

2019 Missouri Municipal League Nomination Summaries

September 10, 2019

*Innovation
Awards*



Missouri
Municipal
League

Growing Our Communities Together

2019 MISSOURI MUNICIPAL LEAGUE INNOVATION AWARD NOMINATION SUMMARIES

The Innovation Awards program showcases municipal programs or projects that have been successfully implemented and demonstrate new approaches for solving municipal challenges. It may also serve as a model for other communities.

To enter, a municipality must be a member of the Missouri Municipal League. Only one program per city will be considered. Joint or multi-city projects are welcome (population category will be based on the largest city in the project). Nominated programs or projects must be completed or well established.

The awards will be given in five categories:

- Extra Large (population more than 30,000)
- Large (population 15,000 to 30,000)
- Medium (population 5,000 to 15,000)
- Small (population under 5,000)
- Member's Choice - all nominees are eligible, and all members are welcome to vote.

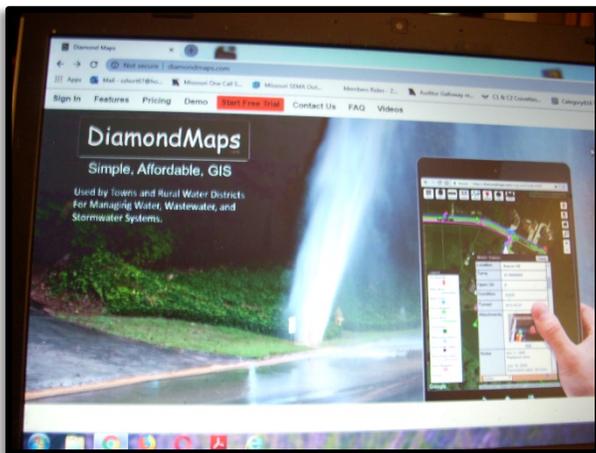
Nominees for 2019

City of Fair Grove Inexpensive Geographic Information System (Small City Category: population less than 5,000)

Fair Grove needed an inexpensive geographic information system to maintain their infrastructure records and maps. They wanted to replace paper plans, GPS-generated wall maps and field books with computer/smart phone accessible maps. At the suggestion of the Missouri Rural Water Association Circuit Rider, Diamond Maps was contacted. For \$300 per year (10-year price guarantee), Fair Grove jumped into the 21st century. Additional costs included a few hundred dollars to digitize construction plans. The GIS system is shared over the internet with city offices, Public Water Supply District No. 5, Fair Grove Fire Protection District,

Fair Grove Planning and Zoning and others including residents,

developers and contractors on an as-needed basis. In the field they can pull up construction and as-built plans, every fire hydrant inspection and flow test, maintenance records, photo documentation and memorization of sewer and water line repairs. New water meters no longer required an outside GPS survey but during the interim can be accurately pinned on the base map in the field. Address and phone numbers of users can also be accessed in the field. This GIS system is suitable for any small city with a limited budget.



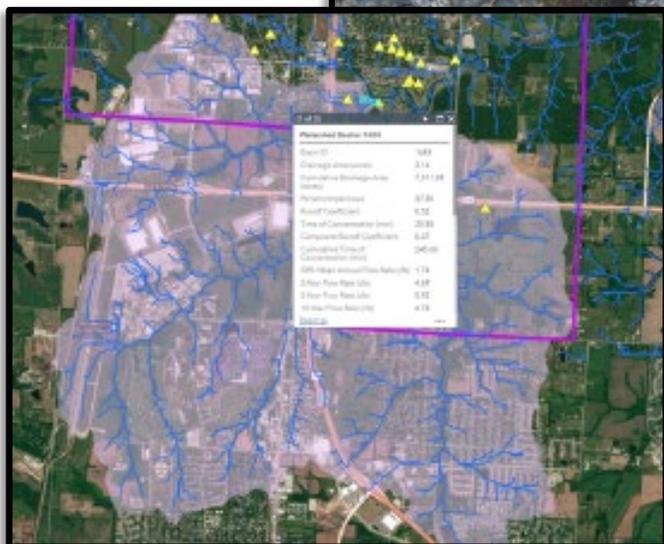
City of Fulton
Smoke Testing with a Drone
(Medium City Category: population 5,000 – 15, 000)

Fulton is under a Consent Order from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to identify and remove excess inflow & infiltration (I/I) entering its sanitary sewers. The City and Burns & McDonnell Engineering determined that the sewers in the downtown area, the “Brick District,” needed special attention. The Brick District is characterized by multi-story buildings constructed side-by-side, with facades extending above the building’s roof lines. The sewer pipe network in the Brick District was subjected to an evaluation technique called “smoke testing.” In addition to boots-on-the-ground personnel taking notes and photographing evidence of smoke escaping from the sewer pipes, the City also employed a drone to video-document of the smoke testing procedure and results. The video footage obtained from the aerial perspective was a very innovative use of drone technology. The Brick District building facades would usually make viewing smoke from street level extremely difficult. The use of a drone significantly reduced the man-hours needed to climb each building’s stairs, traverse the roofs and document the smoke testing. Project success is clear and can easily be judged by the high-resolution video footage. With so many drones flying in our skies, many Missouri municipalities can use this technology to their advantage.



