

2014 MML INNOVATION AWARDS

NOMINATION SUMMARIES

SMALL CITY CATEGORY (POPULATION UNDER 5,000)

Butler – Solar Farm

As of March 2014, the City of Butler has had a fully functioning solar farm. Located on 12.5 acres in the Butler Industrial Park, it is the largest solar farm in the state of Missouri. Butler is known as the “Electric City” because it was the first city west of the Mississippi River to have electric power, so it is very fitting that this solar park be added to the resume. Butler’s utilities are run by the municipality and a significant amount of their revenue comes from this. It has become difficult over the years to keep up with the utility demands and keep the prices down. With a partnership between MC Power Companies, the Missouri Public Utility Alliance (MPUA), and the Missouri Joint Municipal Electric Utility Commission (MJMEUC), the solar farm was designed and built to offset the peak electricity demand used by the City of Butler. While this project is still fairly new, results can be seen daily through MCPower’s dashboard which is used to monitor the solar farm.

Peculiar – Drive-Through Bill Paying

On the Monday following Labor Day in September 2012, Peculiar City staff innovated the world of bill-paying by employing one of the most unique methods available today. The idea: give customers the option to pay their bill through a drive-through window, much like a bank or fast food restaurant. The objective was to give customers a more convenient and time saving option by which to pay their water, sewer and trash utility bill while still maintaining the personal connection they have grown accustomed to. The City Utility Clerk has made bill-paying through the drive-through extremely easy; and her competence mixed with a bubbling personality keeps customers coming back time and time again, already processing approximately 50 percent of the total bills through the window!

Windsor – Curbside Recycling

The City of Windsor wanted to reduce trash to the landfill and have no increase in citizen’s bills, so it started a recycling program. The City Administrator applied for and received three grants from Quad Lakes Solid Waste Management who received funds from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources by way of landfill tipping fees. A recycle trailer was purchased and used but filled faster than Henry County Industries could empty it. HCI employs challenged individuals who give them the opportunity to have on-the-job training and learn a skill and HCI makes a profit from recycling. The city submitted a second grant for 1,400 – 14 gallon recycling totes to provide one to each residence. The city used a sanitation truck and cleaned it to be used only as a recycle truck. The city was collecting trash two days a week and changed it to one day a week and one day for recycling. After receiving the grant and purchasing totes, each tote was marked with a residential address and delivered. The curbside recycling went so well that the city applied for a third grant to purchase recycle dumpsters for businesses.

MEDIUM CITY CATEGORY (POPULATION 5,000 – 15, 000)

Branson – Urban Gardening Project

Several years ago firefighters planted a few garden products including tomatoes, cucumbers and basil around the landscaping beds of the station. The original objective was to simply provide one crew with a few fresh vegetables for use with meal preparation. The current objectives allow provision of freshly grown vegetables from over 1,500 square feet of urban garden space, providing products for the entire fire department plus families, other city employees and community members. This urban garden also meets objectives set in the City's Health and Wellness Program. Branson Firefighters initiated the project and have involved several other City Departments to improve the urban garden space. This includes tons of free mulch from tree debris following the "Leap Day Tornado," use of landscaping blocks recycled from a retaining wall at the Branson RecPlex, and community partnerships such as Home Depot that have helped provide garden seed and supplies. Last year, hundreds of pounds of vegetables were produced and used during the growing season, saving dollars on the firefighter's grocery bill. It was also a contributing factor in a reduction in 2014 Health Insurance Premiums. This project is fresh, growing, and making a positive impact on the City Staff and Community, and is sustainable.

