

2022 Innovation Award Summary

Campbell - The Downtown Project

With a deteriorating downtown area, loss of identity, and disinvestment in the city, there were 16 vacant buildings in the downtown area of the City in early 2017. It was then the City, in cooperation with the Campbell Downtown Development Corporation, and local businesses came together to revitalize the downtown area. The City implemented a five-year plan that has resulted in re-establishing the downtown area as a center of activity. The Downtown Project has been successful in that most every downtown building has been completely remodeled and occupied. The success of The Downtown Project has resulted in increased foot traffic, employment, and sales tax due to new businesses and activities.

Carthage – Asset Management Tool

The asset management toolkit was developed to help municipalities plan for infrastructure upgrades with a targeted planning strategy. This is a free tool that was a collaborative project between the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Public Utility Alliance, with assistance and input from the City of Carthage. Carthage Water and Electric (CWEP) jumped on board to help develop this toolkit and its application. CWEP was the municipal utility entity that provided the necessary feedback of how the toolkit worked, its practical application, areas that needed improvement and what specific items that needed to be addressed throughout the collection system to make this an extremely usable and acceptable tool for use throughout the state.

Ferguson – Santa and Sirens Event

The Santa and Sirens Parade was a great collaboration between the Ferguson parks, fire and police. The event, which included a visit from Santa, allowed the departments opportunities to spread joy throughout the community. On selective December Sundays, the parade followed a pre-planned route through each of the City's 3 Wards. Kids and adults were delighted to have Santa and Sirens in their neighborhoods. Throughout the pandemic communities struggled to keep citizens engaged through traditional activities that are community staples.

Florissant – Angie's All-Inclusive Playground

In 1991, Florissant native Gary Behlmann and his wife Karen lost their 7-year-old daughter, Angie, to complications from cerebral palsy and hydrocephalus. In October of 2008, a small group of Florissant residents led by Gary Behlmann came together to form Accessible Play, Inc., a non-profit corporation with an interest in building an inclusive playground. In 2011, Florissant passed an ordinance to allow Accessible Play, Inc. the use of Manion Park as the site for the playground. This inclusive playground is for ALL children in Florissant and in North County a first of its kind in the area. A partner through all this has been Unlimited Play, Inc, non-profit organization that helps to plan, design and build fully accessible playgrounds.

Grandview – Creating an Oasis in a “Vaccine Desert”

After the release of the COVID-19 vaccine, an independent consulting firm for the State of Missouri named the I-435 corridor a ‘Vaccine Desert’. The Grandview Fire Department (GFD) immediately went to work to create an oasis. Working with the Jackson County Health Department and State Emergency Management Agency, GFD established more than two dozen vaccination clinics for residents and surrounding communities, including two mass vaccination events. GFD provided on duty paramedics to administer doses and/or monitored recipients after the shots at nearly all 25 clinics. GFD also provided at-home vaccinations to homebound residents, and in-office and onsite vaccinations and boosters to the City employees. In all, nearly 7,000 vaccine doses have been administered.

Ironton – Shepherd Mountain Bike Park

Mountain biking is a sport that is increasing in popularity. The objective was to enhance economic development through tourism. Some of the economic results include: reduced time of real estate on the market; acreage prices up over \$1,000 per acre; real estate values have increased 15+%; Ironton sales tax increased 16% (2019 vs 2021); properties valued at over \$3 million have been purchased; increased school enrollment; new jobs created; planned investments exceeding \$500,000; and \$107,529 annual direct revenue to the bike park. Funding from Iron County Economic Partnership and the City paid for the park gravity trails and no state or federal funds were used. Gateway Offroad Cyclists provided consulting on design and development and Jagged Axe Trail Designs engineered and built the mountain bike trails.

Jefferson City - Capital Region MU Health Care Amphitheater

The City’s existing amphitheater at Ellis-Porter Riverside Park was built in the 1950s. The outdoor venue has a rich history of community events, but its deteriorating infrastructure and lack of ADA accessibility made it virtually impossible to operate. The initial phase included reserved, terrace, and open-lawn seating for 2,500 to 3,000, a covered bandshell, and a backstage area with dressing rooms. The City contracted with a venue management firm in January 2021 to provide full operations. Four short months later, Capital Region MU Health Care Amphitheater opened on May 22, 2021, to a sold-out crowd with Clay Walker and Tracy Lawrence taking the stage. The inaugural season saw 19,548 guests for over 26 event days, with an estimated economic impact of \$756,418.

Kansas City – Integration of Outlook Emails into Tax System

The City’s Revenue Division staff initiated a new, internally developed process to import Outlook emails received from taxpayers directly into a work queue housed in the tax software system. Prior to the implementation of this process, general email inquiries were hard to track and difficult to monitor the quality of the responses to taxpayer's questions about tax obligations. The implementation of this project has improved customer service, provided for better managerial oversight, and allowed for the tracking of volume of emails received as well as response times. It also provides a mechanism

for a more efficient completion of work items by employees, as well as promotes great employee accountability.

