Spotlight on Success

2011 Annual Report for Greater Mankato Growth, Inc.

With information included on:
Greater Mankato Growth
Greater Mankato Convention & Visitors Bureau, LLC
City Center Partnership, LLC

Table of Contents

Spotlight on:
Success ........................................... Page 1
The Organization .............................. Page 2
The Membership .............................. Page 3
The Work ........................................ Pages 4 - 12
The Marketplace .............................. Pages 13 - 14
The People who made it Possible .......... Pages 15 - 22
Dear Business Colleagues:

2011 was a year of metamorphosis for our members and milestones for our marketplace.

Recognizing that every businesses is unique and so are its needs, we migrated from the “one size fits all” membership structure of the past, to new options, based on the value you want to receive. As with any new system, there were challenges, but a vast majority of our members embraced the new structure. We want to thank the members who helped create the new model, and all of our members for making this positive transition, which will ultimately benefit your business and the entire marketplace.

Our business community benefits from the efforts of Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. As a member of GMG you are not only investing in the vitality of your business, but investing in the vitality of the entire regional marketplace. While our organization cannot take full credit for all the successes in Greater Mankato over the past year, we can say we are making a positive impact on the marketplace. This would not be possible without the investment of our members.

2011 also saw the strategic expansion and impact of both our LLC’s. The Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) began moving beyond simply selling and marketing the community as a destination, to an organization engaged in helping bring to fruition the amenities and attractions that will draw even more visitors to our marketplace. The CVB further retooled its board and staff, as well as embarked on developing a new brand and marketing strategy, all of which will strengthen our ability to positively impact the marketplace.

The City Center Partnership increased traffic to our city center (downtown) and attention on its resurgence. The first CityArt Walking Sculpture Tour was a wonderful success, we moved Alive After 5 to August and it grew as a result, and our volunteers engaged more than 100 City Center businesses in focus groups. As the organization gains momentum, it will continue to be positioned as a unique voice for vitality in the City Center.

Thanks to your commitment the Greater Mankato marketplace will continue to grow and thrive.

Regards,

Gregory Kutcher, M.D.  
Chair, Board of Directors

Jonathan G. Zierdt  
President & CEO
Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. was created more than four years ago through the merger of the Greater Mankato Chamber of Commerce and Greater Mankato Economic Development Corporation, with the goal of creating an integrated organization to serve the business community and the marketplace.

At that time the Greater Mankato Convention & Visitors Bureau was also established as an LLC of Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. – focusing on visitor attraction and servicing. This past year another LLC was formally added to the organization, the City Center Partnership, which focuses on development in the City Center. While both the Convention & Visitors Bureau and the City Center Partnership operate largely independent, they are a part of Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. and contribute to our overall efforts in Advancing Business for a Stronger Community.

Greater Mankato Growth, Inc.'s funding comes from business members (80%) and community partners (20%). The Greater Mankato Convention & Visitors Bureau is funded primarily through lodging taxes levied by the City of Mankato. The City Center Partnership receives funding from the cities of Mankato and North Mankato, as well as investing business partners. Each organization may receive additional funding through sponsorships and advertising. All three of our organizations take seriously their responsibility to serve as responsible stewards of the funds entrusted to us.

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**MISSION STATEMENT**
Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. exists to support and promote the economic growth and vitality of our members and the regional marketplace.

**CORE VALUES**
The needs of the members are best met by growing the regional marketplace. We accomplish this by being:

- **Catalysts** - initiating action for economic growth beneficial to our members and congruent with our regional desire and culture.
- **Stewards** - using our resources efficiently and effectively and wisely leveraging our strengths.
- **Collaborative & Inclusive** - cultivating and sustaining relationships, while encouraging the mobilization of our marketplace assets to enhance growth.
- **Approachable** - being visible and accessible and creating a friendly, vibrant and respectful environment.
- **Innovative** - embracing change and promoting progressive solutions.
- **Ethical** - communicating openly and honestly and taking responsibility for our actions in all our business practices.

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**Spotlight on the Organization**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greater Mankato Growth, Inc.</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011*</th>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Center Partnership, LLC</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td>$163,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities</td>
<td>$80,606</td>
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</table>

*Pre-audited
Together our member businesses accomplish what no one business could ever do alone, by creating an incredible pool of intellectual and financial resources. By working together to advance business we create a stronger community. And when the community is stronger, business thrives – creating a never ending circle of success.

