



news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Growing a Greater Mankato Campaign Will Educate Public on Sales Tax Extension

Mankato, MINN (August 8, 2016) – Today Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. along with the community volunteers serving on the Sales Tax Extension Committee launched a public education campaign known as *Growing a Greater Mankato* to inform voters about the proposed extension of the existing local 0.5% sales tax by the Cities of Mankato and North Mankato.

On the November 8, 2016 ballot, voters in both cities will be asked to extend this existing local sales tax to support investments in critical municipal infrastructure including improvements to our flood control and water quality systems; transportation, transit and trail network; public safety communication network; library and cultural facilities as well as investments in existing and new regional recreation facilities. *Growing a Greater Mankato* will ensure that voters have all the information they need to cast an informed ballot on this question.

“As the authorization for the existing local sales tax draws near its expiration, community members and our public leaders engaged in a process to identify this slate of regional capital investment priorities. As a result, the Cities of Mankato and North Mankato have come together in a spirit of regional collaboration to advance this sales tax extension” said Jonathan Zierdt, president & CEO of Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. “We look forward to educating the public through the *Growing a Greater Mankato* campaign and making the case that the local 0.5% sales tax is a valuable source of revenue that would otherwise fall on property taxes to support investments in key projects that foster the continuation of our community as one that is socially, economically and culturally vibrant.”

“In addition to the important funding this sales tax extension would provide for critical infrastructure projects, one of the things we’ve heard loud and clear from employers in our region is that top notch recreation amenities will allow our community to attract and retain residents, giving our businesses access to more customers and the workforce they need to stay competitive” said David Wittenberg, Chair of the Mankato Sports Commission. “Quality recreation amenities will also alleviate over-capacity at our existing recreation facilities and enable our community to take advantage of positive economic impacts from sports tourism.”

In addition to the online platforms below that will serve as the source of information for the public on the local sales tax extension, *Growing a Greater Mankato* campaign volunteers will be going out into the public making presentations to community groups and building a strong grassroots network of stakeholders.

Growing a Greater Mankato Online Platforms

- Website: salestax.greatermankato.com
- Facebook: [facebook.com/KatoSalesTax](https://www.facebook.com/KatoSalesTax)
- Twitter: [@katosalestax](https://twitter.com/katosalestax)

Growing a Greater Mankato Volunteers

The following individuals through their service on these volunteer committees have been instrumental in assembling the regional recreation facilities investment priorities and *Growing a Greater Mankato* campaign.

Mankato Sports Commission

- David Wittenberg, Stifel, Sports Commission Chair
- Brett Skilbred, Coughlan Companies, Sports Commission Vice-Chair
- Steve Hatkin, Mankato Clinic
- Stephanie Loeffler, Mayo Clinic Health System
- Randy Knutson, Knutson and Casey Law Office
- Kevin Buisman, Minnesota State University, Mankato
- Seth Hoscheit, Community Education & Recreation
- Ryan Kragh, Bethany Lutheran College
- Sandra Oachs, Spinners Bar
- Chad Surprenant, ISG, representing MAYBA
- Bukata Hayes, Greater Mankato Diversity Council
- Larissa Egli, MANTAS swim club
- Beth Rohrich, SPX Sports
- Greg Weis, Mankato MoonDogs
- Troy Volk, Volk Logistics
- Phil Tostenson, Caswell Park Tournament Coordinator
- Jeff Lang, Radio Mankato
- Paul Gasper, Pioneer Hi-bred International Inc.
- Chris Willaert, Visit Mankato

Regional Recreation Steering Committee Members

- Brett Skilbred, Coughlan Companies
- Julia Ketcham Corbett, Blethen, Gage & Krause
- Denny Dotson, Dotson Company
- Larissa Egli, MANTAS Swim Club
- Beth Fowler Rohrich, SPX Sports
- Chad Surprenant, ISG
- Dave Wittenberg, Stifel
- Stephanie Loeffler, Mayo Clinic Health System
- Chris Frederick, City of Mankato
- Mark Piepho, Blue Earth County
- Jack Kolars, Nicollet County
- Mark Dehen, City of North Mankato
- Sheri Allen, Mankato Area Public Schools

About Greater Mankato Growth

Greater Mankato Growth (GMG) is committed to advancing business for a stronger community. As the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development organization serving the regional marketplace, GMG exists to intentionally develop the regional center by promoting, supporting and serving as a catalyst for economic development through business growth, retention and attraction, talent growth retention and attraction, regional livability and advocacy of the marketplace. Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. includes two affiliates: Visit Mankato, which focuses on visitor attraction and servicing, and the City Center Partnership, which focuses on development in the City Center.

Sales Tax Extension Committee

- Angie Bastian*, Angies Boom Chicka Pop
- Brett Skilbred*, Coughlan Companies
- Bukata Hayes*, Mankato Diversity Council
- Marsha Danielson, South Central College
- Stephanie Loeffler, Mayo Clinic Health System
- Chad Surprenant, ISG
- David Wittenberg, Stifel
- Dean Bowyer, Retired – MSU
- Sheri Allen, Mankato Area Public Schools
- Kevin Buisman, Minnesota State University, Mankato
- Carrie Flanagan, Thrivent Financial
- Jason Femrite, Bolton & Menk
- Sam Brockshus, ISG
- Laura Bowman, Mayo Clinic Health System
- Seth Hoscheit, Community Education and Recreation
- Fred Lutz
- Akram Osman, Mankato Area Public Schools
- Julia Ketcham Corbett, Blethen Gage & Krause

*denotes co-chair

Technical Advisory Team Members

- Pat Hentges, City of Mankato
- Paul Vogel, City of Mankato
- John Harrenstein, City of North Mankato
- Bob Meyer, Blue Earth County
- Ryan Krosch, Nicollet County
- Audra Boyer, Mankato School District 77
- Marsha Danielson, South Central College
- Jared Larson, All Seasons Arena
- Kevin Buisman, Minnesota State University, Mankato
- Don Westphal, Bethany Lutheran College
- John Kind, Mankato Family YMCA