

Alliance for Innovation Newsletter

July 2009



Member Spotlight on Collinsville, Illinois

Collinsville, Illinois is situated just 12 miles from downtown St. Louis and the Gateway Arch. It has a population of approximately 26,000 and encompasses nearly 25 square miles. Collinsville boasts the World's Largest Catsup Bottle, a 170' water tower built in 1949. Named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2002, the Catsup Bottle has been a roadside attraction featured in

many publications and has even found its way onto the Travel Channel. Collinsville also produces 85% of the world's horseradish supply, and as such is also known as the Horseradish Capital of the World.

In this current economy, like nearly every other City, Collinsville is facing the challenge of declining sales taxes. In order to continue to provide superior services, City Staff have been exploring innovative ways to do more with less. Collinsville has initiated many cutting-edge programs, of which City Staff are extremely proud.

The first of such initiatives was the development of the Continuous Improvement Plan which encompasses a structured approach to process improvement to be supported by a performance management component. This effort focuses on the needs of the customers while being supported by an engaged employee workforce.

Over the past twelve months, Collinsville has been utilizing Process Improvement Events to increase the quality of services offered to residents. As part of its Performance Management System, the City continuously evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of its operations.

This past year, the City instituted the University of Collinsville, a unique, in-house training curriculum encouraging personal and professional development for all City employees. August 2008 brought City Council Meetings into resident homes via webcasting. In addition, the City is in the process of launching the first phase of a 311 system, consisting of a citizen request management system making city government easily accessible to residents.

The City also hosted its first annual Citizen's Advisory Forum in early spring 2009 and found it useful in gaining input from residents as the City enters the 2010-2011 Strategic Planning Process. The forums were well received and provided City Staff with valuable insight into what is important to residents.

City Manager Robert Knabel is excited to be a part of the Alliance for Innovation, and believes it is a great resource for the City to utilize when searching for "best practices". Over the past 2½ years, the City has made great strides in finding unique ways to serve its citizens and City Manager Knabel is proud of the efforts of staff. The Alliance for Innovation will greatly assist the City in its vision to be a preferred place to live, work and play.