Members of Greater Mankato Growth are vital participants in our business economy. And as a member, the knowledge you gain, relationships you build and opportunities you have available to you, pay dividends today and in the future.

Based on feedback from our members, in 2011 we embarked on creating a new membership structure for 2012. Created by GMG members for members, this innovative new structure gives businesses a choice of membership levels based on the value you want to receive, rather than past criteria such as the size and type of your business. The new levels provide options for everyone - from basic members who might have limited time to participate in GMG member events, but want to benefit from some of the services and promotional benefits that come with GMG membership – to investing members who are leaders in supporting current and future initiatives that serve the entire business community.

While the new model did require members to learn about a brand new system with a variety of choices, a majority embraced it, with half of all 2012 membership commitments paid before the end of 2011.

### Membership Make-up

- **Diamond Investor** $20,000
- **Platinum Investor** $15,000
- **Gold Investor** $10,000
- **Silver Investor** $6,000
- **Bronze Investor** $3,000
- **Cost-per-member benchmark** $1,584
- **Premier Member** $1,500
- **Engaged Member** $696
- **Basic Member** $300

### Cavalier Calls on New GMG Memebrs

Spotlight on the Membership
Greater Mankato Growth offers programs and services in eight strategic areas. The degree to which each of these eight areas directly benefits each individual business may vary. But all have a positive impact on your business and others by enhancing the economic vitality of our marketplace.
Existing Business Support

*Greater Mankato Growth is dedicated to working with businesses throughout their development, providing services and information to drive business success and making them aware of the abundant amenities and activities available throughout our marketplace.*

- Up-to-date information for businesses provided through eNews, Minnesota Valley Business and the business area of our website greatermankatobusiness.com

- 43 existing business support visits made to area companies as part of the state-wide Grow Minnesota! program, with 13 of the companies visited completing, announcing or planning expansions

- 55 companies received direct business development assistance from the GMG business development team. 38 business development opportunities came to fruition, which were advanced with assistance from GMG.

- Renewable Energy Supply Group that includes over 30 companies, met at participating company locations bi-monthly to encourage local supply chain activity and business expansion for all

- International Business Development opportunities facilitated, including conducting a survey that resulted in a workshop convened on October 4, with U.S. Commercial Services. GMG also connected businesses interested in capitalizing on the relationship between the City of Mankato and MSU China relationship.

- First Regional Economic Summit held in May, which connected businesses and policy leaders on business progress. A panel of business leaders from various industry sectors provided feedback and ideas to policy leaders on enhancing the business expansion attributes of the region. A Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) leader provided an overview of State of Minnesota tools that are available to support regional projects and an assessment of prospective opportunities that they envision the State being involved with in 2012 and beyond.

- Greater Mankato Business Awards & Hall of Fame held in November, with businesses and individuals honored by Greater Mankato Growth and LLCs the Greater Mankato Convention & Visitors Bureau and City Center Partnership

- 61 organizations marked major milestones (groundbreakings, expansions, new businesses, etc.), with participation of the Greater Mankato Growth Ambassadors.
New Business Growth

Greater Mankato Growth is committed to attracting and helping new businesses start and locate in our region, resulting in a stronger, increasingly diversified business climate.

• Online resources continually enhanced to provide information to site selectors and businesses looking at site options for building or expansion

• 12 new business development prospects were responded to and provided with information by GMG about our marketplace. Three of these prospects later announced their plans to develop a business in the region.

• Area cities and counties continued collaborating through the Regional Economic Development Alliance (REDA), enabling GMG to position the marketplace collectively in the business development arena.

• Effort started to capitalize on our unique combination of regional assets, including talent, community livability and business resources that are attractive to particular types of businesses

• Pipeline Report updated monthly to benchmark and track business expansion activity in the marketplace

• 57 entrepreneurs served through the Greater Mankato Business Accelerator, a program that connects new and emerging businesses with the resources they need to succeed, by working cooperatively with area organizations with services for entrepreneurs (406 clients served since 2006)

• 500 kids participated in Lemonade Day Greater Mankato, where they learned how to start, own and operate their own business by running a lemonade stand.