**City of Grandview
Next Generation Stormwater Tool
(Large City Category: population 15,000 – 30,000)**

Significant flooding in 2017 impelled the city of Grandview, to update its 30-year-old stormwater master plan. For a timely and cost-effective solution, the City called in Burns & McDonnell to tackle the task. The result is a financially feasible next-generation stormwater master plan for every city and every day. Instead of developing the traditional capital project list requiring significant funding, the Burns & McDonnell team took the master plan in a different direction. In conjunction with TREKK Design Group, the teams developed a suite of tools to provide real-time analysis of stormwater issues. Using current City data, the team created map layers in a geodatabase framework, compatible on a multitude of platforms. These tools identify locations of current drainage issues, overland flow paths and any obstructions, and drainage service requests. Layering the tools paints a picture of how water moves through Grandview. Engineers can see how much area (acres) is draining to a point and how much stormwater (cubic feet per second) is anticipated during various storm events. These tools can also determine if existing pipes meet the minimum level of service per current regional design standards, as well as estimate the pipe capacity needed for future development. Additionally, the tools make direct use of service request information, creating a people-centric model for engineering. With the right tools in an easy-to-navigate dashboard, the City can better manage stormwater on a day-to-day basis. The total project cost was \$100,000.



This shows a service request that observed flooding at an identified location. Using the stormwater tools, the City can start the conversation with the property owner that this property is located where several major flow paths converge, how much stormwater drainage is coming to this area, and visually show the paths of this drainage. In addition, the City can provide the property owner information about the cumulative flows reaching this location in the watershed.

**City of Lebanon
Fire Department Safety and Education
(Medium City Category: population 5,000 – 15, 000)**

This project's objective is to improve life safety, directly related to home fires. The primary intent is to ensure there are working smoke detectors in every home within the city of Lebanon. The project was expanded to include providing carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers and bailout ladders. The objective is ongoing. Project development involved members of the community donating funds to purchase smoke detectors and the Lebanon City Council passing Ordinance #5822, establishing the project and committing to matching funds to support efforts. Members of the Lebanon Fire Department are the hands-on part of this project. These men and women install carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, conduct public education sessions, and deliver ladders and fire extinguishers when requested. Public safety is the primary responsibility of every level of government in any community. This project is applicable in any size city, village, or town and could be implemented at any feasible level. Simply providing smoke detectors to those in need can save lives.



Fire Chief Sam Schneider distributing smoke detectors.

**City of Lee's Summit
Improving Students Through Government Interaction
(Extra Large City Category: population more than 30,000)**

In an effort to expose students to careers in municipal service, while also helping them develop necessary technical skills, the city of Lee's Summit's Public Works Department and the Lee's Summit R-7 School District's Summit Technology Academy collaborated to create an innovative program that has reached more than 150 students since its inception in 2002. The program serves as an opportunity for students planning to study engineering in college to experience real-world situations and to learn and use basic technical skills. Each year, the students work in groups to complete a planning and design project, later presented to city officials, educators and parents. When the program initially began, only a handful of city engineers and technicians were involved in the process. Over time, the program has evolved and now includes 12 to 15 city employees from various departments who are involved throughout the semester. This innovative approach to learning has been applied to a financial analysis class this semester, where the City's finance department is working with students. This innovative program has helped reinforce the passion students have for engineering and has provided the tools necessary to succeed wherever they choose to continue their educational careers.



City of Maplewood
First Responder Meal Program
(Medium City Category: population 5,000 – 15, 000)

The First Responder Meal Program was intended to foster communication and strengthen the relationship between first responders and Maplewood residents as well as neighbor-to-neighbor relations. While the program was conceived by residents it was quickly embraced by the City and became a joint effort. Residents wanted to show their appreciation and have the opportunity for open dialogue with first responders. The meals are meant to be intimate and personal, and what better way than to “break bread” together? Maplewood first responders participate in several community outreach programs during the year. This program is unique by design. There is no set schedule, the residents can host the meals at times that are convenient for them which allows for more inclusion. The overall program is simple but has the potential of making a significant long-term impact on the community.

