



We are proud to present these 2022

# Outstanding Local Government Achievement Awards

## The OLGAs:

Each year, East-West Gateway  
Council of Governments presents its  
Outstanding Local Government  
Achievement Awards  
recognizing the extraordinary work of  
municipal, county, special purpose and  
school district officials in the St. Louis region.

It does not matter whether a jurisdiction,  
department or district is large or small,  
volunteer or professional, part-time or full-time.

We look for individuals who provide the  
highest level of leadership;  
for projects and partnerships that raise the bar;  
and for jurisdictions that provide a level  
of excellence, expertise and service in local  
government for all to emulate.

We challenged you to bring those who  
embody these qualities forward for consideration  
and we honor them today.

## Gateway Lifetime Public Service Award

Honors exemplary individuals who have given a  
lifetime of service to the public sector.

## Exemplary Accomplishment by a Local Government Jurisdiction, Agency or Individual

Honors local government jurisdictions, special  
purpose and school districts, public agencies  
and individuals for unique achievements in  
the creation and implementation of exemplary  
government programs or projects and exceptional  
public sector contributions.

## Exemplary Collaboration, Partnership or Regional Initiative

Honors cooperative efforts or joint ventures  
among local government jurisdictions, nonprofit  
organizations, and/or the private sector that  
result in high impact, positive change.

## Leadership in Planning and Design Innovation

Honors forward-thinking planning and  
design efforts for public spaces or community  
development that challenges the way people  
think about their surroundings.



## 2022 OLGA Winners

### Gateway Lifetime Public Service Award

Peg Capo  
Shirley Norris

### Exemplary Accomplishment by a Local Government Jurisdiction, Agency or Individual

David Grider, Volunteer, St. Clair County Assessor's Office  
Timber Trail to Briar Ridge Channel Project - City of Frontenac

### Exemplary Collaboration, Partnership or Regional Initiative

#### RETAF: Real Estate Tax Assistance Fund

City of St. Louis Collector of Revenue  
Park Central Development  
Legal Services of Eastern Missouri  
Prosperity Connection

#### Connect Washington

City of Washington  
Washington Chamber of Commerce  
Downtown Washington, Inc.  
School District of Washington

### Leadership in Planning and Design Innovation

#### 24:1 Land Use and Economic Development Plan

Beyond Housing  
PGAV Planners  
Rise Community Development  
Armstrong Teasdale

#### Culinary and Agriculture Center, Field to Table Institute

St. Charles County Community College

# Gateway Lifetime Public Service Award

## Peg Capo



Peg Capo has been serving as the Executive Director of the Developmental Disabilities Resource Board of St. Charles County (DDRB) for 30 years. DDRB is a public taxing entity, commonly known as a "Senate Bill 40 Board," and contracts with agencies that serve individuals with developmental disabilities in St. Charles County. With this funding, resources and services are allocated in a way that enables individuals with disabilities to stay in their homes with their families while receiving care.

Under Peg's leadership, this organization has held a reputation as a leader in funding and providing support to St. Charles County citizens with developmental disabilities. Throughout her tenure, Peg has emphasized strong provider partnerships, innovative funding strategies, transparent processes, and programs to actively engage the St. Charles County community. Peg believes at the center of everything is a person. Providers need to listen to what is going on in that person's life and create systems of support to provide what they need. Lives are transformed as a result of the DDRB approach not just for the person with a disability, but the lives around them are changed for the better as well.

When case management was failing at the state level, Peg was one of the early leaders to agree to move case workers for adults with developmental disabilities to her agency to better serve residents. Other Senate Bill 40 Boards in Missouri benefit from Peg sharing her experience and from the relationships she has fostered with leaders statewide and in the St. Louis Region, promoting the needs of those with development disabilities and their families.

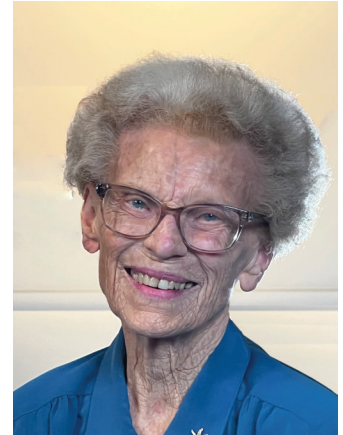
Peg is a founding partner of the Eastern Regional Alliance (ERA), a partnership of the four County Developmental Disabilities Boards in the St. Louis Region. The ERA has created a common funding and accountability framework for partner agencies. Collaborating with public, non-profit, civic, and corporate organizations, the DDRB has attracted innovative programs to St. Charles County. Peg serves on committees and workgroups with state and national significance, including University of Missouri-Kansas City's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities' Leadership Advisory Team and the Missouri Association of County Developmental Disability Services (MACDDS) Best Practices and Governmental Affairs Committees.