Carthage – Community Team Policing

Team Policing is an innovative concept, implemented by the Carthage Police Department as an extension of the community-oriented policing movement. The Carthage Police Department has designed the Team Policing project as a way to solve several issues in troubled areas of Carthage. The project was created to contend with rising calls for service, increasing criminal incidents and a decreasing quality of life for area residents. The project assigns one or two officers to a selected neighborhood of about 200 homes. These officers go door-to-door to meet with residents and conduct surveys designed to reveal their concerns with crime and security issues. By assisting residents to take ownership of their neighborhood, criminal activity is reduced and the neighborhood is safer and a more enjoyable place to live. Through partnerships with the public works department, area organizations and churches, each area is beautified by addressing code violations. Our sixth and most recent project has assigned an officer to a local apartment complex of 116 units. Working with management and tenants themselves, our agency is addressing complaints of drug activity, property crime and traffic safety. This ongoing project is responsible for a 30 percent reduction in calls for service over the course of three and a half years.

Fulton – Stinson Creek Trail Historical Markers

In June of 2011, the City of Fulton's Historic Preservation Commission began discussing the placement of historical markers along the City's Stinson Creek Trail. The commission felt the signs would add an extra dimension to the man-made structures and natural scenery already seen near the trail. Also, it would make residents and visitors better informed on the City's history. Once the sites were chosen, the City's public information officer created a design for each sign based on a common template. The Kingdom of Callaway Historical Society was vital in providing photographs and historical data to ensure the markers were accurate and members of the HPC wrote the narratives for the signs. Meanwhile, Quick Response (QR) Codes were incorporated into the signs, which visitors can scan with a mobile device and find more information online. All of the markers were financed through sponsorships by local

businesses and organizations. On May 20, 2014, the first nine Stinson Creek Trail Historical Markers were unveiled. This is the type of project that can be implemented by cities of any size and without the use of additional public funds.

Harrisonville – Farmers Market on the Square

On June 1, 2013, the City of Harrisonville started a weekly farmers market on the square. Our objective was to find a way to bring people back to the square to shop on a consistent basis, and we hoped to achieve this by capitalizing on the current popularity of locally grown foods. Our goal was to reignite interest in the square as a viable location for businesses of all types, and to promote the purchase of historic structures surrounding the square so they could be put back into productive use. Starting with just seven vendors on our first day, we grew to have more than 60 vendors registered by season's end and 25-30 typically selling produce, plants, custom meats, prepared foods, jams, jellies, baked goods, and other treats every Saturday. Response from shoppers was so enthusiastic we extended the market through Oct. 5, six weeks longer than originally planned. Seeing the renewed activity on the square, two new businesses were opened during the summer and three buildings were purchased. The Harrisonville Chamber of Commerce is currently planning to move to the Harrisonville Square. Special thanks to a dedicated core of volunteers whose hard work and support helped us accomplish this!

Lebanon – Mandatory Seatbelt Use Campaign

The project was a campaign for mandatory seat belt use for City employees to bring awareness to workers compensation claims and safety in general during National Safety Month in 2011. The objectives were: 1) lower workers compensation claims paid 2) make all employees aware of workers compensation claim cost 3) bring focus to worksite safety. The objectives were achieved and have been sustained. In policy year 2011 claims were \$215,038, in 2012 they were \$92,319 and in 2013 claims paid were \$41,842. In addition to cost savings, lives were saved. During the project, two employees one a consistent seat belt user and the other an occasional, long trip user, were struck head on driving on a City street a few miles from their home by a drunk driver. Seat belt use saved both lives and they continue to work for the City. This incident helped drive home the point that safety matters. All employees were involved in the project; however the Human Resources Department and senior management led the campaign and were responsible for the enforcement of seat belt use. Safety training is an important part of our overall training program and is celebrated during National Safety Month.

Maplewood – Trash, Recycling and Composting Consolidation

Due to an increase of businesses within the central business district, specifically restaurants, a proliferation of unsightly and filthy dumpsters littered the parking lot serving businesses on the 7300 block of Manchester. Dumpsters blocked valuable parking spaces, access to pedestrian walkways and rear entrances to businesses. This block is considered the heart of Maplewood's business district and is vital to the financial success of the City. Therefore, improving this situation was critical to the City's continued resurgence. To reduce the number of dumpsters, the City required consolidated trash services and added recycling and composting options for businesses. As a result, the number of dumpsters was cut from 38 to seven and the above referenced concerns and numerous others were addressed. By offering recycling and composting services that were previously not an option, this has been the most successful sustainable project the City has undertaken. The City selected haulers for trash,

recycling and composting and worked with businesses to ensure implementation was successful. The City took over accounting and billing for services and due to economies of scale and grants obtained by the City for recycling and composting, each business saves money on their monthly trash bills.

