

2014 MML Innovation Awards

The MML Innovation Awards program showcases municipal projects that demonstrate new approaches for solving municipal challenges.

The awards complement the League's goal of serving as a clearinghouse for municipal information. The awards recognize and celebrate successful programs, spotlighting those that could benefit other communities.

Large City Category Winner: City of Lee's Summit



(L-R) City of Lee's Summit Police Department Major Scott Lyons, Mayor Randall Rhoads, Captain Bryan Wilson.

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 plans to expand to other areas of the city.

Large City Category Honorable Mention: City of St. Peters



Front row: City of St. Peters Mayor Len Pagano, Alderman Terri Violet, Alderman Jerry Hollingsworth, City Clerk Patty Smith, City Administrator Bill Charnisky. Back row: Alderman Patrick Barclay, Alderman Rocky Reitmeyer, Alderman Judy Bateman, Assistant City Administrator Tim Wilkinson. Not Pictured: Alderman Don Aytes, Alderman Dave Thomas, Alderman Tommy Roberts.

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 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.

**Large City Category Honorable Mention:
City of Kansas City**



(L-R): City of Kansas City Councilmembers Scott Wagner, John Sharp, Melba Curls and Dick Davis.

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.

Find a list of all entries and past winners on the MML Innovation Awards page at www.mocities.com.

**Medium City Category Winner:
City of Carthage**



(L-R): City of Carthage Police Chief Greg Dagnan, City Councilman Jason Shelfer, Police Captain Bill Hawkins, Mayor J. Michael Harris, Officer Doug Dickey, City Clerk Lynn Campbell, City Councilman Steve Leibbrand, City Administrator Tom Short, City Councilman Jim Swatsenborg.

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, the 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.

**Medium City Category Honorable Mention:
City of Branson**



(L-R): City of Branson Alderman Michael Booth, Branson Fire Department Division Chief Charlie Huston and Engineer Brien Reinke.

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.

**Small City Category Winner:
City of Butler**



(L-R): City of St. Peters Alderman Rocky Reitmeyer and City of Butler City Clerk Casey Koehn.

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. Results can be seen daily through MCPower's dashboard, used to monitor the solar farm.

**Small City Category Honorable Mention:
City of Windsor**

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. A recycle trailer was purchased and used but filled faster than it could be emptied. The city submitted a second grant for 1,400 14-gallon recycling totes to provide one to each residence, cleaning up a sanitation truck to be used only as a recycling truck. The curbside recycling went so well that the city applied for a third grant to purchase recycle dumpsters for businesses.