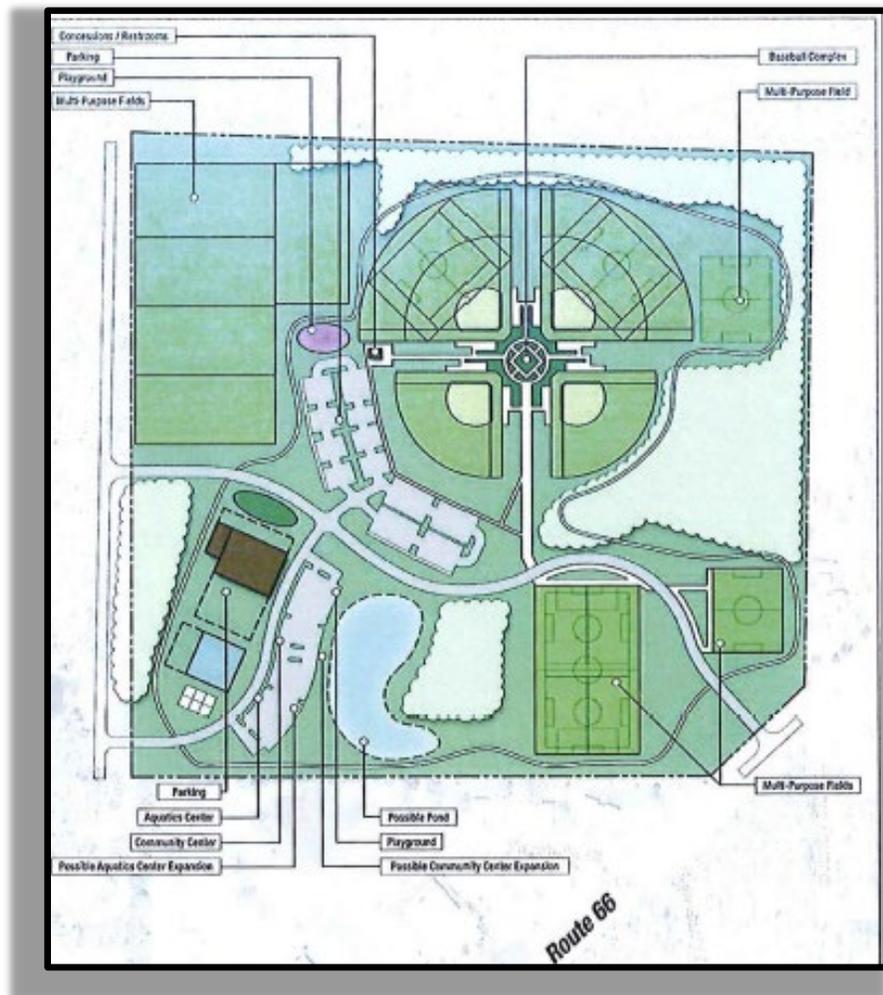
**First Responder
Meal Program**



City of Marshfield
Activity Complex and Pool
(Medium City Category: population 5,000 – 15, 000)

In 2013, rather than incur approximately \$100,000 in expenses to perform maintenance and upgrade a 40-year-old pool to be ADA compliant, the city of Marshfield's board of aldermen chose to close the city pool. Elected officials established a Citizen Action Group, that became the Foundation for Activity Complex Marshfield (FACM) and took the lead on researching and gaining community support to build an Activity Complex. Additionally, the City facilitated Vision Casting Meetings involving citizens from eight demographic groups to identify the community's priorities for the City. Support gathered by FACM and the Vision Casting Meetings revealed a new pool and activity center aligned with the community's desire for increased activities and recreation. In 2015, the City placed a question on the ballot for the community to approve a half-cent local parks sales tax, with a quarter cent sunsetting when all construction debt is retired. The sales tax was approved with more than 70% in favor. The work of FACM, Vision Casting, and the support of the community drove the current project to build a new Activity Complex in two phases with phase one, pool opening, in spring 2019, and phase two, indoor activity center, beginning within five years.

Diagram of Activity Complex



**City of Nixa
Staff Think Tank
(Large City Category: population 15,000 – 30,000)**

The idea for the Think Tank was born at a city leadership retreat in June 2017. In August 2017, the Think Tank Coordinator was assigned, and the committee officially launched in September 2017. Think Tank represents a bottom-up approach to problem solving and is on the cutting edge of current leadership trends. The Think Tank concept bridges the efforts of top-level leadership with line-level and mid-level employees to work together on large-scale issues. Discussions within Think Tank allow employees to practice critical thinking on higher level issues than may normally apply to their job description. Think Tank is an innovative approach to fostering open communication. It better prepares the organization for the future by engaging staff in the discussion to address emerging issues. The younger generations in the work force highly value being involved in decision-making processes and understanding the “why” behind the responsibilities assigned to them. The Think Tank contributes to creating a millennial-friendly workplace.