Peg is also greatly valued by her peers for her consistent approach to openness of ideas, adherence to standards for quality services to individuals with developmental disabilities, and open communication with her board, the individuals her agency serves, and their families. She has provided extraordinary guidance and dedication to create, support, ensure and be accountable for services to those in the community with developmental disabilities and their families. These members of the St. Charles community have a strong advocate in Peg. She has succeeded in bringing recognition of the needs of these citizens to leaders in the region, as well as statewide.

## Shirley Norris

At age 92, Project Manager Shirley Norris has spent close to half of her life working at the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) St. Louis district. Shirley's tenure at MoDOT distinguishes her as the oldest full-time government employee in the state, having started her career with the organization in 1977 at the age of 47. In June 2022, her service was recognized with a resolution from the Missouri Board for Architects, Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Landscape Architects.

A native of south St. Louis City and graduate of Southwest High School, Shirley earned her Bachelor's Degree in Engineering from Vanderbilt University in 1951. She was one of the program's first two women graduates. She remembers that the dean of the engineering school made it clear that the female students would have to prove they could work as hard as the many World War II veterans who were using their G.I. Bill benefits at the time, saying, "If you young ladies can't cut the mustard, there are veterans who can." She married and became a stay-at-home mom until her husband was killed by a drunk driver. After her children went to college, Shirley pursued work in the engineering field. However private firms rejected her resume or offered work well below her abilities as there were few female engineers at the time.



Shirley applied to and was hired by MoDOT and soon became the first woman in the St. Louis district to become a squad leader, the position she held before becoming a project manager. As project manager, Shirley over sees all aspects of projects from engineering design, right-of-way, environmental review and construction in Franklin, Jefferson and south St. Louis County. Shirley currently oversees 50 roadway and bridge projects. She is slated to manage more than 46 projects, totaling over \$190 million, between 2023 and 2027.

Shirley is extremely dedicated to her work, arriving at work by 6:30 a.m. and working 40 hours per week or more and relies on Cheetos, coffee, and cookies keep her going and productive. Every day, Shirley wears a starfish pin, as a reminder of the story about a young man who threw starfish that had washed up on the beach back in the sea so they would survive. Even though there were thousands of starfish on the beach and he could not possibly save them all, the man insisted that each starfish he threw back made a difference. Shirley distributes starfish pins and shares this story at training events. She believes that we can all make a difference in peoples' lives - one starfish at a time.

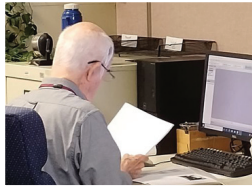
Shirley was the first recipient of the MoDOT-St. Louis Trailblazer Award, selected by the district's Women's Leadership Conference for creativity and innovation in the improvement of programs, services, products or approaches in the workplace. Over the years, Shirley has dedicated many hours to local community charities, including St. Louis Wheelchair Athletic Association and the Special Olympics. Her hobbies include crocheting, working on crossword puzzles, and watching sports, especially the world champion St. Louis Cardinals and St. Louis Blues.

# Exemplary Accomplishment by a Local Government Jurisdiction, Agency or Individual

## David Grider, Volunteer, St. Clair County Assessor's Office



David Grider has been a volunteer with the St. Clair County Assessor's Office for over 12 years. David devotes an entire day each week to make sure records that are subject to the Freedom of Information Act are retained correctly. Also, David trains new volunteers and provides troubleshooting assistance to office staff with computer problems, tapping into his years of technology experience. The office staff consider David a key member of their team.



David's volunteerism started with the Retired Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP) at Southwestern Illinois College's Programs and Services for Older Persons (PSOP) where he provided computer training to fellow retirees. David then saw the posting for help in the county Assessor's office and has been a dedicated volunteer there ever since. The Assessor's Office is responsible for administering accurate, equitable, and timely property assessments in St. Clair County. One-fourth of the

county needs to be reassessed yearly, creating a significant number of government records to be entered into the county's computer system. David's assistance contributes to the easy electronic access of records, which allows staff greater efficiency in document retrieval and management, saving time and money.

David's consistent, dependable service, and the pride David takes in his volunteer work greatly helps the St. Clair County Assessor's Office be transparent, which promotes public confidence that assessments are accurate and fair. David, along with other volunteers, make it possible for the public to view all assessments electronically. David's volunteer service highlights the valuable contribution older adults can play in the workplace.

## Timber Trail to Briar Ridge Channel Project

The Timber Trail to Briar Ridge Channel Project produced an aesthetically pleasing solution to chronic bank erosion and creek degradation in a city of Frontenac neighborhood. Severe stream bank erosion from years of storm-water runoff resulted in the loss of soil, trees and shrubs from back yards, threatened structures as retaining walls and was beginning to threaten homes. Careful technical analysis, creative engineering that included both greenscape and hardscape techniques, early and often communication with homeowners, and integration of homeowner concerns into the design make this an outstanding project.