Maryville – Rebranding Mozingo Lake Recreation Park

Partnerships in “Town & Gown” communities often focus on overarching issues such as housing, policing efforts, and infrastructure. Aside from these, there are numerous challenges facing municipalities that can benefit from direct student involvement and new approaches. The City of Maryville recently partnered with Northwest Missouri State University’s Advanced Advertising Class to rebrand and market Mozingo Lake Recreation Park, a 3,000 acre city-owned park. The student-led efforts have transformed the park from an outdated “hidden-gem” into a regional tourism draw, captured the interest of national hotel/conference center developers, and secured the construction of a nine-hole youth golf course designed by legendary golfer Tom Watson. Following this partnership, numerous other mutually beneficial student projects have been designed in similar fashion to benefit the community. The project utilized city staff working directly with the class on a weekly basis to ensure a successful outcome and provide a real-world experience for students.

Oak Grove – South Broadway Street Improvement Project

The South Broadway Street Improvement Project expands an existing 1.5 mile two-lane road to four lanes with a center turn lane along with new sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. This project meets a community objective to widen Broadway Street that was identified in both the 1981 and 1999 Comprehensive Plans. It was also ranked as the highest transportation priority in 2008 by an Oak Grove citizen advisory committee. The road widening is a joint project between the City of Oak Grove and the Missouri Department of Transportation that utilizes the MoDOT Cost Share program with each entity paying for 50 percent of the project costs. To pay for its portion of the funding, the city developed a creative funding package that redirected an existing ½ cent sales tax and sold voter-approved general obligation bonds. The project also straightens an S curve near the southern city limits in an area where numerous, sometimes fatal, wrecks occur. This project took years to complete and required two agencies to work together to finish a decades-old community goal. It involved a financing method that was overwhelmingly supported by the citizens of Oak Grove. Most importantly, it improved the safety of those traveling the road and potentially saved lives as a part of the process.

LARGE CITY CATEGORY (POPULATION MORE THAN 15,000)

Ballwin – The Pointe Sustainable Improvement Project

The primary objective of The Pointe Sustainable Improvement Project was to replace the worn out mechanical systems in order to maintain a quality community recreation facility; secondary objectives included improving energy efficiency, lowering operating costs, and sustainability. A comprehensive approach that addressed all the issues that could have an effect on meeting the objectives was endorsed by the city’s leadership. The opportunity made available through Missouri Statute 8.231, which allows cities to contract for design services and construction without using traditional bidding methods (Guaranteed Energy Savings Agreement), was also reviewed by city officials and endorsed. A contract was awarded to

CTS Group in the amount of \$3.9 million dollars for the final engineering and installation of equipment to meet the guaranteed energy savings goal of \$54,000 per year. CTS was also responsible for applying for the energy efficiency incentives with local utilities on behalf of the city to help off-set the cost of the project. Keeping the public informed was crucial to the success with information in the lobby, communication with staff in order to accurately inform visitors, and articles in the local paper to help the public understand the importance of the inconveniences they may have encountered.

Columbia – New Fleet Maintenance Building

The City of Columbia, Missouri, has three fleet maintenance facilities. One was an aging building that was repurposed many times since its original construction as an airport hangar around 1940. In 2012, a building assessment was completed, which indicated that the building was structurally unsound. The City opted to replace the building with a new fleet maintenance building. Project team members from Columbia's Public Works Department, the Columbia Fire Department, PWA, and Crawford Construction Company worked collaboratively to achieve the following objectives: replace the existing building with a state-of-the-art fleet maintenance building; increase the City's capability to support its growing fleet maintenance requirement; improve ergonomic and environmental conditions of City staff at the facility; and incorporate facility requirements for the future repair of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles. Construction of the facility began in mid-2013 and was completed in May 2014. In all, the project successfully achieved the City's goals. The new building has increased the maintenance output capability by 100 percent, while remaining within the original building's footprint. With the only certified CNG vehicle maintenance facility in Columbia and the greater central Missouri area, the City of Columbia is prepared to meet the growing service needs of the community.

