**Section 520.250 Application Evaluation and Ranking**

a) All applications submitted on or before the deadline established in Section 520.230 shall receive an initial review by the Department. This initial review shall determine if the application contains all the information required pursuant to Section 520.220 and if the application meets at least three of the criteria in Section 520.210(d). Upon meeting the minimum eligibility thresholds, applications will compete in a formalized ranking system.

b) The Department shall issue recommendations to the Board by assigning a score to each application. The scores will be determined by the Department, based on the extent to which an application meets the criteria under Section 520.210.

1) *Up to 50 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(1) *with points awarded according to the severity of the unemployment* as indicated by the percentage that the unemployment rate in the local labor market area exceeds 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. [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(1)]

2) *Up to 50 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(2), *with points awarded in accordance with the number of jobs created* and retained *and the aggregate amount of investment promised* in the Enterprise Zone as well as the alleviation of *the effects of poverty and unemployment within the local labor market area.* [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(2)] More points are awarded for specific commitments.

3) *Up to 40 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(3). [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(3)] Applicants will receive:

A) up to 10 points for the poverty rate in the local labor market area, according to the latest data from the Census Bureau;

B) up to 10 points for the percentage of children in participating schools and institutions in the local labor market area are eligible for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program according to the most recent data available from the Illinois State Board of Education;

C) up to 10 points for the percentage of households in the local labor market area that receive SNAP benefits, according to the latest data from the Census Bureau; and

D) up to 10 points for the severity of the situations described in subsections (b)(3)(A) through (C).

4) *Up to 30 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(4), *with points awarded in accordance with the severity of the environmental impact of the abandoned coal mine, brownfield, or federal disaster area.* [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(4)] More points will be awarded for abandoned coal mines in the proposed Enterprise Zone that are a priority 1 or 2 site, as determined by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Mines and Minerals, Division of Abandoned Mined Lands Reclamation or Federal Office of Surface Mines. More points will be awarded for brownfields in the proposed Enterprise Zone that are listed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Priorities List. Points will be awarded for major disaster declarations when a county or counties in the proposed Enterprise Zone are included in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)individual assistance program, the FEMA public assistance program, or both programs. More points will be awarded for multiple major disaster declarations.

5) *Up to 50 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(5), *with points awarded in accordance with the severity of the applicable facility closures or downsizing*. [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(5)] Severity of the applicable facility closures or downsizing will be measured by the number of workers affected as shown by notices filed pursuant to the Illinois Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act [820 ILCS 65] in the 10 years prior to the date of application, notices filed pursuant to the State Facilities Closure Act [30 ILCS 608] in the 5 years prior to the date of application, or reliable evidence of the number of workers affected by federal facility closures in the 5 years prior to the date of application.

6) *Up to 40 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(6) *with points awarded in accordance with the severity and extent of the high floor vacancy or deterioration*. [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(6)] Applicants shall list affected commercial or industrial parcels and/or units and describe how those parcels or units were determined to be vacant or deteriorated. To show a vacancy rate or prevalence, applicants shall provide data of the total number or square feet of commercial and industrial parcels or units in the local labor market area in comparison to total number or square feet of vacant and demolished commercial and industrial parcels or units. Applicants shall describe how that data was collected or determined. (See Section 520.210(d)(6).)

7) *Up to 30 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(7) *with points awarded in accordance with the extent to which the application addresses a plan to improve the State and local government tax base*. [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(7)] Applicants shall address the State and local sales tax base, the State income tax base, and the local property tax base.

8) *Up to 50 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(8) *with points awarded in accordance with the existence of significant public infrastructure* in addition to a plan for infrastructure development and improvement. [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(8)] Applicants shall provide an inventory of the public infrastructure that demonstrates that significant public infrastructure exists in the local labor market area to support economic development at the time of the application. Applicants shall provide a three-year public infrastructure improvement and development plan for each municipality and/or county applicant government that provides for large, physical improvements that are permanent in nature and that are needed for the functioning of the community, including transportation, utilities, etc. The plans shall include a listing of the capital improvement projects, the plan for financing the projects, a timetable for the construction or completion of the projects, and justification for the projects. Points will be awarded for both the inventory of existing public infrastructure and the public infrastructure improvement and development plan, with a majority of the points awarded based on the public infrastructure improvement and development plan.

9) *Up to 40 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(9) *with points awarded in accordance with the extent to which educational programs exist for career preparation*. Applicants shall list all high schools and community colleges in the local labor market area and indicate which high schools and community colleges *are engaged in ACT Work Keys, Manufacturing Skills Standard Certification, or other industry-based credentials that prepare students for careers.* Applicants shall provide documentation that high schools and community colleges in the local labor market are engaged in these programs. More points will be awarded to applicants with a higher percentage of high schools and community colleges *engaged in ACT Work Keys, Manufacturing Skills Standard Certification, or other industry-based credentials that prepare students for careers*. [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(9)]

10) *Up to 40 points for the extent to which the applicant meets or exceeds the criteria in* Section 520.210(d)(10) *with points awarded according to the severity of the change in equalized assessed valuation*. [20 ILCS 655/4.1(a)(10)]

A) If the change in statewide equalized assessed valuation in the State of industrial and/or commercial properties in the 5 years prior to the date of application is positive, the applicant should demonstrate that the increase in EAV of industrial and/or commercial properties in the 5 years prior to the date of application in the local labor market area is equal to or less than 50% of the State average increase in EAV for industrial and/or commercial properties, as applicable, for the same period of time as reported by the Department of Revenue.

B) If the change in statewide EAV of industrial and/or commercial properties in the 5 years prior to the date of application is negative, the applicant should demonstrate that the decrease in EAV of industrial and/or commercial properties in the 5 years prior to the date of application in the local labor market area is equal to or greater than 50% of the statewide average decrease in EAV for industrial and/or commercial properties, as applicable, for the same period of time as reported by the Department of Revenue.

C) Applicants are encouraged to use data on EAV of industrial and/or commercial properties in the local labor market area from the Department of Revenue or from the chief assessment official of the municipality, municipalities, county or counties in which at least a portion of the local labor market area is contained. Severity will be measured by the difference in the local labor market area's industrial and/or commercial EAV from the State average change in EAV for industrial and/or commercial properties beyond the threshold for this test.

c) *No later than June 30, the Department shall notify all applicant municipalities and counties of the Department's determination of the qualification of their respective designated Enterprise Zone areas, and shall send qualifying applications, including the applicant's scores for* the items listed in subsection (b) *and the applicant's final score under* this Section, *to the Board for the Board's consideration, along with supporting documentation of the basis for the Department's decision*. [20 ILCS 655/5.2(c)]

(Source: Amended at 40 Ill. Reg. 10858, effective July 29, 2016)