In 2005, the city of Frontenac enacted 1/2 cent sales tax to address stormwater concerns. By coordinating with the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD) and by leveraging USEPA 319 nonpoint source water quality funding with local funding, the city was able to address erosion and water quality issues in one project. The project stabilized a tributary to Two-Mile Creek that feeds into Deer Creek. Deer Creek is impaired for E.coli and chloride, and floods during high rainfall events.

The project used native vegetation on over 1,300 feet of the channel, which prevents approximately 100 tons of sediment, 114 lbs. of phosphorus and 227 lbs. of nitrogen from polluting Deer Creek each year. These reductions are made possible to a significant extent because of over 600 lineal feet of aesthetically pleasing filter strips that remove E. coli bacteria from 90% of rain events. The filter strips were designed specifically for this project. As a result of technical analysis, an error was identified in the deviation for critical shear stress values, a component of determining erodibility of creek channels. This discovery will improve engineering design and function of future streambank stabilization projects.



# Exemplary Collaboration, Partnership or Regional Initiative

## Real Estate Tax Assistance Fund (RETAF)

The Real Estate Tax Assistance Fund (RETAF) was established through a partnership with the city of St. Louis Collector of Revenue, Park Central Development, Prosperity Connection and Legal Services of Eastern Missouri in response to needs of homeowners facing tax sales. The RETAF provides tax assistance to owner-occupants with no mortgage that are facing imminent tax foreclosure. As a result, families can stay in their homes, maintain housing stability and hold on to hard-earned equity in the home.

Funding for the program comes from both public and private philanthropic dollars. The city of St. Louis committed ARPA funds to establishing the RETAF program. Park Central Development provides tax relief assistance to property owners who may not meet the threshold for assistance with government funds.

Prosperity Connection, along with Park Central Development, screen the city's tax sale list and contacts property owners to see if they qualify for the RETAF.



In addition to the tax assistance, these organizations and Legal Services of Eastern Missouri provide financial planning assistance to home owner that may not otherwise have access to such services on their own. Prior to the RETAF, property owners with financial hardships had nowhere to turn for assistance with their tax bills. The RETAF offers direct assistance to prevent homeowners from losing the biggest asset they own. The program benefits the community by stemming population loss, ensuring funding for schools, parks, and other crucial services, and prevents increases in vacant property that can negatively impact health, crime, and property values in neighborhoods.

## Connect Washington

The Connect Washington program connects students, families and the community around career interests and workforce development in Washington, MO through the work of the Workforce Connections Team. The team includes the city of Washington, Downtown Washington, Inc., the School District of Washington the Washington Chamber of Commerce. The program connects PreK-12 students, families, and the community with a common language around career interests, such as through the RIASEC / Holland Code inventory, which engages students and parents in identifying students' interests. The process opens their eyes to possible career paths. The Personalized Partnership approach with the business community provides students opportunities for real world learning. Connect Washington ensures that each high school student has an opportunity to explore their workforce passions and interests through experiences in businesses and industries prior to graduation.

Due to the deep-rooted partnerships among city government, the school district, Downtown Washington Inc. and the Washington Chamber, Connect Washington is uniquely positioned to connect students to a diverse number of career pathways. The program has been able to create opportunities for 3,650 students in Pre K- 12th grade, including classroom visits, business tours, internships, mentors, apprenticeships and career fairs. The graduating class of 2022 had 163 students (51%) that obtained a Career and Technical Certification due to partnership opportunities. The program also had over 50 career-focused business partners for the school year. Connect Washington prepares students for college, careers and life, and builds the workforce that will contribute to Washington's and the region's success in the future.



# Leadership in Planning and Design Innovation

## 24:1 Land Use and Economic Development Plan

The 24:1 Land Use and Economic Development Plan is a unified approach to increase the quality and quantity of businesses and housing development within the 24:1 Municipal Partnership footprint. The 24:1 Municipal Partnership is comprised of elected officials from the 23 (formerly 24) municipalities that make up the Normandy Schools Collaborative. Through the planning process, elected leaders across municipal lines worked together, demonstrating to other municipalities how much community leaders can achieve when they work together. The partnership anticipates the plan will lead to increased revenue and population growth. The partnership brings a sense of optimism and growth to the area, with one community welcoming its first grocery store in 40 years.