Linn Creek – Tesla Pilot Program

Chief Christiansen began exploring options for replacement of a patrol vehicle for the City. The City owned a four vehicles. By purchasing an electric vehicle, specifically a Tesla Model 3, there were no fuel expense or need for routine maintenance such as oil changes or replacement patrol vehicle batteries. Prior to receiving the vehicle, the City sold two of their vehicles and put the funds towards the expense of the Tesla. Prior to receiving a charging station, a local business owner had offered to allow the City use of its quick charging station at no cost. Within the first month, the City has saved approximately \$300.00 in fuel.

Nixa – Sensory Path

In October 2021, Nixa unveiled a new sensory path at one of the city parks. The sensory path was designed to provide those with sensory needs a quieter space. Since the path was being created in a park that already had walking paths but could not have traditional playground equipment the construction cost less than \$1,200 and The Nixa Community Foundation provided a grant to help add the path to the park. The attendance within this park grew dramatically as people took advantage of the new activities. The activities can be implemented anywhere a hard surface exists or is created, as they are simply spray painted on the path and small signs are installed to give simple instruction.

North Kansas City – Operation Safe

Operation Safe, a public-private coalition, was formed to provide eligible Missourians an opportunity to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible within the State of Missouri. The coalition consisted of Clay County Public Health Center, North Kansas City Hospital, Liberty Hospital, Cerner Corporation, and the cities of Liberty, North Kansas City, Gladstone, Smithville, Kearney, and Excelsior Springs, along with William Jewell College, and Excelsior Springs Hospital. Operation Safe administered nearly 100,000 vaccinations, with a throughput of approximately 70 patients every 10 minutes. At the end of its 3-month operation, 1 in 5 vaccinated Kansas Citizens received their COVID-19 shots, thanks to 4,250 volunteers providing over 50,000 hours of service.

Northwoods – Extraordinary Halloween Event

The police department moved the National Night Out Against Crime in conjunction with the Halloween Event to an outdoor venue due to the pandemic. Making it safe and exciting with new additions, the police featured a pumpkin carving contest, hayrides, and other activities for all ages. They had sponsors, community, volunteers, elected officials, staff and dignitaries to participate, including Congresswoman Cori Bush and NAACP-STL County Branch President, John Bowman. National Night Out enhances the relationships between neighbors, law enforcement and is a community police

awareness raising event in the US. The overall expressions of appreciation were positive throughout the community. Not only did the children have a good time, but it was safe and engaging.

Osage Beach – Police Officer Recruitment Program

The City has been faced with unprecedented struggles city-wide in recruiting, hiring, and retaining quality employees in a time of sweeping worker-shortages nationwide. The City's police department at full employment consists of twenty-five commissioned officers. The department has struggled with up to 40% vacancies at various times over the past year and a half. In April 2021, the *Police Officer Recruit Program*, an innovative solution to address the workforce challenges in the police department, began. An unprecedented approach for the City, the program was designed to proactively invest in the future of qualified individuals by providing full-financial academy sponsorship and simultaneous career opportunities with the City.

Ozark – Operation Giving/Operation Hope

This is a community outreach program focused on engagement with senior citizens throughout Ozark. The program delivers holiday meals on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Eve, as well as other holidays to senior citizens who rely on local programs for food assistance. Established local programs do not deliver meals on these holidays, so the home bound seniors would go without food deliveries if not for this program. Annually, the Ozark Police Department delivers approximately 80 meals to home bound seniors and serves meals to over 500 seniors at the Ozark Senior Center. This is a partnership between the Ozark Police Department, the Ozark Senior Center, the Utopia Club of Ozark, various local businesses, and the Ozark Police Officers Association.

Springfield – Art @ Work

This project is a collaboration between the City of Springfield, Department of Workforce Development, Springfield Art Museum, Springfield Public Schools, and Missouri State University. Art @ Work integrates workforce preparation through hands-on art projects with students, specifically from historically underserved communities. This project provides art and culture exposure to fourth graders by weaving soft skill training into their art classes. These soft skills include problem solving, teamwork, communication, and overcoming obstacles. Workforce Development and Art Museum Staff visited monthly, spent 1 to 1.5 hours in each classroom, and facilitated individual and group projects. A field trip to the Springfield Art Museum and Missouri Job Center concluded the project.

St. Peters – GOLD GROW Biosolids Compost

The City turns waste into “gold” for people's lawns, gardens and for many of Missouri's leading vineyards. The City of St. Peters Earth Centre is where the team combines biosolids from their wastewater treatment process with the yard waste collected from area residents to create a nutrient-rich, environmentally friendly soil amendment. Today,

happy customers line up with trucks, trailers and buckets to enjoy Earth Centre's award-winning GOLD GROW product at market rates. Biosolids composting reduces waste and associated costs, reduces the City's carbon footprint, improves the quality of the soil and waterways, and helps manage storm water runoff.

Willard – Jackson Street Park Solar Project

This project will remove common barriers to extended time in outdoor spaces by utilizing solar energy to power USB charging stations in outdoor spaces difficult to reach by conventional methods. Quick and easy access to charging stations for cell phones, tablets, and laptops provides the opportunity for extended play time without the fear of a dead cell phone battery and helps to move the office outdoors. Willard Parks and Recreation in partnership with NewTek Energy, LLC, has multiple features including emergency lights, call stations, and security cameras, as well as charging stations for cell phones and laptops.