The City’s Think Tank has enhanced the organizational culture; developed leaders among the line level and mid-level staff; and developed solutions to several complex internal challenges. Think Tank topics have developed recommended solutions for adoption and implementation by city leadership include defining the internal culture; improving internal communications; enhancing onboarding/orientation processes; developing an internship program; and enhancing internal training. Other cities could easily establish internal Think Tank committees with their staff. This project has no external cost and is flexible enough to adapt to any organization to provide solutions to a variety of internal challenges. The city of Nixa highly recommends the Think Tank concept as the benefits to morale and internal culture are immense.



Staff Think Tank Team 2018-2019 from the City of Nixa

**City of Peculiar
Peculiar Smart Networking
(Small City Category: population less than 5,000)**

Connectivity is a major staple in today's society. In the world of municipal government, connectivity is crucial to daily operations. From having all sites able to communicate, to security, to fleet management, the possibilities are endless. There is another type of connectivity that is important as well, the residents of a community having the latest technological advancements available in the form of high-speed internet and smart metering access.

The City currently owns and operates a water distribution system and wastewater sanitary sewer system. Being able to monitor the current conditions of the two systems was challenging. What existed was two very different Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems that did not communicate. SCADA systems allow for real-time information to be viewed by the operators at either lift/pump stations, water storage facilities or wastewater treatment facilities, and allows changes to be made if necessary. The City began the process of wanting to combine and upgrade the existing SCADA components to a unified system for both the water and wastewater systems. The City was also upgrading its water meters to a new fixed-base smart metering application from Badger Meter. The new meters would provide hourly readings for customers and would even allow customers to use an app on their phone to get information on their water meter such as readings and usage history. The only piece missing was a network to transfer the data. At the same time, it was becoming clearer that gigabit internet service was no longer a luxury for the business world but was becoming mandatory for businesses to succeed.

The City selected Comcast to install a fiber-optic network so connectivity would be available for commercial or industrial projects. The network would allow the City to connect all of its facilities with a new state-of-the-art, fiber-optic network and it put Comcast in a place to expand to rural customers who did not have internet provider options. The City utilized capital funds for the buildout of the network and revenue bond proceeds for the Smart Metering and SCADA improvements. The City hopes that this type of program can be mirrored to help benefit municipal governments big and small.

**City of Springfield
Give 5 Civic Matchmaking Program
(Extra Large City Category: population more than 30,000)**

The Give 5 program is a first-of-its-kind "civic matchmaking" initiative with the following objectives: connect each program graduate with one or more strategic volunteer opportunities in the community that feeds his/her passion and provides a renewed sense of purpose and meaning (civic matchmaking); address social isolation; strengthen the community's fabric by increasing "bridging" social capital in the community; help program graduates discover the community legacy he/she wants to leave; and re-engineer volunteer opportunities to make them more meaningful. The Give 5 program has been underway for more than one year and has been very successful in achieving program goals. Springfield is preparing to graduate its seventh class, and each of these objectives is being achieved to a greater degree as each class graduates and begins to volunteer in the community. The Give 5 program is a partnership between the city of Springfield, Greene

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County, and United Way of the Ozarks. This program can be replicated in other communities. It is customizable – each community is unique. It is flexible and can be implemented in any region – urban, suburban and rural. The program can be scaled to any size community.



City of Willard Student Government Representative Program (Medium City Category: population 5,000 – 15, 000)

The student government representative seat on the Willard Board of Alderman was established in 2017 with a mission to connect students with local government issues and provide a voice to students in the community. The program is a partnership between the city of Willard and the Willard High School Student Government Association class. Since the start of the program, the Willard Board of Aldermen has worked with dozens of students providing input at board meetings and the program is now counted as part of the final grade for the Student Government Association class. The objective of the student government representative program is to promote civic duty among students in the community and gain fresh, new ideas and insight from the younger generation. The program rotates one student bi-weekly on the board, allowing each student to express the opinions of themselves and their student body. It also gives them the opportunity to cast a recorded, but non-binding, vote on issues brought before the board of aldermen. The program taught students about real-world policy-making decisions and served as a potential training ground for future community leaders. The results of the program were positive, and the program received recognition from the local media. The program was also a topic at the statewide student government association conference and received recognition from the Missouri State University Public Affairs Conference.

Congratulations to the 2019 Innovation Award Winners!

Fair Grove

**Inexpensive Geographic Information System
(Member's Choice and
Small City Category: population less than 5,000)**

Lebanon

**Fire Department Safety and Education
(Medium City Category: population 5,000 – 15, 000)**

Nixa

**Staff Think Tank
(Large City Category: population 15,000 – 30,000)**

Springfield

**Give 5 Civic Matchmaking Program
(Extra Large City Category: population more than 30,000)**

**Thank you to all those municipalities
that submitted nominations
for this year's
Innovation Awards!**

It is truly appreciated!

Remember...

**if you have a great innovative program
or project that your municipality has
implemented, 2020 applications can be
submitted starting Dec. 2, 2019!**



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