Ferguson – Live Well Ferguson

In 2008, the City of Ferguson and Trailnet collaborated to form Live Well Ferguson. Trailnet is a St. Louis-based nonprofit serving as the region's leading advocate for active living. The objective of Live Well Ferguson is to help residents live healthier lives through active living and improved dietary habits. Ferguson is a pilot community in Trailnet's Healthy, Active and Vibrant Communities Initiative that supports residents' health at any age. Since its inception, Ferguson has taken on many projects to achieve Live Well's goals that impact policy and create healthy social networks. This program involves residents, community volunteers, elected officials, city employees, and area business partners. Today, Live Well Ferguson's programs, including Sunday Parkways, Eat Well Ferguson, Ferguson Twilight Run, and Ferguson Twilight Ramble thrive in the community.

Florissant – Dunegant Park Disc Golf Course

In an effort to transform an underutilized park into a space that would attract desirable park users, an 18-hole disc golf course was installed at Dunegant Park. The 52 acres of moderately wooded and hilly areas with expansive open land was the perfect place for this course. The projects objectives were to counteract the negative image that the park had taken on and to enhance the overall park environment. Unique landscaping, such as sand hazards and prairie grass, were added to increase the technical aspect and challenging features to the course along with complementing the beauty of the existing park. Those involved in the project were the parks director, the mayor, a team of councilmembers, a local disc golf course designer and the park advisory board. The Dunegant Park Disc Golf Course

has become an integral and dynamic amenity to the Florissant park system and has generated extremely encouraging and overwhelmingly favorable reviews. The disc golf course was an excellent investment built with far less capital than a baseball diamond and with minimal construction or alteration to the existing landscape.

Gladstone – Linden Square

Gladstone citizens have long indicated a strong desire to have a focal point in the community where people could gather, bring friends and enjoy a downtown atmosphere. Having a downtown was recognized as essential to economic growth and stability. As a community Gladstone had no downtown, defined central business district or square. Stakeholder meetings were held and the overwhelming direction coming from those meetings was to build a downtown that started with the desired focal point citizens so desperately wanted. There was already an award-winning community center in place that was seen as an anchor for future development on the east side of what would become Gladstone's downtown. Linden Square was built, becoming that central gathering place, an outdoor entertainment venue with year-round outdoor activities and the impetus for additional growth and development. A \$950,000 public investment spurred an additional \$4 million office building, which was followed by the development of a \$28 million mixed use project that includes 222 luxury apartments. This project brought a new restaurant and martial arts school to the immediate area. Now plans are underway to build 200,000 square feet of Class A office and research space that will house area educational opportunities.

Kansas City – Urban Agriculture Growing KC

Americans throughout the country have found urban agriculture to be an excellent way for municipalities to obtain nutritious foods and build community. In Kansas City, Missouri, urban gardeners and farmers turn vacant lots into productive growing spaces. Unfortunately, successful growing in urban areas is often held back due to lack of water accessibility and/or affordability. To address the water access issue, KCMO Water Services, Kansas City Community Gardens, Cultivate KC and Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition collaborated to introduce an innovative solution; KC Grow. KC Grow is a consulting and small grant-providing initiative. The primary goals of KC Grow are; accessibility, affordability, and sustainability. The annual project objectives are to educate 100 gardeners and farmers about KC Grow, conduct 50 water audits, provide technical assistance to 25 gardens or farms, and award a minimum of 50 small grants. Within the first quarter of the project, the educational objective has been surpassed and 40 percent of the audits were conducted, putting KC Grow on track to meet its technical assistance and grant-awarding standards.

