufacturers, starting with metal manufacturers. 	Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC)	\$56,500
9	Supply Chain Certificates	<p>The Supply Chain Innovation Center and Business Incubator (SCICBI), Governors State University’s Illinois Innovation Network (IIN) hub, is collaborating with Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation (CSEDC), in applying for a Southland Economic Transformation (SET) grant managed by the South Suburban Economic Growth Initiative</p>	<p>Governors State University</p> <p>Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation</p>	\$50,000

		<p>(SSEGI). We are seeking \$50,000 to assist employee certificate training in supply chain and logistics, a priority sector identified by SSEGI. The SET grant funding will help employees in small and medium sized businesses in the supply chain and logistics and related sectors in the region seek certificate training that will enhance their skills needed for their jobs. It will better prepare employees, especially the individuals from under-represented social and economic groups for on-going challenges on their jobs, and provide opportunities for career advancement. The knowledge and skill set acquired by these employees will in turn improve efficiency and effectiveness of their businesses, and as a result promote workforce and economic development in the southland region.</p>		
10	Tech Incubator	<p>The Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation (CSEDC) is collaborating with South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority (SSLBDA), Illinois Small Business Development Center at SSEGI, and Supply Chain Innovation Center and Business Incubator (SCICBI) of Governors State University to apply for the Southland Economic Transformation (SET) grant. The vision of the Chicago Southland Business Incubator is to increase the representation of minority and female small business founders related to Manufacturing and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL) by providing shared working space, high-speed internet, advanced start-up software, mentorship, and funding opportunities to increase access to networks and expertise that these entrepreneurs need to build their businesses. The group is seeking \$49,988 to initiate the pilot phase of the digital programs at the new Chicago Southland Business Incubator. The proposed digital programs aim to support business development and help existing business and prospective small enterprises use digital technologies to transform their business with an emphasis on harnessing the power of e-commerce during the COVID-19 crisis.</p>	<p>Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation</p> <p>South Suburban Land Bank & Development Authority</p> <p>Governors State University</p>	\$49,988