

From the report *Show Us the Stimulus (Again)*, online at <http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/stimulusweb.cfm>.

STATE: Illinois <http://recovery.illinois.gov/>

CATEGORY	SCORING SYSTEM (* shows component of actual score)	MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SCORE	ACTUAL TOTAL SCORE
SPENDING (ALLOCATIONS OR ACTUAL) BY PROGRAM AREAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Broad categories only: 5</li> <li>- Narrow categories only: 5</li> <li>- Both broad and narrow categories: 10*</li> <li>- No breakdown by program areas: 0</li> </ul>	10	10
SPENDING (ALLOCATIONS OR ACTUAL) BY COUNTY OR OTHER RELEVANT GEOGRAPHIC UNIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- County/geographic unit overall totals only: 10</li> <li>- County/unit totals for individual programs only: 10</li> <li>- County/unit totals for both individual programs and overall spending: 15*</li> <li>- No county/geographic unit breakdowns: 0</li> </ul>	15	15
SPENDING (ALLOCATIONS OR ACTUAL) COMPARED TO ECONOMIC DISTRESS (unemployment, home foreclosure, poverty, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- County or other relevant geographic unit distribution compared to two or more variables: 15</li> <li>- Compared to one variable: 10</li> <li>- No comparisons to economic needs: 0</li> </ul> EXTRA CREDIT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-percentage of contracts given to disadvantaged business enterprises: 5</li> </ul>	15 (plus 5 potential extra credit)	0
CONTRACT/GRANT DETAILS (via maps or lists)	ADD SCORES TO GET TOTAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Descriptions of individual contract/ grant projects: 3*</li> <li>- Dollar amount: 3*</li> <li>- Name of recipient entity: 3*</li> <li>- Text of contract or grant document: 3</li> <li>- Status of project/portion completed: 3</li> </ul>	15	9
RECIPIENT JOBS DATA	ADD SCORES TO GET TOTAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actual job data for individual contract and grants: 7*</li> <li>- Job totals for program areas: 5</li> <li>- Job totals for the entire state: 3*</li> </ul> EXTRA CREDIT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- data on job quality (wage rates): 5</li> <li>- demographics of workers: 5</li> </ul>	15 (plus 10 potential extra credit)	10
MAPPING OF CONTRACT AND GRANT PROJECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interactive map with significant details on projects: 15*</li> <li>- Interactive map with limited details on projects: 10</li> <li>- Static map: 5</li> <li>- No mapping: 0</li> </ul>	15	15
USER AIDS	ADD SCORES TO GET TOTAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- search box (including coverage of data): 5*</li> <li>- data downloadability: 5*</li> <li>- machine-readable data feed: 5</li> </ul>	15	10
TOTALS		100 (plus 15 potential extra credit)	69

Notes: Illinois' Recovery Act website has been significantly improved since our last scoring in *Show Us the Stimulus*. However, its navigation could still be better, and it lacks features such as disclosure of contracts award documents, comprehensive data on wages of Recovery Act-supported jobs, and comparisons of ARRA spending distribution to metrics of economic distress.

Spending by geography and program area have been displayed in an easily navigable form that allows one to start with broad categories of spending and drill down to specific projects or cities:

<http://recovery.illinois.gov/projectInformation.htm>

Contract and grant details can be downloaded all at once by leaving the search field blank on this webpage:

<http://recovery.illinois.gov/default.aspx>

Jobs data for stimulus projects are displayed for each project in the downloadable contract and grant data and the drill-down category page (see both links above). Jobs data for the state overall are posted inconspicuously at the bottom of the following page: <http://recovery.illinois.gov/ARRAReporting.htm>

Contract and grant details are displayed geographically on the Recovery Map by checking the "Show Individual Projects on Map" box. Projects can be narrowed by specific categories of spending as well. Available here:

<http://recoverymap.illinois.gov/>

The website displays three maps. Each offers a different advantage for displaying information.

One map at <http://recoverymap.illinois.gov/> allows a broad comparison of county-by-county and program-specific spending across the state. It could be improved in a few ways. Cook County was awarded \$1.4 billion dollars while Rock Island County was awarded \$57 million, yet the map leads one to believe that both received the same amount of funding. This could be rectified by using graduated colors instead of symbols to represent spending, making the range more reasonably reflect natural breaks in the data, and then using a legend to explain the amount of spending reflected on the map. Another improvement to the map would be allow the user to view spending on a per capita basis, compare spending to poverty rates, unemployment, foreclosure rates, and other metrics of need.

A map on the main Recovery Act page allows the user to click on a county and see county-specific project spending. This map should also be displayed as graduated colors with appropriate natural breaks and a legend.

A third map at <http://wwwb.recovery.illinois.gov/projectInformation.htm> allows one to click on a county and see broad categories of spending by agency and category. It too should be displayed as graduated colors with appropriate natural breaks and a legend.

Illinois has an outstanding search box that combs all Recovery Act data for the state, filters according to keyword, contractor name, agency, city, or county, and automatically downloads that information into an Excel spreadsheet for analysis. We applaud this useful tool.