Kirkwood – Historic Kirkwood Landmarks Walking Tour

The City of Kirkwood, Missouri, established in 1853, is a city with many historic neighborhoods and buildings. To assist residents and visitors in their exploration of Kirkwood's neighborhoods, a Walking Tour and accompanying brochure were developed. Kirkwood boasts beautiful historic homes, a thriving historic downtown business district, and a historic, working train station where passengers embark and disembark from four Amtrak trains daily. With abundant shopping, dining, and entertainment in a pedestrian-friendly community, Downtown Kirkwood has become a destination spot for visitors arriving by car or train. The walking tour was designed to encourage visitors to walk the streets and explore the nearby neighborhoods of this historic community, to enjoy the full "walkable Kirkwood experience." The tour was developed by the Kirkwood Landmarks Commission, in

cooperation with the Downtown Kirkwood Special Business District and the Kirkwood-Des Peres Area Chamber. A brochure was designed by graphic design students at St. Louis Community College at Meramec, which is located in Kirkwood.

Lee's Summit – Crime Reduction Team

In fall 2011, the Lee's Summit Police Department elected to implement a new Community Oriented Policing strategy with a Crime Reduction Team (CRT). The CRT would be assigned to designated high crime geographical areas identified as a CRT Target Zone. The CRT aimed to reduce crime, increase quality of life, and improve perceptions of law enforcement for residents in the defined area. Specifically, the CRT hoped to establish stronger relationships between law enforcement and local residents while reducing violent crime, property crime, and drug activity. The team worked with local landlords and churches to engage the community. The CRT was composed of four officers from the Lee's Summit Police Department: Sgt. Josh Patterson; Brad Anders, Mark Wiesemann, and Matt Hargrave. The CRT carried out significant drug seizures and other arrests, achieving an 85 percent clearance rate on cases, nearly twice the average for the community as a whole. The efforts of the CRT were measured by a series of qualitative surveys and quantitative measurements of crime in the area. Perceptions of law enforcement and quality of life in the community improved dramatically, and the CRT now plans to expand to other areas of the city.

Manchester – Safety through Legislation and Procedures

The initiative of City of Manchester elected officials, staff and employees has been instrumental in implementing certain safety procedures to protect the City's citizens, businesses and guests. City officials were innovative and forward looking by passing the "Funeral Protest" Ordinance which, after challenge by the Westboro Baptist Church, was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals. Manchester's pioneering spirit also led to passage of an ordinance regulating the sale of ephedrine- and pseudoephedrine-related products used in methamphetamine production to protect the City's residents and the general public. An ordinance was later adopted pertaining to decontamination of structures where methamphetamine has been produced to determine if the property is safe and suitable for human habitation.

The City of Manchester Board of Aldermen adopted an ordinance prohibiting texting and electronic messaging for individuals who engage in that conduct while driving motor vehicles in Manchester. An ordinance was also adopted prohibiting the public display of dangerous and deadly weapons. Additional public safety activities in which the City of Manchester is involved include citizen training in the Citizens' Police Academy and the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), a Women's Safety Seminar, the "In Safe Hands Program" (a program that collects information to assist police in the safe return of special needs individuals, those with Alzheimer's', dementia or Down's Syndrome, to their families) and the "Are You OK?" program (a program that places computerized calls to elderly residents to check on their well-being).

Raymore – Sidewalks on Undeveloped Lots

The Raymore "sidewalk on undeveloped lots" program was implemented in order to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk network that were occurring in developing subdivisions in the City. Construction of a home on each lot in a subdivision can often take years to be completed. If the City only required that the sidewalk be installed when a home is constructed

on the lot, then gaps in the sidewalk network would frustrate existing residents in the subdivision for years. Raymore's program requires a property owner to install a sidewalk on an undeveloped lot when 66 percent or more of the lots on the same side of the street in the same block already have sidewalk. When the threshold is met, property owners are provided notice of the requirement to install the sidewalk. If the property owner fails to install the sidewalk, the City may then install the sidewalk and place a special tax assessment on the property to recover the costs. Creation of this program was a combined effort of residents, city officials and the development community. The objective of establishing a well-connected and complete sidewalk network throughout the entire City is now closer to completion.