• 39 new and emerging businesses accessed the services of the LegalClinic, a brief legal advice clinic.
Spotlight on the Work

Business Promotion

Providing businesses with opportunities to connect with and market to their fellow businesses and consumers is an important element of Greater Mankato Growth’s work.

- 139 businesses committed to purchase a majority of their products and services from regionally located businesses, as Buy & Build Greater Mankato partners.
- 2,531 attended Business After Hours and Business Before Hours, each held monthly to give members and opportunity to gather with one another to exchange ideas and promote their business
- 500+ attended the Greater Mankato Business Showcase, providing members of the business community an opportunity to learn about each other’s businesses and the products and services they provide
- 25,000 households and businesses received the new Greater Mankato Quick Reference Guide in Spring 2011, which listed the names and phone numbers of all GMG member businesses.
- Thousands of individuals enjoyed Songs on the Lawn, held over the lunch hour every Thursday in June.
- 162 golfers (a new record) participated in Greater Mankato on the Green, a member networking golf tournament.
- Second Annual Tour of Manufacturing event put on by GMG and the Economic Growth Collaborative of South Central Minnesota in October, with 10 companies providing tours and information about their businesses, industry and career opportunities to the general public
- 59 different marketing opportunities made available to members, with 37% of those available for 2012 selling out by year-end 2011
- 59 welcome visits made by the Greater Mankato Growth Cavaliers to new GMG members

Songs on the Lawn

Business After Hours
As one of our region’s strongest assets, attracting, retaining and enhancing our talent is a priority for Greater Mankato Growth.

- 1,200 students from 13 high schools participated in the Greater Mankato Career Expo through a partnership with Mankato Area Public Schools, South Central Service Coop and GMG.

- 1,500 college students attended and more than a 100 businesses and community organizations exhibited at the Greater Mankato Campus & Community Fair at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

- Internship connections made between area businesses and our five higher education institutions.

- Partnership established with Minnesota State University, Mankato’s College of Business for the “Big Ideas” speaker series and began work with South Central College on a professional development series.

- 125 individuals participated in the Greater Mankato Young Professionals program (up from 85 in 2010), with 12 social and 12 professional development events offered annually.

- 25 professionals participated in the 2010-11 session and 31 participated in the 2011-12 session of the Greater Mankato Leadership Institute, a nine month community focused leadership training program.

- New tool implemented through iSeek and other workforce development partners to help connect area businesses, job seekers and students.
Spotlight on the Work

Public Affairs

Greater Mankato Growth’s role in Public Affairs is twofold (1) Providing information on all sides of issues that could impact business and (2) Creating and facilitating opportunities for interactions and meaningful idea exchange between the business community and public policy makers.

- 69 candidates were sent questionnaires during the 2010 and 2011 elections. Candidates were asked for biographical information and questions about what they would do as a leader in areas impacting business, with answers to these questions published in the candidates’ own words.

- 18 candidate forums for city, county and state elections hosted by GMG in late 2010 and 2011, which were attended by 375 individuals and broadcast online by GMG and local news outlets

- 4 Special Election Editions of eNews sent to a distribution list of 1,800+ GMG members

- 10 issues dialogues hosted or co-hosted by GMG in late 2010 and throughout 2011 on topics including higher education funding, unemployment insurance, metrodome and new facility options, immigration reform, local government aid, civic center expansion bonding proposal, performing arts center construction and All Seasons Arena enhancements, regional transportation connections, local government public financing offerings and incentives, Mankato Area Public Schools 2011 technology referendum and Minnesota tax policy reform impacting business.

- 4 surveys conducted, which received 626 total responses. Public officials asked GMG to survey business members to gain input on Local Government Aid (LGA), the Mankato Bonding Proposal, American Jobs Act and the Federal Debt Limit, with the results sent to local, state and federal lawmakers.