The planning process began in 2020, when Beyond Housing facilitated a selection process led by 24:1 Municipal Partnership representatives, which resulted in the selection of a team led by PGAV. PGAV's team also included Rise Community Development and Armstrong Teasdale. The planning team gave a total of 30 presentations to engage elected officials and the public. The joint plan afforded local governments with substantial savings since the total cost was shared among individual municipalities based on a sliding scale. As of September of this year, 12 municipalities have adopted resolutions for the 24:1 Land Use and Economic Development Plan, with additional municipalities currently in the adoption process. This collaborative project emphasized the fact that when one community succeeds, neighboring communities benefit as well. Then in turn, the whole region benefits from these successes.

## Culinary and Agriculture Center, Field to Table Institute

St. Charles Community College's Culinary and Agriculture Center and its Field to Table Institute brings a culinary program to St. Charles County and to the St. Louis region that is truly unique. The Center is growing food in an outdoor hydroponic, vertical farming space. The Freight Farm project, which involves growing fresh, healthy, organic produce in specially equipped shipping containers, is a new technology that introduces a state-of-the-art learning experience for students. Vertical freight farming technology is efficient in terms of space, energy use and water use. It also offers the ability to economically grow fresh fruits and vegetables in any area, whether it's urban, suburban, or rural. The Field to Table Institute brings together culinary, agriculture, and healthcare education by teaching about the connection between farming, food, healthcare, and quality of life.



In addition to credit programs, the Field to Table Institute offers community-based courses in food, gardening, health, and sustainability. The program, partially funded through Missouri's MoExcels Workforce Initiative, aims to be the center for healthy living in St. Charles County. Enrollment in the program has already quadrupled. The innovative work at the Center brings the values of healthy food and quality of life into the classroom. Not only are culinary students prepared for careers, but health care students are trained in healthy food techniques and the dietary needs of various diagnoses, which will contribute to significant improvements in patient care in the future. This program enhances regional workforce preparedness in both the culinary and healthcare fields.

**We recognize the great work that local governments and  
local government officials are doing across the region.**

*Please join us as we applaud all of our 2022 OLGA nominees.*

**St. Louis County Office of Emergency Management**

**Gregory F. X. Daly, City of St. Louis**

**Scott Anders, St. Louis County**

**City of O'Fallon Resident Utility Assistance Program**

**Devlin Hutchins, City of St. Charles Police Department**

**Mayor Nikylan Knapper, City of Maplewood**

**Madison County Building & Zoning**

**Joseph Vollmer, City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen**

**Monroe County First Responder Memorial**

**City of Wentzville's 150th Birthday Celebration**

**St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center**

**North Jefferson County Ambulance District**

**Central Core Training Division**

**I-44 Pedestrian Bridge Landing Project, City of Sunset Hills**

**Richmond Heights Fire Department**

**Gateway Green Light Emergency Vehicle Priority Project**

**Wade Amsden, City of Pevely**

**Mayor Barbara Overton, Village of South Roxana**

**Chief Dale Curtis, Webster Groves Police Department**

**Dr. Bernard DuBray, Fort Zumwalt School District**

**Mayor Patty Gregory - Southwestern Illinois Justice & Workforce Development Campus**





## **In Memoriam**

Each year, East-West Gateway Council of Governments honors those elected officials and public servants who we have lost since last November. Please join us in remembering the following individuals.

**Battalion Chief Marvin Shaffrey, Cedar Hill Fire Protection District**

**Officer Christy Meier, Sunset Hills Police Department**

**Kaitlyn Anderson, Missouri Department of Transportation**

**James Brooks, Missouri Department of Transportation**

**Officer Antonio Valentine, Detective, St. Louis County Police Department**

**Randy McCallum, former Mayor, Village of Alorton**

**Steve Nagle, former Community Planning Director, EWGCOG**

**Jacklin O. Owens, City Council Member, City of Wellston**

**Kevin Hagarty, City Council Member, City of O'Fallon, IL**

**Dan Witt, City Council Member, City of O'Fallon, IL**

**Della Williams, Police Dispatcher, Wentzville Police Department**

**Charlene Deeken, former Director of Public Safety, City of St. Louis**

**David Glaser, former Mayor, City of Wildwood**

**Rick Bonasch, Rise Community Development**

**Cora Faith Walker, former Missouri General Assembly, Policy Director for St. Louis County**

**Kent Leichtler, former City Administrator for the City of Crestwood**

**Benjamin Polson, City of St. Louis Fire Department**

**Michael Kozuszek, Retired Deputy Chief, Maryland Heights Police Department**

**Jean Kuczka, Teacher, St. Louis Public Schools**

**Daniel Dreisewerd, Code Enforcement Division Manager,  
Department of Transportation and Public Works, St. Louis County**

**Eugene Verdu, former Director of St. Clair County Office on Aging**



**EAST-WEST GATEWAY**  
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Creating Solutions Across Jurisdictional Boundaries

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