Sedalia – Citizens for A Clean Sedalia

Citizens For A Clean Sedalia is a citizens group created by the City Council to concentrate on and help address increasing complaints and observations of neighborhood and downtown decay. The Committee's objectives were divided into three sections: (1) A review and possible recommendations to strengthen the City's residential nuisance policies; (2) A review and possible recommendation for stronger downtown dangerous building inspection policies; (3) Garner volunteers to assist with these clean-up efforts. The projects goals were achieved. Not only were recommended nuisance policies approved by the City Council and are now in use, including the highly unique "Pick-up On Demand" program; but a one-of-a-kind downtown dangerous building inspection program was implemented and currently is underway. Additionally, more than three hundred volunteers over the past two years have assisted with this project. Those involved in the project include the six member citizens committee, which spearheaded all recommendations; the City Council; the City's Community Development Department, Pettis County Community Partnership, Whiteman Air Base, Open Door, Diversified Community Outreach, Starbucks, McDonald's Restaurant, Bethel Church and more than three hundred community volunteers.

St. Joseph – Block Walk St. Joe

Block Walk St. Joe, a National Association of Development (NADO) Innovation Award recipient, is a grassroots effort designed to create a livable, sustainable and walkable community in St. Joseph, Mo. The project incorporates two concepts through the use of technology, revitalization and collaboration creating impactful and valuable community initiatives. The first element is a virtual walking tour enabling users to learn about the history behind downtown St. Joseph. The tour showcases the integrity behind the multiple historic buildings, educating residents and visitors on St. Joseph's rich past. The second concept, the St. Joe Design Center, is a program designed to find new perspectives on the potential of downtown St. Joseph through landscape plans. The city of St. Joseph has developed numerous city plans in the past, but this project inherited and showcased ideas from those on the outside looking in. Both concepts added a unique, innovative twist to Block Walk St. Joe to continue the effort to revitalize downtown St. Joseph, while sustaining the historical integrity of the community.

St. Peters – Voluntary Utility Round Up Program

Meals on Wheels volunteers at the St. Peters' Senior Center deliver about 150 meals a day, Monday through Friday. The program faced major state and federal funding cuts over the last several years and was in jeopardy. Through the Voluntary Utility Round Up Program, St. Peters utility customers have the option to donate to the Meals on Wheels program by simply rounding up their utility bill payments to the next dollar amount, or to make a larger contribution if they wish. The objective was to provide the supplemental funding to keep the St. Peters Senior Center Meals on Wheels program delivering 150 meals each day Monday through Friday to St. Peters seniors. Because of the generosity of our residents, the St. Peters Senior Center Meals on Wheels program continues to deliver hot meals to 150 seniors Monday through Friday. This project involves City of St. Peters' elected officials including the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, City Staff, City residents and utility customers. St. Peters Board of Aldermen presented and approved the idea to provide the opportunity for City utility customers to make voluntary contributions.

Wentzville – Police Department Body Cameras

In January 2012, the newly appointed Chief of Wentzville Police Department, Lisa Harrison assumed command and immediately began looking at ways to improve the department and better serve the community. One of her first objectives was to find a cost-effective replacement for the department's current aging, in-car camera systems. Aware of budgeting limits, she presented the challenge to her command staff. Research and analysis of various in-car camera systems was conducted, as well as detailed comparative analysis of body cameras. After eliminating other similar devices, the command staff presented the Taser Axon Flex system manufactured by Taser Incorporated for further evaluation. In April of 2012, Lt. Emmanuel Borroum randomly selected two patrol officers that would assist in the field testing by wearing the Axon Flex for a period of six months. In November 2012, the Axon Flex system with the accompanying cloud storage, www.evidence.com, was fully deployed to all commissioned patrol officers and sergeants. Each system cost roughly 70-85 percent less than conventional in-car systems. The systems enable officers more opportunity to capture copious amounts of usable audiovisual evidence in the course of performing their duties. In addition, the camera system increases officer safety and reduces unjust complaints.



For more innovative ideas that may work for your city, visit the Innovation Awards page on MML's website at www.mocities.com.