- Greater Mankato Day at the Capitol held in February, with business and civic leaders promoting the Greater Mankato region to legislators from throughout the state

- Special invitation to President Obama’s Town Hall Meeting in August extended to GMG President & CEO from Congressman Waltz’s office

- 23,000+ total page views in the Public Affairs area of the GMG website from late 2010 – 2011, including 11,212 in the “Greater Mankato Elections” area

Greater Mankato Day at the Capitol

Issues Dialogues
Community Marketing

Our region has a great story to tell and Greater Mankato Growth is committed to continually positioning it as a place people want to live and businesses want to locate.

- 122,031 total visits for the Greater Mankato website in 2011, up 40% from 2010
- 70,598 total visits up (22% from 2010) for the online community events calendar, greatermankatoevents.com, a collaboration of GMG, Greater Mankato Convention & Visitors Bureau, Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, The Free Press and VoyageurWeb.
- 130 news articles featuring information/interviews from Greater Mankato Growth ran in local and state media.
- Numerous recognitions and differentiating statistics utilized to promote Greater Mankato
- Social media activity increased, with 1,469 total fans for all the organization’s various Facebook pages, which include Greater Mankato Growth, Greater Mankato Young Professionals, Greater Mankato Events and Jonathan Zierdt’s GMG page. On the Greater Mankato Growth page alone there were 186,616 post views in 2011, nearly 20 times the 2010 number of 9,524.
- Resident and relocation information provided in the community area of our website and in a relocation packet that included the “Guide to Greater Mankato”
- The online Cost of Living Index, a tool which lets those thinking of moving to the area know about Greater Mankato’s affordibility, was used as by businesses in their employee recruitment efforts.
- Assets of Greater Mankato available to businesses promoted in online ads on sites for national business publications, as well as regional print ads
Visitor Attraction & Servicing

The Greater Mankato Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) is an LLC of Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. focused on driving the visitor economy through destination research and planning, advocacy, product development, visitor services and sales and marketing.

• Organization began transition from a traditional convention and visitors bureau to a Destination Management Organization (DMO). This includes an expanded focus from selling and marketing the destination to a focus on research and coordinating a master destination plan that will enhance the community

• North Star Destination Strategies hired to conduct visitor research, which will feed into a new branding and marketing plan process

• Staff roles restructured and two new positions added (Director of Marketing & Leisure Sales and Mankato Marathon Coordinator)

• $4,076,948 in total economic impact produced for Greater Mankato in 2011 from events and conventions

• 12 conventions confirmed in 2011 for conferences held in 2011 or future years, with a total economic impact of $1.2 million

• 22 conventions held in Mankato in 2011 received assistance from the CVB, bringing in an estimated 6,019 hotel rooms booked, representing $1,836,548 in economic impact.

• 31 sporting events received assistance from the CVB, with 6,870 booked hotel rooms, representing $2,240,400 in economic impact.

• 7% increase in leisure inquiries from magazines and general call-ins over 2010 numbers

• 2nd Annual Mankato Marathon hosted by CVB in partnership with Final Stretch, with 3,800 runners and 6,000 – 8,000 spectators in 2011

• 5 individuals recognized in the categories of attraction, hotel, restaurant, retail/shopping and a friend of tourism during National Travel & Tourism Week in May
Civic Engagement

*Greater Mankato Growth strives to engage businesses in community visioning and implementation activities by serving in various capacities from coordinating efforts to disseminating information to the business community.*

- Envision 2020 efforts furthered through GMG’s work with E2020 Implementation Team to coordinate and recruit new volunteers and chairs and create an annual report of E2020 successes and next steps.
- Envision 2020 progress and next steps reported on E2020 website and a quarterly report in Mankato Magazine.
- 73 delegates from the private, public and non-profit sectors participated in the Greater Mankato Leadership Delegation’s “Inter-City Leadership Visit (ICLV)” to Charlottesville, Virginia, with 39 presenters from Charlottesville providing information in the areas of Economic Development, Talent Development and Regional Partnerships.

**citycenter partnership**

- First CityArt Walking Sculpture Tour held, with 10,000 brochures picked up and 1,000+ votes cast for the People’s Choice Award, receiving recognition as a recipient of a Minnesota Community Pride Award.
- 1,500 people attended Alive After 5, an outdoor evening event with live music and refreshments in the heart of the City Center.
- 120+ individuals participated in business focus groups designed to learn about challenges and opportunities in the City Center.
- 65 businesses invested in the City Center Partnership.
- 15 new businesses agreed to “Adopt-a-Planter” in the City Center.
- 5 businesses were awarded the CityDesign Award of Excellence.
Consistent, manageable growth has been a hallmark of Greater Mankato regional marketplace, which includes the Mankato-North Mankato MSA (comprised of Blue Earth and Nicollet county), as well as communities immediately adjacent. 2011 was a strong year, thanks to the marketplace’s industry diversification, supply chain availability, business resources, access to talent and other assets that contribute to business success in Greater Mankato.

2011 Marketplace Milestones

25th in the nation on Forbes 2011 list of “Best Small Places for Business and Careers” - In June, Forbes ranked Greater Mankato 25th in the nation of all places in the U.S. with populations less than 245,000. Forbes based the ranking on the entire MSA’s performance in a variety of areas, including job growth, costs (business and living), income growth, educational attainment, projected economic growth and quality of life.

Level 1 Regional Trade Center - In addition to receiving this new designation for retail and service sales in December 2011, the U of M’s Trade Center Hierarchy Report also indicated the community had a 123% increase in taxable sales from 1990 to 2009, nearly triple the next-highest rate of 42% for St. Cloud.

51 New Building or Renovations Projects Planned, Started or Completed in 2011 - Square footage data was available for 30 of the 51 projects, totaling 721,590 square feet of new or renovated space. Total construction costs for all projects for which financials were available (31 of the 51) was estimated at nearly $23 million. These figures do not include the future Wal-Mart Distribution Center, with an estimated construction cost of $100 million and a size of 880,000 square feet.

Highest Year over Year Job Growth of any MSA - Greater Mankato had the highest job growth for any Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in the state.

Average Monthly Employment Rise of 2.2% - Average monthly employment for residents living in the MSA grew from 54,785 in 2010 to 55,988 in 2011, an increase of 1,203 employed. Average monthly unemployment for the same period went down from 6.15% in 2010 to 5.28% in 2011, with unemployment never going above 5% in the last four months of 2011.

Average Number of Establishments Up - The average number of establishments in the first two quarters of 2011 was up .7% from the same period for 2010 and up 3.1% from 1990.

Total Payroll Increase - Total payroll for the first two quarters of 2011 was up 4.7% from the first two quarters of 2010.

For more details and data sources for the above statistics, visit greatermankato.com/business-vitality.php.
## Greater Mankato’s Economic Diversity

### Business Payroll Distribution by Industry for Mankato-North Mankato MSA (includes Blue Earth and Nicollet Counties)

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<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Total Payroll</th>
<th>% of total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total, All Industries</td>
<td>$1,600,188,898</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Economy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural Resources and Mining</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
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<td>Utilities</td>
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<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
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<td>Transportation and Warehousing</td>
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<td>Information</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Professional / Service Economy</strong></td>
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<td>Finance and Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional and Business Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Services - Blue Earth County</td>
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<td>Other Services</td>
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<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>$42,073,913</td>
<td>2.49%</td>
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Source: 2010 QCEW, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)
Compiled by: Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. | greatermankato.com | 507.385.6640 | info@greatermankato.com
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Andrew Willaert, City Center Partnership*
*Retiring

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Tami Reuter, South Central College Foundation
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Sandy Buckley, Buckley & Bateman, LLC
Honey Burg, U.S. Bank
Rick Chandler, R-U Wireless/THINK Toner & Ink
Nathan Crane, University of Minnesota Extension
John Daly, Valuation Specialists
Rhonda Drysdale, CAbi-Independent Fashion Consultant
Jennifer Faust, Snell Motors
Christa Haala, Drummer Companies/Weichert Group
Connie Hanek, Paragon Printing, Mailing & Specialties
Rick Harbarth, AgStar Financial Services, ACA
Jan Haugum, ServiceMaster of Mankato/Waseca
Megan Lange, Aflac
Kate Loging, Eide Bailly
Joy Kelly, ECS – Your Wiring Pros
Mike Kennedy, Community Insurance
Judy Mettler, JM Promotions
Judy Ringler Mountain, New York Life Insurance
Sandra Oachs, Hilton Garden Inn
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Nicole Schroeder, Paulsen Architects, Inc.
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